



Short-Term Faculty Led Study-Abroad Handbook 2024-2026



Letter from the Director

Dear Prospective Program Leaders,

We would like to extend our appreciation for your dedication in facilitating enriching study abroad opportunities for our students. Your approach, careful planning, and strong leadership are vital, and we are committed to assisting you in your efforts.

Faculty-led study abroad programs offer students a unique combination of academic learning and real-world experience, fostering close collaborations with faculty members and their classmates in a new cultural setting. Many students find their time abroad to be among the most transformative experiences of their school years.

Faculty-led study abroad programs offer several benefits such as academic enrichment, cultural immersion, experiential learning, global networking, personal growth, resume/career advantages and memorable, transformative experiences.

“This trip had been more than just a study abroad experience or an eco-tour. It had been a journey of personal growth, a crash course in global citizenship, and a stark reminder of our responsibility to protect and preserve the natural world. As I boarded the plane, I silently promised myself that this would not be the end, but rather the beginning of a lifelong commitment to understanding and protecting our planet's precious ecosystems.”

- BHCC student Josian, participant in 2024 faculty-led study abroad to Costa Rica

“What surprised me about Ghana was how I was received by the locals. They made me feel so welcomed. I learned that 97% of my DNA is West African, and 47% Ghanaian. Now I see why I felt at home.”

- BHCC student Tyrie, participant in 2024 faculty-led study abroad to Ghana

This handbook is designed to provide faculty members leading study abroad programs with comprehensive information on the roles and responsibilities of both faculty and students while participating in their programs.

The role of the program leader is pivotal in study abroad programs. Your responsibilities vary from crafting academic curricula and managing logistics to ensuring the safety and well-being of all participants. Leading a study abroad program will require your availability around the clock, as you will play a crucial role as a mentor and advisor, both inside and outside the classroom.

We strongly encourage all program leaders, including those with prior experience, to thoroughly review this handbook, and keep a copy readily accessible for themselves.

Once again, we sincerely appreciate your commitment and efforts in providing this vital experience to our students. Please know that the International Center is here to offer support to you throughout all stages of your study abroad program.

Thank you for your dedication.

Warmest Regards,

Doni

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Things to Consider Before You Begin to Develop a Study Abroad Proposal

Thank you for considering developing a proposal for a short-term faculty-led study abroad program. We recognize that it takes a great deal of time, effort, and commitment not only to run a program, but to develop and market it. The information below is intended to provide you with more detailed information about what will be required of you as a program leader and how you will be compensated. These programs inevitably deliver more personal satisfaction to leaders than financial compensation, but having done several myself, I can tell you that they are worth the sacrifice. We in the International Center are honored to support you in these endeavors that are transformative for our students. – Doni M. Casula, Director, International Center

- ✓ All program leaders must be physically based in a location from which it is possible to regularly visit the BHCC Charlestown campus in the academic year prior to their program.
- ✓ Faculty and staff leaders will be required to travel with the student participants roundtrip from Boston to the destination and back.
- ✓ Family members or friends not enrolled in the study abroad course may not accompany the group.
- ✓ Faculty and staff leaders will be primarily responsible for marketing accepted programs. One or both leaders of accepted programs are required to hold a minimum of 2 information sessions (1 in-person, 1 online) and attend a minimum of 4 study abroad fairs scheduled by the International Center including at least 1 on the Chelsea campus during the Fall term before a Spring or Summer program and during the Spring term for a Winter session program. At least 3 brief classroom visits must be arranged and conducted by faculty and/or staff leads.
- ✓ Faculty and staff leaders will be required to attend 10 training sessions scheduled by the International Center, some WebEx, some in-person, scheduled prior to the commencement of class meetings for the program.
- ✓ Compensation to program leaders will only be made to accepted programs and is fixed at the rate (s) of:
 - **Course Development:** Faculty with approved proposals will be compensated at the normal course development rate for DCE faculty of \$1,500 for a 3-credit course. Please note that if faculty have taught this particular study abroad course before, they will not be compensated again for course development.
 - **Teaching:** The instructor of record will be compensated for teaching the course at the normal DCE rate.
 - **10 Hours of Mandatory Training:** Program leaders will be compensated for undertaking mandatory training at the hourly rate of \$45/hour.
 - **Program Lead Stipend:** The program leader/instructor of record will be compensated a stipend of \$500 for work related to program logistics.
 - **Co-lead Stipend:** Faculty who are serving as co-leads for the program will receive a \$2,000 stipend for their work related to program logistics. Staff co-leads will be compensated at their regular rate of pay.
- ✓ Program leaders must abide by the financial processes, procedures, and policies of the college promptly.
- ✓ It is not possible to use college credit cards to pay vendors who only have offices or locations outside the United States.
- ✓ In order for financial aid to cover any student costs, the travel portion of programs must take place within the dates of an established academic term (Summer, Fall, Spring, or Winter session).
- ✓ Upon program approval, you will be required to submit your passport identification page and current US insurance card to the International Center for flight and international insurance purposes.
- ✓ When the student selection process is complete, program leaders must provide students with their contact information, including a cell number. Preferably, you will set up a What's App group for the course. You will be the primary contact for the student participants in your program.
- ✓ Post-program, leaders will be required to submit a report to the International Center, for which guidelines will be provided, by the published deadline.

BHCC Study Abroad Scholarship & Stewardship

BHCC offers an extraordinary opportunity to our students in the form of a scholarship that covers approximately 80% of their cost for each study abroad experience. This is unprecedented among community colleges and demonstrates BHCC's commitment to accessibility to the benefits of international education for all. The cost to students for each program is just \$750, which may be covered by financial aid.

The budget for these scholarships is limited. In order to make the greatest possible use of this very special resource, it is critical that everyone involved – the International Center, Program Leaders, and Administrators to exercise excellent stewardship in its use. There are several ways to accomplish this, including choosing economical accommodations, being flexible with flight dates to find the best price, using public transportation where practical, etc. The International Center staff is happy to assist program leaders in finding the most reasonable options so that opportunities can be made available to as many students, faculty, and staff as possible without compromising academic integrity or the health and safety of our community members abroad.

Advance planning is one of the best ways to ensure that additional costs are not incurred for last minute bookings of flights, lodging, and admission to sites and attractions. Payment for these activities can take time as requests and invoices make their way through college financial processes, and this additional time should be accounted for during program development.

Deadlines will be developed and posted for each study abroad development cycle to keep everyone on track for submitting request forms and invoices, making flight reservations, etc. These have been carefully thought out to maximize the benefits and we ask that you keep them in mind as you plan your program.

Process Overview

1. Faculty member (or staff member qualified to teach as adjunct) has an idea for a short-term (10-12 days) faculty-led study abroad program.
2. Faculty or staff member schedules an exploratory meeting with Doni Casula, Director of the International Center by contacting Ferman Karakoc at ferman.karakoc@bhcc.edu.
3. Faculty and staff members attend a Study Abroad Information Session scheduled by the International Center to become familiar with policies and practices around study abroad programs.
4. Faculty member and secondary program leader develop study abroad program proposal and submit it to Academic Chair and Dean for signature.
5. Faculty member and secondary program leader submit program proposal to the International Center by the posted deadline for the academic year in which the proposed program would take place.
6. Review committee consisting of Deans, a staff member of the International Center, faculty members, and an international student worker, reviews and scores proposals using a prepared rubric based on leaders' qualifications and experience, cost feasibility, marketability, health and safety, and the course's fulfillment of degree requirements. The highest-scoring programs will be evaluated by the final selection committee, consisting of the Dean of Behavioral Sciences, Social Sciences, and Global Learning, the Director of the International Center, and the Study Abroad Advisors. The selection committee will consider all of the feedback and make a recommendation to the Administration for the programs to be approved.
7. Program leaders of approved programs meet with International Center staff to identify areas of needed support.
8. International Center staff or program leaders develop marketing materials for the program to include name and description of the academic course, dates of travel, cost to students, and general description.
9. Program leaders schedule information sessions and classroom visits for individual programs and attend study abroad fairs scheduled by the International Center.
10. International Center collects and processes student applications for program by posted deadlines.
11. International Center determines whether the application pool for each program is sufficient for the program to move forward.
12. If program has a sufficient pool of applications, program leaders and International Center staff meet to select student candidates to interview for the program.
13. International Center staff and program leaders collaborate to schedule interviews and meet to select student participants by the posted deadline.
14. International Center staff notify selected students, student deposits due, travel request forms submitted.
15. Program leaders schedule class and pre-departure meetings for individual programs (International Center staff to attend first class meeting to collect necessary documents), International Center staff schedule pre-departure orientations for all program leaders and selected students.
16. Program leaders begin training sessions (10, 1 hour each over 10 weeks) on Tuesday evenings at 6pm.
17. Student final payments due, flights are purchased.
18. Program leaders submit vendor invoices to the International Center by the posted deadline.
19. Program is delivered.
20. Program leaders submit final report as proscribed and student evaluations within 10 days of return.

**See timeline for specific academic year for deadlines.*

Program Development Guidelines & Policies

Course Selection and Prerequisites for Student Participants

College policy is that a student must have a 2.0 cumulative grade point average to be considered for a study abroad program. Advantages of developing or utilizing an introductory level course are that there are many to choose from and your potential pool of applicants may be widened. A disadvantage is that students may have taken the course (i.e. SOC 101) before they hear about your program, which would make them ineligible to participate. There can be a happy medium in choosing a course that has minimal prerequisites – for example, ENGL 111 is a very reasonable prerequisite that many students will have taken in their first semester.

“Setting Academic Goals and Learning Outcomes

Integrated Syllabi begin with the consideration of specific academic goals and learning outcomes. Thought should be given to the integration of course readings, lectures, site visits, and independent study and research. Think about how your academic goals will combine intercultural learning with academic learning. Be creative! Consider how you might include an activity that seems tangential or even disconnected to the course focus, such as a theatre performance in a nontheatre course, to bolster the course learning objectives and take advantage of local resources. Also consider how these activities will be a part of the intentional cultural experience you are designing for your students.” (Chieffo & Spaeth, 2017)

Third-Party Providers

A third-party provider is a tour company or travel agency that arranges part or all of your “on the ground” arrangements. These might include ground transportation, arranging group meals, reserving space for class meetings, making lodging reservations, arranging excursions and admission to museums and other sites, arranging meetings with organizations of interest for the group, a tour guide, etc. There are several that specialize in short-term, faculty-led study abroad, and many will design custom programs, at a price. Advantages of using a third-party provider include ease of payment (only paying one invoice), in-depth knowledge of logistics in the study abroad destination, and less for program leaders to do in terms of making arrangements. Price can be a disadvantage, but there are many ways to mitigate that. Our preferred travel agent here in Boston is Colibri travel, with which IC staff would meet along with you and them to plan your program. Another known provider is EF Tours, which is based here in Boston as well. After we discuss the specific goals of your program, we can help you to determine whether a third-party provider is a good option.

Flights

Obviously, flights are required for nearly every study abroad program. It is required that all programs fly to and from the study abroad destination as a group with both program leaders. All flights for study abroad are coach class. We try to negotiate flights that include at least one checked bag, but that might not always be possible. It is critical that we have passport identification pages for all student participants and program leaders before the posted deadlines so that the flights can all be secured at once. Travel cannot begin before the day immediately preceding the term in which the course takes place and cannot return after the end date of the term. It is essential for program leaders to be flexible for a few days after their proposed travel date (or before, if term has started) in order to reserve flights at the best price available.

Lodging

Students must always have their own beds, but should expect to share sleeping quarters with 1 or more other students of the same gender, unless they expressly opt for mixed-gender rooms. When selecting students, it is important to note

that you have the appropriate number of each gender for the anticipated rooming situation (2 to a room, 3 to a room, dormitory, etc.). Program leaders may have their own rooms in hotels separate from the students where practical and appropriate, but are welcome to share if they are comfortable with the arrangement. Please be aware that there is often a substantial “single person supplement” charge if the travelling group is a mix between sharing and not sharing in lodging arrangements. There are several types of lodging that work well with short-term faculty-led programs. We will describe each of them here:

Homestays: Homestays involve students staying, normally in pairs, with a family local to the study abroad destination. Homestays are usually the most culturally immersive and economical forms of lodging, but may or may not be practical depending on the particular goals of your program. In popular study abroad destinations, particularly in Europe, there are large organizations that recruit and vet the host families. Often 1 or 2 meals per day are included in the rate. This might be a practical option if your program will have a “home base” that the students return to each night, and if host families are in close enough proximity for students to travel easily to meeting points.

Dormitories: Whether or not your program is academically associated with a university or college abroad, there may be dormitory space available for your program. There are even dormitories in some popular areas that have been developed specifically for this purpose and are not associated with any particular institution. It is sometimes possible to arrange catering or cafeteria meals, helping to make this another economical, student-friendly option. Colleges and institutions will often provide a class meeting room for free or at minimal cost if the group is using their dorm facilities.

Short-Term Rentals: These are VRBO/AirBNB type rentals of apartments or houses. An advantage of these is that there is often the possibility of cooking some meals there, while a disadvantage may be finding places with sufficient beds in particular units or lack of proximity of units to each other and/or meeting points.

Hotels: These are generally the least economical option, but sometimes the only practical one. If it is necessary to use one or more hotels for your program, please consider stewardship in your proposals and choices. In some destinations, it is a simple matter to have hotel rooms set up for 3, and in some triple or even quadruple rooms are regularly available. Be sure to include hotel tax, resort fees, and any other hotel fees in your estimates. Hotels chosen should meet basic needs and be geographically convenient for meeting points and excursions. Some hotels may provide a conference room for class meetings at minimal to no cost, while others may want to charge an exorbitant amount. It is necessary to research this while developing your program proposal. We also strongly encourage you to research reviews of the lodging for comments about safety and the general area.

Excursions to Museums, Historical Sites, Relevant Cultural Sites, Organizations, Etc.

It is absolutely imperative to reserve these for your groups well in advance of the actual travel, even if there is no cost. Study abroad programs often take place at busy times in various destinations, and you could find your group denied entry. Excursions should directly relate to the subject matter of the course and/or the culture or history of the destination. It is also necessary to plan for transportation to and from excursions sites. The International Center can help you to do this on sites like Expedia and Viator, or your third-party provider can include them with the other arrangements. Please bear in mind that BHCC cannot directly pay an overseas vendor with a college credit card, and vetting overseas vendors for other forms of payments is a slow and arduous process, if it is possible at all.

Possible Local Resources in Your Study Abroad Destination

The following might be local resources at the destination that you can all upon during your planning:

- Local universities and think tanks
- Governmental and intergovernmental agencies, including EducationUSA
- Nongovernmental organizations
- Media outlets

- Museums
- Artistic exhibitions
- Local people
- Third-party program providers
- Public schools
- Local business owners/service providers (Chieffo & Spaeth, 2017)

Orientation and Class Meetings at Study Abroad Destination

An on-site orientation is required as soon as possible upon arrival. It should include general orientation to the lodging and surrounding area, meeting points, cultural reminders, and where student participants can find basics like a grocery store, pharmacy, etc.

There should be regular class meetings and touch points throughout the travel experience, at least one processing-type session each day.

Meals

Students will be responsible for the cost of meals not included in the program. How many group meals you include in the itinerary will largely depend on the variety and options at the destination and near lodging. We recommend trying to have breakfast included with the lodging wherever possible, and planning group meals while the group is on excursions and choices are limited. Your third-party provider may be able to negotiate a limited menu or buffet at restaurants near excursion and meetings sites to control the cost. Group meals should be paid in advance wherever possible, preferably through a third-party provider. Participants should not be given free license to order anything on the menu at a program-funded group meal. Under no circumstances will the college cover the cost of alcoholic beverages for anyone.

Free Time

Everyone needs a little down time, but on a study abroad experience, too much free time invites problems. During any free time in the itinerary, students must be required to use a buddy system whenever possible, and not wander off alone in uncharted territory. If they are in a small town or on a college campus, this could be relaxed, but the buddy system is best for safety anywhere. We recommend that free time be included in the itinerary for specified periods in limited geographic areas. For example, "You have 3 hours to explore this neighborhood and we will meet back at this point at 6pm to return to our lodging."

Itinerary

The itinerary you submit with your proposal should be as detailed as possible. It should include daily schedules for each day of the travel experience with meeting points and times, class meetings with times and locations, excursions, places and times for meals, modes of ground transportation, scheduled free-time, etcetera.

Pre-Departure Class Meetings and Orientations

Please propose dates, times, and activities for each of your pre-departure class meetings and orientations within your proposal so that they can be made available to students considering applying to your program during the marketing phase.

Timeline for 2024-2025 Study Abroad Cycle

October 15 – Program Proposals Deadline

October 15-October 25 – Committee members review proposals

October 26 – Selection Committee meet to select proposals to move forward

October 26 – November 2 – Develop program marketing materials, update web site, etcetera, set up rooms for information sessions

November 3 – Student application available

November 4 – Study Abroad Fair 11am-1pm – Chelsea Campus

November 4 – Study Abroad Fair 4pm-6pm – Chelsea Campus

November 5 – Study Abroad Fair 1pm – 2:30pm – Student Central

November 6 - Study Abroad Fair 1pm – 2:30pm – Student Central

November 12 – Study Abroad Fair 1pm-2:30pm – Student Central

November 12 – Study Abroad Fair 4pm-6pm – Chelsea Campus

November 13 – Study Abroad Fair 4pm-5:30pm – Student Central

November 18 – 1pm-3pm – Study Abroad Share & Fair Event – Meet participants from the 2024 programs!
Location TBD

December 19 – Student Study Abroad Application Deadline

January 13 – Student applications distributed by IC to program leaders

January 17 – Program leaders' deadline to choose student applicants to interview, provide information and available dates and times to IC staff

January 22-January 31 – Student interviews with program leaders and IC staff

January 28 – April 1 – Staff and Faculty Study Abroad Training every Tuesday 6pm-7pm

February 3-5 – Program leaders meet with IC staff to select participants

February 7 – IC staff notify accepted participants

February 21 – Student deposit due

March 14 – Remaining Student Payment Due

March 18-Students are registered for study abroad courses

March 17-Departure – Pre-Departure classes and meetings scheduled and held

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and Responsibilities of Program Leaders

Leading a group of students on a faculty-led study abroad program requires a commitment of time and energy. Study Abroad program leaders will be involved in most aspects of the program before, during and after the program, and are often on duty for extended hours while overseas. BHCC faculty and staff who wish to direct a faculty-led study abroad program will work with the IC to obtain approval from their department, and academic dean. Study Abroad program leaders who have proposed and coordinated short-term study abroad programs in previous years may propose continuation of the program.

Study Abroad directors are responsible for much of the communication with potential applicants and student group members regarding program cost; itinerary; travel and accommodation arrangements; site arrangements for faculty and participants; assignments; grading policies; program evaluation and student assessment; and final reports. Study Abroad program leaders are responsible for outlining and making clear the student's role on the program and expectations regarding academics and appropriate behavior.

Study Abroad program leaders, in addition to academic responsibilities, are responsible for:

- Maintaining daily contact with program participants while abroad
- Staying in regular contact with program applicants/participants prior to the start of the program and for following up after the end of the program
- Advising students of all changes
- Providing participants and IC with a detailed program itinerary that includes emergency contact addresses and telephone numbers
- Holding class meetings in the host destination and directing academic activities
- Accompanying the students on planned excursions and activities that are part of the course
- Contacting the IC as soon as possible in the event of any sort of emergency or serious violations of the student code of conduct
- Providing required financial documentation regarding the program to the International Center by published deadlines before and after the program takes place

Safety Abroad

It is crucial to stay informed and prepared, that way you can better manage your study abroad group safety and well-being.

Some information to consider for your program:

The nearest US embassy or consulate in your study abroad destination can assist you:

- Replace a Stolen Passport: Help with replacing your passport if it is lost or stolen.
- Contact Family and Friends: Facilitate communication with your family, friends, or employers.
- Medical Care: Assist in obtaining appropriate medical care.
- Emergency Assistance: Address immediate needs resulting from crime, including explaining the local criminal justice process and connecting you with relevant resources.
- Victim Support: Provide information about local and U.S. victim compensation programs and connect you with local lawyers who speak English.

What the US embassy or consulate in your study abroad destination cannot help you with:

- Investigating crimes
- Provide legal advice or represent you in court
- Serve as official interpreters or translators
- Pay legal, medical, or other fees for you

Enroll and require students to enroll in [The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) through the state department to:

- Receive important information from the Embassy about safety conditions in your destination country, helping you make informed decisions about your travel plans.
- Help the U.S. Embassy contact you in an emergency, whether natural disaster, civil unrest, or family emergency.
- Help family and friends get in touch with you in an emergency.

Study Abroad program leaders are responsible for complying with government regulations regarding travel, study, and research in the host country. For example, if approval is required for a site visit, it is the program leaders' responsibility to obtain the approval.

BHCC International Center and the College reserve the right to alter or cancel a program as may be deemed necessary.

Role and Responsibilities of International Center

One of the functions of the International Center is to coordinate and assist in administering faculty- led study abroad programs offered in BHCC. The IC will assist as needed with logistics and budget for accepted programs. BHCC International Center will provide the following services:

- Provide guidelines on how to develop a program
- Supply all required policy/procedures for the establishment of the program, including program applications
- Create promotional materials, if needed, and schedule study abroad fairs for program leaders to attend to promote their programs
- Handle all monetary transactions that take place in the United States, including collection and disbursement of funds, any transactions that must be made in the program destination will be handled by leaders with receipts to be returned to the International Center ***within 5 business days of return***
- Prepare and process program leaders' expenses and reimbursements
- Assist with international travel arrangements for program participants where appropriate, as well as housing arrangements, as needed
- Schedule and present general pre-departure orientation sessions for all student participants and faculty/staff leaders
- Purchase international health insurance and provide documentation to all student, faculty, and staff group members

Role and Responsibilities of Student Participants

In faculty-led study abroad programs, students have several key responsibilities to ensure a successful and productive experience.

- Review Program Details: Carefully read and understand the program itinerary, requirements, and guidelines provided by the faculty and/or program leaders.
- Complete Documentation: Submit all required forms, applications, and necessary documentation, such as passports, visas, and health records, before the deadlines.
- Attend Orientations: Participate in pre-departure orientations and informational sessions to prepare for the cultural, academic, and logistical aspects of the program.
- Secure and Carry all Required Documents (passport, visa, debit card, etc.)
- Follow Itinerary: Adhere to the program schedule and participate in all planned academic and cultural activities.
- Abide by BHCC's Code of Conduct at home and abroad.
- Respect Local Laws and Customs: Abide by local laws and cultural norms to ensure respectful and lawful behavior while abroad.
- Understand and Follow Safety Guidelines: Follow safety protocols and emergency procedures as outlined by the program.
- Participate Actively: Engage actively in classes, fieldwork, and any academic activities included in the program.
- Complete Assignments: Meet all academic requirements, including completing assignments, projects, and exams on time.
- Stay in Touch: Maintain regular communication with program faculty and staff, especially if there are any issues or concerns.
- Inform of Changes: Notify program leaders and/or faculty of any changes in personal circumstances, such as health issues or travel plans.
- Pay Fees: Ensure that all program fees and related costs are paid according to the published schedule.
- Manage Health Needs: Take care of personal health, including obtaining any required vaccinations, managing medications, and seeking medical attention if necessary.
- Work Collaboratively: Foster a positive group dynamic by working collaboratively with fellow students and respecting different perspectives.
- Show Respect: Be respectful towards local cultures, people, and customs, and act as a positive representative of your home institution.
- Complete Evaluations: Participate in program evaluations or surveys to provide feedback on your experience.
- Reflect and Share: Reflect on your experiences and share insights with peers, faculty, and future students interested in similar programs.
- It is required that you enroll in the U.S. State Department's [Safe Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) to receive advisories and alerts about your destination. As relevant, please also see this State Department page on [U.S. students abroad](#), [women travelers abroad](#), [LGBT travelers abroad](#), and [travelers with disabilities](#).

By fulfilling these responsibilities, students contribute to the smooth operation of the program and maximize the benefits of their study abroad experience.

Health & Safety Guidelines for Students and Program Leaders

The health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff abroad are our top priorities. Although we cannot guarantee absolute safety, we provide essential resources and tools to help students and their families stay informed. Ultimately, each individual is responsible for their own health and safety.

Preparation and awareness are crucial for a healthy and safe experience abroad. While unforeseen events can happen anywhere in the world, staying informed about personal health, current conditions—such as weather, global health trends, local specifics, and political factors—will contribute to a successful and secure experience overseas.

Schedule a Routine Checkup

Before traveling abroad, schedule a physical and dental checkup and encourage your students to do the same. These routine appointments are a great way to ensure your health is in good shape before you leave. If you take prescription medications, ask your doctor for a detailed explanation of your medications and their generic names, especially if you may need to refill them overseas. Note that mailing medications internationally is not allowed.

Follow similar procedures for any ongoing treatments. If you anticipate needing medical care abroad, bring comprehensive documentation about your condition, including copies of your prescriptions. It may also be helpful to have a letter from your physician or pharmacist detailing your condition, medications, their dosages, and their generic names.

While many countries do not require proof of immunizations, it is wise to consider getting certain vaccinations depending on your destination. For information on recommended or required immunizations, visit the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) website for travelers](#). You can find recommended vaccinations for all destinations [here](#). [CVS](#) offers several vaccines at no cost with insurance, and [PassportHealth](#) has additional travel vaccines available. Check with your doctor and insurance company to determine the most affordable option for the vaccines you need.

Food

You will likely encounter different foods in your host country compared to what you're accustomed to at home. To ease the transition, consider incorporating some familiar foods into your diet. Look for western-style supermarkets or local stores where you can purchase foods similar to those you eat at home. Many major cities and tourist areas have restaurants offering familiar dishes. Gradually adapting to local cuisine can help with both social and nutritional adjustments.

Water

Before traveling, check whether the tap water in your destination is safe to drink. In many countries, it is. If the local tap water is not potable, stick to bottled water. When dining out, choose bottled water if tap water is unsafe. For hiking or traveling in remote areas where bottled water might not be available, bring a high-quality water filter or iodine tablets to purify water.

Alcohol Consumption

It is recommended that you refrain from alcohol consumption while on a study abroad program. Drinking norms may differ from those in the United States, with variations in the minimum drinking age and cultural practices related to alcohol consumption. Be aware of and respect these norms, and monitor your own behavior to ensure it aligns with local expectations.

AIDS and Other Sexually Transmitted Diseases

HIV, which causes AIDS, is a significant health issue in some countries. Practice the same precautions to avoid HIV as you would at home. Use condoms if you are sexually active, and consider bringing your own supply, as the quality of condoms may vary internationally. Additionally, other sexually transmitted diseases, such as syphilis and herpes, are prevalent worldwide. Take necessary precautions to protect yourself from these infections.

Cultural Sensitivity & Respect

As you embark on your journey abroad, remember that you may be seen as a representative of the United States. People might connect you with various aspects of American culture, including foreign policy and pop culture. While it's natural to be aware of potential anti-American sentiment, many students find that they encounter much more friendliness and curiosity than they expect.

It's essential to recognize that values accepted in the U.S. may differ significantly from those in your host country. Actions considered racist or sexist in the U.S. might be normalized elsewhere. While tolerance is crucial, it's also important to be prepared to speak up if you encounter behavior that feels deeply wrong or dangerous.

If Something Happens to You While Abroad

If you encounter a crime overseas:

- Contact the local police to report the incident and get immediate help. Request a copy of the police report.
- Contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate
- To contact the Department of State in the U.S. call 1-888-407-4747 (from the U.S. or Canada) or (202) 501-4444 (from overseas)."
- Visit: <https://travel.state.gov/content/studentsabroad/en/whileabroad.html> for more information.

BHCC Student Code of Conduct Abroad

Student participants in study abroad programs, as well as faculty and staff, are subject to BHCC's code of conduct. In the event of a violation of the code, the International Center should be contacted first, with documentation provided by e-mail, which will then be made available to the Dean of Students' office. The full text of the Code of Conduct is available at <https://www.bhcc.edu/handbook/behaviorpolicies/#ma-code-of-conduct>.

Program Marketing & Student Application Process

Marketing specific programs is primarily the responsibility of the Program Leaders, with ancillary support from the International Center. Some study abroad destinations or programs will require more promotion than others to achieve a sufficient pool of applicants. For example, if your program is to take place in a destination that is not well known in American media, it is likely that it will be necessary for you to spend more time and effort on marketing than a program in a better-known destination.

Print and Web Materials: Program leaders may create their own marketing materials to be approved by the International Center, or IC staff can help to create the materials with information provided by program faculty/staff. The International Center staff will facilitate printing of poster and flyers and distribute them throughout the Charlestown and Chelsea campuses. The International Center will also add program information to the study abroad web site.

Information Sessions: Upon approval, program leaders will be required to schedule a minimum of 2 information sessions to promote their program, at least 1 in person and 1 via webex. The International Center can help to arrange rooms and publicize the sessions.

Study Abroad Fairs: The International Center has scheduled several study abroad fairs on the Charlestown and Chelsea campuses and will arrange for tables and poster easels. If you need additional equipment (i.e. a television) please contact Brisna Rodas at least one week prior to the scheduled fair and we will do our best to accommodate you. Program leaders are strongly encouraged to have at least one leader at every study abroad fair to speak with students. The list of scheduled fairs will be included in the published timeline for the academic year in which your program will take place.

Student Application Process and Requirements: Students will complete an application to submit to the International Center along with a copy of their passport identification page (if they have a passport), their US health insurance card, and 2 references. The college's minimum G.P.A. to participate in study abroad is 2.0. Immediately after the application deadline the International Center will determine whether the pool of applications is viable to continue (a sufficient number of students who have submitted complete applications and meet minimum requirements). Provided the program can move forward, the International Center will work with program leaders to set up student interviews with standard questions to be conducted via WebEx. The student selection committee for each program will consist of one or both program leaders, an International Center staff member, and any other designees. Interviews will be recorded and committee members will be asked to complete an electronic survey for each interview. When all interviews have been completed, the International Center will compile the feedback and provide it to the Program Leaders.

Program Finances & Approvals

As mentioned earlier, program finances are governed by college and state policies which must be adhered to. A few notes to keep in mind:

- Travel Request Forms must be submitted and approved by all approvers, including the Provost and President's offices before flights can be purchased or payment for other reservations can be made.
- The International Center will submit travel request forms for student participants, while program leaders are responsible for submitting their own travel request forms.
- MOUs and/or contracts are required for some vendors, including tour operators and other educational institutions. Program leaders are required to complete the contract forms as requested and return them to the International Center. Guidelines and instructions are included with the forms and they will be reviewed by Administration and Finance and signed by their representative. Program Leaders may not enter into contracts without approval
- Foreign providers who do not have offices in the United States cannot be paid with a college credit card. The most expedient way to have these payment made is to go through a local travel agent for an additional fee, which should be accounted for when developing a budget.
- If costs rise significantly between the time of proposal, acceptance, and implementation for any reason, the program may be canceled.