

Handbook for Travel-Study Programs and Courses

Table of Contents

Travel-Study Roles & Responsibilities	3
Faculty Sponsor Conduct	4
Orientation.....	5
Program Budget	5
Mobility	6
Participant Conduct	6
Social Behavior & Norms / Legal Issues	6s
Removal from Program.....	7
Payment Information.....	7
Safety & Security.....	8
Health Risk Awareness & Preparation	8
First Aid	9
Emergency Management.....	9
Liability & Risk Management	10
Independent Travel.....	10
Transportation	11
Appendix	12
Developing a Travel-Study Program: a Guide for Faculty	12

Introduction

The Reynolds Community College Travel-Study Committee is pleased that you are considering designing a course with travel away from campus as a central component. We believe that a travel can provide a lasting experience that can broaden students' perspectives and change lives. The following Handbook is designed to provide general guidance for developing and leading a Travel-Study program or course for J. Reynolds Community College. It provides useful information for you regarding the responsibilities of faculty and students, finances, emergency management, and safety. It also includes an appendix with general information about developing a Travel-Study course proposal and the approval process at the College.

Travel-Study Roles & Responsibilities

The following roles and responsibilities are established for faculty sponsors and others in the development and implementation of a travel-study course/program.

School Dean

- Contact with vice presidents of academic affairs and student affairs on all aspects of designing and administering travel-study programs and courses to include development, logistics, determination of faculty-participant ratio, process and procedures, and marketing
- Completion of forms necessary for the establishment of programs and for student participation
- Assistance with promotion of the opportunity, to include development of publicity to ensure a unified presentation in coordination with the appropriate offices
- Coordination of all financial transactions with the college Business Office
- Decisions regarding academic content and instruction (dean of the academic school in which the discipline is housed), with final approval by the vice president of academic affairs
- Appointments of faculty sponsors for travel-study programs or courses, upon the recommendation of the appropriate school dean, and approval by the vice president of academic affairs

Vice President of Student Affairs

- Developing, in conjunction with the faculty sponsor, a risk assessment plan in order to identify risks associated with the travel-study program or course and to minimize college liability
- Ensuring reasonable expectations of the participants by reviewing appropriate pre-departure orientation plan, with appropriate pre-departure materials created by faculty sponsors, which must include the course syllabus
- Advising participants of any and all changes in previously agreed-to travel, accommodation, and other course-related arrangements

Vice President of Finance and Administration

- Ensuring strict adherence to state and college policies on compensation and travel

Faculty Sponsor

- Coordination of services to participants prior to and during the travel-study program or course
- Communication with participants regarding the itinerary, travel, accommodations, academic requirements, and program format
- Developing an instructional plan
- Recruitment of participants
- Developing, in conjunction with the vice president of student affairs, a risk assessment plan in order to identify risks associated with the travel-study program or course
- Execution of the instructional plan during the travel-study program or course
- Coordination and leadership of the participants in the travel-study program or course from recruitment/solicitation through the return
- Maintaining contact with course participants throughout the program
- Advising the vice president of student affairs, who shall contact the vice president of academic affairs and the vice president of finance and administration, as soon as possible of any injury or emergency related to a course participant or third party who might be considered the college's responsibility. All such reports will be followed by a detailed written account and submitted to the vice president of student affairs, the vice president of academic affairs, and the vice president of finance and administration upon the faculty sponsor's return to JSRCC.
- Preparation and submission of a course assessment to the school dean within ten (10) days following completion of the travel-study program or course
- Completion of a final accounting of receipts and expenditures for the travel-study program or course and submission of it to the vice president of finance and administration within ten (10) days of return.
- Providing the vice president of academic affairs and the vice president of finance and administration with detailed itinerary to include emergency contact addresses and telephone numbers of each overnight stay
- Insuring all participant fees are paid a minimum of fifteen (15) days before departure

Faculty Sponsor Conduct

The faculty sponsor shall communicate the rules, requirements, and expectations concerning participant behavior and activity performance. Participants will have almost 24-hour contact with the faculty sponsor. They will scrutinize the behavior of a faculty sponsor abroad more closely than they would that of a professor in a regular class situation. Common sense is the key. The faculty sponsor cannot be there all the time to supervise participants. Ultimately, responsibility for behavior must remain with the participant. It is, however, a good idea to reiterate the rules, requirements, and particular local laws as needed. The faculty sponsor is responsible for the administration of the program from the beginning to the end of the tour. It is imperative that the faculty sponsor not leave participants for more than a short period. No overnight absences or early departures are permitted

The faculty sponsor should develop an amicable relationship with the participants while maintaining a professional demeanor. He/She should also encourage participants to mix with the local people. In

socializing with participants, the faculty sponsor should be careful not to overindulge in alcohol or participate in other undignified behavior that sets a bad example.

Orientation

J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College requires that each travel-study program or course provide at least one pre-departure orientation for all participants to ensure that participants understand their rights and responsibilities before they depart. The faculty sponsor conducts orientation sessions. The following topics must be reviewed in the orientation session.

Conditions of participation

Each participant will be asked to agree to the conditions of participation by signing a Travel-Study Program or Course Conditions of Participation form, [JSRCC Form No. 75-0014](#). This document details the rights and responsibilities of the participant to the travel-study program or course as a whole. It is important for the faculty sponsor to discuss with the participants all of the information on this form. Conditions of participation must be delineated in the syllabus, including required attendance at orientation sessions and course meetings. Conditions of participation will differ based on the requirements of the individual class and/or travel-study program.

Topics covered on the Travel-Study Program or Course

- Conditions of Participation
- Payment deadlines
- Refund policy
- Program participation
- Host institution regulations
- Expulsion policy
- Health and medical insurance
- Consular information sheets and travel warnings
- Program cancellation
- Program costs
- Agreement and release

Program Budget

In developing a program budget, the following expenses incurred on behalf of the entire group should be considered:

- Honoraria for guest speakers
- Ground transportation such as van rentals, group admissions into museums and attractions, etc.
- Individual participant expenses, which includes items paid for by the program on behalf of each individual participant including room and board, external tuition, and individual admissions

- Faculty sponsor's expenses and airfare

Mobility

The faculty sponsor shall advise participants of the degree of mobility necessary to accomplish the activity. If special accommodations are needed, these should be arranged prior to trip departure as part of the planning process.

Participant Conduct

The faculty sponsor shall make it clear to all participants prior to the trip or course that they are expected to follow [JSRCC Policy No. 1-35](#), Student Conduct, and may be administratively withdrawn from the course for failure to do so. Should a participant perform in a manner detrimental to the good of the group, interfere with teaching, or fail to show respect for others, that participant may no longer participate in the course or continue the trip. No fees shall be returned to participant in this instance.

During the travel-study program or course, the illegal use or possession of alcohol or drugs, as defined by law, is strictly forbidden. Use of alcohol during class activities is prohibited. Such use is grounds for expulsion. All laws, procedures, and policies of J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College must be obeyed. Contractual obligations and standards in addition to the above rules apply during travel-study programs and courses. A violation of such obligations, standards, or rules may subject the violator to disciplinary action or severance of the relationship to the college. Sexual harassment or misconduct will not be tolerated. The faculty sponsor shall make it clear to all participants prior to the trip or course that tours and other activities depart on time and will not wait for latecomers.

Social Behavior & Norms / Legal Issues

The faculty sponsor must thoroughly understand the social and/or behavioral norms of special populations at a site or of the host country. Program/course participants should be informed of expectations that may differ from acceptable behavior at home. Participants are held to the legal standards in effect at the site. In the event of a confrontation with the law, there is very little that can be done to assist the participant; and the judicial and civil liberty guarantees of the United States are not recognized abroad. The college cannot and will not intervene on participants' behalf when norms of behavior and site laws are broken. Participants should also be made aware that their behavior reflects not only upon themselves but also upon the group, the college, and the United States in general. Therefore, they are expected to uphold standards of common decency and respect within the group and in interactions with the inhabitants of the site and country.

Removal from Program

It is important to keep in mind the welfare and experience of the group as a whole. However, if a participant endangers him/herself and jeopardizes the group as a whole, expulsion is appropriate. The Participant Conduct section of this policy must be reviewed with all participants. In the event of expulsion, the expelled participant and not the college is financially responsible for all related costs necessary to get home. Also, the expelled participant will not be refunded any of the program charges. Once the expulsion is made clear to the participant, the college will no longer be responsible for the participant, and it will be the participant's responsibility to handle their own expenses from the moment of expulsion. If the participant continues to jeopardize the group, the faculty sponsor may contact the appropriate security officials.

Note: If an expulsion is being considered, the faculty sponsor must contact the vice president of student affairs who will inform college officials as appropriate and approve or deny the expulsion request.

Payment Information

In order to receive credit, participants must register for travel-study programs or courses just as they would for any course. All expenses are to be paid by participants. Determination of the travel fee each participant must pay will be made by the faculty sponsor and the vice president of finance and administration. Any final bid documents that contain costs of the travel will be used when determining the travel fee. Tuition and travel fees must be paid in two separate transactions. Students receiving financial aid may request that the costs associated with participation in a travel study program be added their cost of attendance for the term in which the program will be conducted. Students must follow procedures outlined by the Financial Aid Office for special circumstances.

No monies are to be collected for travel-study programs or courses until a request for approval of a travel-study program or course has been approved by the vice president of academic affairs and the vice president of student affairs and such approval has been forwarded to the vice president of finance and administration. If a travel agency is used, no monies are to be collected until a bid has been awarded and a specific cost for the trip has been determined. The college business manager shall establish a special local fund sub-account for each trip or, in the alternative, the Invitation to Bid may indicate that fees are to be paid directly to the official travel agent. If fees are paid to the college, each participant must bring to the Business Office a copy of a Travel-Study Program or Course Request for Approval, [JSRCC Form No. 75-0009](#), to ensure that funds are deposited in the proper account. The Business Office shall establish a log of payments for each trip and shall provide this information to the faculty sponsor. It is the faculty sponsor's responsibility to ensure that participants have completed payment of all fees in advance of the trip.

When payments or advances are required, the faculty sponsor shall complete a request for disbursement in sufficient time for payments to be made. Generally, this is at least three weeks prior

to the time payment is required. If funds are not available in the local funds sub-account, no payment will be made.

Tuition refunds follow established tuition refund procedures. Refunds for fees paid to cover other expenses may vary and must be approved in advance. Faculty sponsors must request a refund in writing to the Business Office. If a travel agency is involved, guidelines for refunds must be clearly defined in the contract. In other circumstances, refund criteria must be clearly articulated to participants. Under no circumstances shall refunds be given after commitments for services have been made, such as bus rental, etc.

Within ten (10) days after completion of the travel-study program or course, the faculty sponsor shall prepare a final accounting of receipts and expenditures on the Student Travel Expenditure Request/Report form, [JSRCC Form No. 75-0010](#). Final accounting must be reconciled with revenues and expenditures. The faculty sponsor is responsible for obtaining and safeguarding all receipts. These receipts must be attached to a memorandum. The accuracy of the report shall be verified by the college Business Office.

It is advisable to pre-pay as many program costs as possible. If the vendor requires payment by check, the college must receive an original invoice prior to processing a requisition for payment. The invoice must be on the vendor's letterhead, showing the vendor's address, telephone number, and Federal Identification Number, if applicable. Please note that completed travel authorizations for both the faculty sponsor and other accompanying faculty and staff paid for with state funds are required prior to requesting vendor payments. Vendor payments are made in accordance with State Prompt Pay guidelines. The vendor should normally receive payment within thirty (30) days after the receipt of a proper invoice plus the mail transit time.

Safety & Security

Participants should be cautioned to follow all of the instructions provided by the faculty sponsor and be informed that the faculty sponsor reserves the right to make changes in the itinerary, and participants must follow such changes. Participants may travel "on their own" during unstructured free time. Participants should inform the faculty sponsor of their whereabouts and plans. Faculty sponsors will attempt to warn participants of any safety issues they may encounter; but participants should exercise situational awareness at all times, particularly when traveling away from the group. Participants should understand that they are responsible for their own safety and welfare during free time. Personal rental of vehicles is discouraged as driver and passengers are not covered by state insurance.

Health Risk Awareness & Preparation

Faculty sponsors should be aware of health, safety, and security issues with participants, some of whom may be traveling for the first time without parents. Planning ahead will help to ensure a safe and healthy trip.

The faculty sponsor and each participant must be familiar with procedures regarding health insurance and medical care at the host site or in the host country. All should understand the appropriate process if medical attention is required. Participants should be made aware of any special conditions with regard to location that may affect their health, i.e., malaria risks, high altitude location, etc., and apprised of general climatic and public health conditions.

Participants must provide medical history information on their application forms, including prescriptions and other medications taken regularly. The faculty sponsor should review this document and discuss any concerns with the vice president of student affairs and other college officials as necessary.

First Aid

The faculty sponsor is not expected to handle emergency situations alone. The vice president of student affairs must be contacted and will alert college officials, who will gather the essential facts, consult with the appropriate state authorities, formulate a course of action, and notify the faculty sponsor. Although the college will coordinate information between the faculty sponsor and families at home as well as other concerned individuals, the faculty sponsor will need to be prepared to deal with worried families and respond to their concerns directly.

Emergency Management

In general, when confronted with an emergency situation, the faculty sponsor should take appropriate action. For example, if a participant gets sick, then the participant should be taken to the doctor or hospital. Safety preparedness will assist in the appropriate response to an emergency situation. Faculty sponsors should take the following pre-departure actions so that appropriate management can take place if an emergency situation develops:

- Do not act outside of the scope of your official responsibilities, such as those related to the direct instructional content and travel arrangements of the program or course.
- If traveling outside of the United States, contact the U.S. embassy or consulate and provide information on the purpose of the trip, length of stay, and a list of participants.
- Know the provisions of return tickets in case an early departure becomes necessary.
- Write down the ticket number, date, and place of purchase for yourself and for all participants. Leave photocopies of tickets and passports with the vice president of student affairs.
- Have the following essential information available at all times:
 - identification card and passports

- emergency information on each participant
- list of local English-speaking physicians and hospital locations
- important phone and fax numbers:
 1. U.S. embassy/consulate
 2. host institution
 3. nearest medical facility
 4. ambulance service

Liability & Risk Management

A risk assessment plan must identify factors at the site and factors in activities at the site that may present a risk. The plan must state how participants will be informed of the potential risks and state the degree of supervision of participants' activities. Emergency procedures must be established as well as the method of communication of emergencies to participants. It is mandatory that all participants in the travel-study program or course be notified of any known risks associated with the activity, and all must be notified that the participant assumes such risks.

Participants will be required to sign an Assumption of the Risk certificate, [JSRCC Form No. 75-0004](#), and a Medical Agreement and Release form, [JSRCC Form No. 75-0012](#). Completed and signed forms must be put on file in the school office at the time the participant submits his application for the travel-study program or course.

The faculty sponsor must make it clear to participants that the college's liability does not extend to the participant's free time. To do this, the faculty sponsor must make it clear which activities are a part of the official trip and which are not. If a participant leaves the group to travel alone or return independently, the participant must sign a Travel-Study Program or Course Participant Traveling Apart From Group or Returning Independently form, [JSRCC Form No. 75-0013](#), releasing the college from further responsibility.

It is strongly recommended that participants in travel-study programs or courses have or obtain accident and/or health insurance. It is strongly recommended that participants purchase travel cancellation or loss insurance.

Independent Travel

If a participant chooses to travel away from the group or to return from a trip independently, prior approval must be obtained from the vice president of student affairs, the vice president of academic affairs, the vice president of finance and administration, and the faculty sponsor. The Travel-Study Program or Course Participant Traveling Apart From Group or Returning Independently form, [JSRCC Form No. 75-0013](#), must be utilized to obtain such approval. Under no circumstances will the college accept responsibility for a participant who leaves the group during a trip.

Transportation

Transportation may take one of five forms:

- Participants may meet at the site of the activity. Participants will then be responsible for arranging their own transportation. To avoid the risk of personal or college liability, the faculty sponsor or other college employee must not transport participants in a personal vehicle and must not be involved in arranging transportation in other private vehicles.
- A common carrier, bus, train, or airplane may be used by the entire group. In this case, proper purchasing procedures must be followed.
- A rented vehicle may be used. In this case, proper purchasing procedures must be followed. Participants who are not state employees must not drive such rented vehicles.
- A state vehicle may be used. Arrangements can be made through the college Facilities Management office. Participants who are not state employees must not drive state vehicles.
- A college van may be used. The faculty sponsor should complete [JSRCC Form No. 75-0003](#), Request to Reserve a Campus Van.

Note: If travel agency services are needed, proper purchasing procedures must be followed.

Appendix

Developing a Travel-Study Program: a Guide for Faculty

By Jane Rosecrans, PhD, Reynolds Community College

Introduction

This guide is intended to help faculty members develop new study abroad courses at Reynolds. It is based on my personal experience of travelling with students to New York City, England and Italy while I was a faculty member at John Tyler as well as my experience developing a study abroad program to Turkey in 2015 (which was cancelled due to security concerns) and to Italy (ENG 295: The American Romantics in Italy) scheduled for the summer of 2017.

Pedagogy for study abroad

Obviously a study abroad course is a different kind of course. It puts a premium on experiential learning. Students learn by doing, seeing, and discussing, more than by reading, writing, and listening to lectures. You should consider this when planning your course. In my view, a study abroad course should not just be the same old class taught in a different place. Take maximum advantage of the special sites, guides, museums, tours, excursion possibilities, and other resources that will only be available abroad. I guarantee you, your students will come to understand what you want them to learn if you use your time abroad as an opportunity for active learning. Consider resources from international education organizations such as NAFSA (Association of International Educators).

Syllabus, Itinerary, Budget

The three most important considerations in creating a study abroad course are: the syllabus, the itinerary, and the budget. In helping you conceptualize how to think about study abroad, I will present you with several steps that worked for me.

Step 1: Connect the country to a course or the course to a country (or countries). Either works. For me, I decided to focus on a country I believed to be safe after the cancellation of the Turkey trip due to security concerns. I am Italian and have family in Italy, and I have visited many times including with students. Once I had decided on Italy, I immediately recalled the many travels American writers had made to Italy in the 19th century.

Thinking about a Country to Visit: As you think about where you would like to travel, keep these factors in mind:

1. Have you visited this country before? I strongly recommend faculty who develop a study abroad program, especially if they have never travelled with students before, focus on places with which they are familiar.
2. Is this country safe? You may need to visit sites such as that of the State Department to see if there are any travel warnings or advisories.
3. Is this country affordable? You may know the answer to this based on your own travel experience. If not, there are ways to research costs online.

Step 2: Research the how the content of your course relates to the country you plan to visit. At this stage, I began to research American writers who had travelled to Italy as well as the works they created as a result. This was important because I needed to link these writers to cities in Italy. It was through this process that I simultaneously created a list of readings as well as an itinerary of places to visit and what to visit in each place.

Step 3: Create a *draft* of a syllabus for the study abroad course you are developing. This will be needed for your initial request for approval. Most important sections of the syllabus to complete: Course Description, Course Outcomes, Course Requirements, and Course Schedule.

Step 4: Complete the *Travel-Study Request for Approval*. The Study Abroad Committee has streamlined the process and has embedded several early steps so that faculty do not need to present actual costs and negotiate with vendors before their course is approved.

Step 5: Complete the *Request for Bids from Vendors*. This is a very detailed form and includes all items that will need to be covered by student travel vendors: airfare, hotel accommodations, in-country travel, meals, site visits, etc.

Step 6: Upon approval, you will move forward contacting and negotiating with vendors. The *Request for Bids from Vendors* will streamline and accelerate negotiations with vendors. The vendors I spoke to were thrilled that I had offered them such a detailed request.

Step 7: Negotiate with vendors. This can be a time-consuming process. Most vendors will not offer you an “a la carte” menu of services. Instead, they package several services together. I was able to learn that airfare to Italy was \$1200, but I never learned the final cost for hotels or even meals. The primary concern here is cost. You will find yourself negotiating to bring costs down, which is what I did. Big ticket items that you can negotiate include: hotel accommodations, in-country transportation, the number of free spots, and the inclusion of a tour guide.

Step 8: Once you have finalized your study abroad program, you will need to work with Marketing to publicize your program and Student Services to offer Information Sessions. Keep the following in mind when marketing and planning information sessions:

1. Create a short flyer for your program that can be email to college faculty, administrators, and staff; students; and outside groups such as K-12 schools in our service region.
2. Create promotional material for the college’s website and to be posted on campus.
3. Set up information sessions on the PRC and DTC campuses. For my program, we included an afternoon and early evening session on each campus. Because we are partnering with John Tyler, if they are also offering a study abroad program, you will also need to set up information session on the Chester and Midlothian campuses for JTCC.
4. Create materials for your information sessions: PowerPoint, Participant Forms, Attendance forms with email.

Step 9: Enroll students into your program. The vendor you are working with will establish payment deadlines and a payment plan for students. I set up an email list for all interested students and then a second list of students who submitted the deposit.

Step 10: Schedule an Orientation session during the semester prior to your departure. This session will cover the basics such as passports as well cultural information and more details on the program. My Orientation will include the following:

1. Passport Information and Application
2. Detailed Itinerary
3. Flight and Luggage Information
4. Detailed Hotel Information with Contact Information for each hotel
5. My Rules for Travel to Italy
6. Packing List
7. Health Care Information
8. Money, Exchange Rates, and Financial Security Information
9. Cell Phone and Tablet Information
10. Detailed Information on every Museum, Archeological Site, Church, Art Exhibit, Music Event, University, Palace, Outdoor Market, Designer Outlet, Neighborhood, Excursion Site, and Winery we will visit
11. "Other Places to Visit" for each Major City we will visit for those times when you have free time to explore on your own
12. Information on Italian Food and Beverages
13. Information on Italian Culture
14. Information on Shopping in Italy
15. Basic Facts about Italy
16. A brief History of Italy
17. Information on the Italian Language including a phrase and pronunciation cheat sheet
18. A list of MP3 files and Apps for the places (see #10) we will visit

Best Step: Teach your course and travel!!