



International Study Abroad Advisory Committee (ISAAC)
Manual

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Letter from the Chair of ISAAC

To the students, faculty, & staff of Saint Leo University,

In September of 2010 the International Study Abroad Advisory Committee (ISAAC) was formed by Dr. Rhondda Waddell with the purpose of increasing the quality, number, and overall student participation of international service-learning trips at Saint Leo University. This handbook is a product of the work of the International Study Abroad Advisory Committee (ISAAC) in its continuing effort to bring forth the best practices and policies that will foster active faculty, staff and student participation in planning and attending service-learning trips.

The following guidelines have been established by the International Study Abroad Advisory Committee (ISAAC) to aid the development of short-term international study abroad trip opportunities. The guidelines remain open and flexible to the possibility of trips developing during all times of the year even when classes are not in session.

These guidelines are to be followed by all faculty, staff, and student trip participants. If a case arises where a general policy does not fit a specific situation or a situation requires that a policy be altered, it should be brought to the attention of the International Study Abroad Advisory Committee. The Committee will review the situation at hand and make recommendations that can be further discussed within the department's leaders.

All in all, we hope that this handbook becomes a useful tool for faculty, staff and student participants. It should be kept updated and current to address the new challenges of operating an International Study Abroad program. In future years, when challenges arise, always keep in mind the Saint Leo Core Values and the students that the ISAAC program is designed to empower. Make decisions that are aligned with the Saint Leo Core Values and in the best interest of the students and surrounding communities being visited.

Sincerely,

Rhondda Waddell, PhD, LCSW
Chair

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Section I. Approved Policies and Guidelines

A. Mission Statement

The mission of the International Study Abroad Advisory Committee (ISAAC) Program is to empower members of the Saint Leo University community to engage in study abroad service-learning trips. These trips are designed to promote living our Benedictine core values of community, respect, integrity, personal development, excellence and responsible stewardship through service to those in need.

B. Committee Structure

1. The International Study Abroad Advisory Committee is a committee of the President of Saint Leo University. Originally formed in September of 2010, the International Study Abroad Advisory Committee was entrusted by Dr. Maribeth Durst with the task of increasing overall participation in international study abroad trips and to maximize the results of these trips. The committee approached this task by working to increase involvement in the planning and organizing of trips.
2. Members of the Committee are to be appointed by the Director of the Center for Values, Service and Leadership of Saint Leo University to fit the following positions (total 10):
 - a. 1 Representative of the Center for Values, Service, and Leadership (to serve as chair of the committee)
 - b. 6 (total of 6) faculty from the general population in addition to the specific positions listed below
 - c. 1 Representative of Training
 - d. 1 Representative of Student Involvement Staff
 - e. 1 Representative of Risk Management
 - f. 2 Representatives of University Communications
 - g. 1 Representative of the S.E.R.V.E. program
 - h. 1 Representative of University Development
 - i. 1 Representative of Career Services

3. All members of the committee will be appointed for a 2 year term. At the end of the term members positions will be open for applicants to include existing members.

C. Getting Started - Planning your Study Abroad Trip

1. Ways to Study Abroad.

A. Understanding the way study abroad programs are structured is crucial in making the right program choice that will fit your needs.

B. SLU Short term study abroad trips (Faculty-led):

- i. Groups of SLU students travel together with a Faculty or staff member serving as the trip advisor.
- ii. Programs vary in length from 10 days to 3 weeks.
- iii. Students will complete training prior to departure and will receive study abroad credit as part of their class.

C. SLU Long term study abroad trips:

- i. Long term study abroad opportunities are offered through the Multicultural and International Services office. Please contact it for further details.

D. SLU International Internships and Research

- i. Students have multiple options for pursuing ways to study abroad in internships or research projects. Please contact your Academic department for options.

2. When should you start planning to study abroad? (Timeline)

A. **NOW!** It's never too early to start planning. Ideally a year in advance of your departure allows sufficient time for thorough planning and preparation.

Example Timeline:

Professor decides to offer a study abroad trip, develops its basic content and itinerary, with the approval from the chair and dean of the department.

- 12 Months before planned trip

Professor develops basic content and itinerary with approval of department chair and dean of school

Professor promotes the course of study across campus and to any other markets (alumni, parents, etc.) and contacts the Center for Values, Service and Leadership to give details of the approved trip so it can be added to the website.

Student/participant creates profile on the Study Abroad website:

<http://saintleo.abroadoffice.net/index.html>

- 8-10 months before planned trip

With dean's approval each student/participant is notified of acceptance or placement on waitlist

Professor builds the course with the Registrar's Office (1-2 weeks prior to pre-registration)

Professor/Advisor registers student for credit during pre-registration period or add/drop

- 6-8 months before planned trip

Sign contracts for all arrangements (flights, hotels, tours, etc.) whether contracted individually, partially or wholly through a reputable tour company

Establish a deadline for students/participants to make deposits holding spaces for the trip

Remind students/participants of the tour company's policy regarding cancellation if there is non-payment

Establish intermediate and/or final payment deadline date (s) to confirm students/participants spaces for the trip

Students/participants must get passports at least 6 months before the trip

- 3-6 months before planned trip
 - Instructor teaches the pre-trip part of the course
 - Pre-trip meetings for all /students/participants (including those not registered in course)

- About 3 months before the planned trip

Cancellation date is set per SLU requirements, provide any refund or obtain replacement(s) from waitlist

Obtain visas (individual or group) for necessary countries depending upon the nationalities of students/participants

- For your convenience, please see the Student International Travel Checklist

3. Where can you get more information about opportunities to study abroad?

A. Contact the International Study Abroad Advisory Committee (ISAAC) where you will learn about studying abroad including how to select a program that is the best fit for you, along with other practical information about finances, the documentation process, and other resources available to you. Given the variety of options in which you can choose and all the things you will need to consider, contacting ISAAC will help you narrow your choices and provide you with an opportunity to ask questions. Contact the Director for the Center for Values, Service and Leadership for further details and see <http://saintleo.abroadoffice.net/index.html> for more information on study abroad options.

4. What options will exist for studying abroad on the semester calendar?

A. Fall Semester (late August through mid-December) includes winter break for short term programs.

B. Spring Semester (early January through early May) includes spring break for short-term programs.

C. Summer Semester (early May through Early August) includes all summer months for both short-term and long-term study abroad options.

5. Will my financial aid package be able to be utilized when I participate in a study abroad program?

A. Varies. While the exact amount varies per study abroad trip and depends on each student's individual aid package and whether or not aid is received, students will be able to use financial aid (Federal, State and University monies) for their

program if they receive it. Federal Work Study cannot be applied to any study abroad experience.

D. Trip Requirements

1. The International Study Abroad Advisory Committee has the responsibility to register the required information on the planned study abroad trips. The ISSAC may make recommendations to the faculty and their departments as needed to ensure completion of all registered study abroad trip information.
2. A written informational document (Appendix A) along with proposed Budget (Appendix B) will be completed and submitted to the International Study Abroad Advisory Committee for documentation purposes.
 - a. The document must include:
 - i. Up-to-date contact information.
 - ii. Passport number (If you have applied for a passport and have not yet received it or if you have not yet applied for a passport, you may still complete the documentation form. Please be advised that a passport is required to participate in any study abroad program.)
 - iii. Name and contact information of individuals; to be contacted in case of an emergency.
 - iv. Trip information to include: Overseas destination and targeted population, Departure and returning dates, Host institution/organization (if applicable), In-country contact information (email and/or cell), Department information, Department contact person, explanation of trip activities (Trip Itinerary).
 - b. ISAAC related trips are permitted to occur during any seasonal break during the academic calendar. They may not interfere with class schedules. These trips are not allowed to leave earlier than the last scheduled class/exam time prior to that vacation. The trips are required to return at least one full day prior to classes resuming.
 - c. For every 7 student trip participants there must be 1 faculty/staff advisor

E. Financial Policies

1. Each faculty/staff member will be responsible for arranging financial payments through their departments or other Saint Leo funding sources prior to the study abroad trip.
2. Each trip participant will be required to pay in full for all travel expenses incurred on their study abroad trip.
3. Each participant is required to sign a Financial Obligation Agreement (Appendix C) thus acknowledging s/he understands his/her financial responsibilities to the trips. Failure to sign this agreement may result in the participant being prohibited from participating on the trip.
4. Students with an outstanding balance four weeks prior to the trip departure date will be notified by the Trip Advisor to render a payment for the remaining balance by two weeks prior to departure.
 - a. The trip advisor maintains the right to refuse a student the right to participate in the study abroad trip if the balance is not paid.
 - b. The trip advisor holds the right to report students with outstanding balances to Saint Leo University's Accounts Receivable department for collection.
 - c. If a check does not clear, the participant will be responsible for the full amount of the check as well as any fees that the University incurs as a result.
 - d. If a participant chooses not to participate on a trip or is prohibited from participating s/he is still responsible for any expenditures associated with their participation, such as airline tickets that cannot be refunded or transferred.
5. Trip advisors are given the authority to negotiate with vendors for lodging, meals and transportation. The trip advisor must also secure all financial arrangements required to facilitate the study abroad trip in full detail.
 - a. Request for reimbursement is to be submitted within thirty days of the issue of the receipt. A Travel Reimbursement Form (Appendix D) must be completed. For a list of acceptable and unacceptable items which can be purchased please see the University's Travel Reimbursement Policy located in the University's Policy and Procedures Manual.
 - b. To take out a cash advance, the faculty/staff advisor should submit an email to their department requesting a cash advance and the amount asked for. This

amount is not to exceed \$1000.00 unless approved by the Vice President of Business Affairs.

6. Budgets for the study abroad trips are to be submitted with trip documentation form **one year prior to travel**. At this time the budget should be as complete as possible.
 - a. Upon return from a trip, the trip advisor is may choose to submit a reconciled budget. A reconciled budget reflects the true costs that were associated with the trip. For example, the original budget was for \$300.00 in gas, but the trip really spent \$375.00 in gas, then the budget should be updated to incorporate the additional \$75.00 expense.

Appendix A: Trip Documentation Form

International Study Abroad Trip Documentation Form

Advisor Information

Faculty/Staff Advisor: _____

Phone number: _____

Email Address: _____

Do you have a passport? _____

Program Information

Location for trip: _____

Departure and return dates for trip: _____

Program provider/Host institute contact person: _____

Program provider/Host institute website: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Email: _____

Academic program/class associated with this trip: _____

What population will your students be working with on this trip?

What is the focus of the trip? Please explain what the students will be engaging in while on this trip.

Appendix B: Budget Form

Appendix C: Financial Obligation Agreement

Appendix D: Travel Reimbursement Form

Appendix E: Other Required Forms