

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SPONSORS FOR OFF-CAMPUS PROGRAMS

(Faculty Directors and Appropriate College Officials)

1. Conduct periodic assessments of health and safety conditions for the program, and develop and maintain emergency preparedness processes and a crisis response plan. The former could include requests for bulletins on conditions at program sites from the State Department and the Centers for Disease Control.
2. Conduct appropriate inquiry regarding the potential health and safety risks of the local environment of the program, including program-sponsored accommodation, events, excursions and other activities, on an ongoing basis and provide information and assistance to participants and their parents/ guardians/ families as needed. On arrival at the program location, the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate could be consulted regarding: 1) local health and safety conditions in the areas of program activities and home stays, and 2) doctors and hospitals where adequate medical care can be received by program participants.
3. Provide basic health and safety information for prospective participants so that they and their parents/guardians/families can make informed decisions concerning preparation, participation and behavior while on the program. For example, note that prescription medications readily available in the U.S. may not be obtainable outside the U.S., and that access to English-speaking health care providers may be limited. If the program director has questions, staff at the College Health Service may be consulted. Also, inform participants that they may have to pay cash for medical expenses while on the program, and then submit the bills to their insurance company for reimbursement.
4. Provide orientation to participants prior to the program and on site, which includes information on safety, health, legal, environmental, political, cultural, and religious conditions in the host country, dealing with health and safety issues, potential health and safety risks, and appropriate emergency response measures. On-campus orientations should include some mechanism for feedback from prior participants, and the information presented should be made available to students that are away on a leave term or unable to attend.
5. Consider, to the extent possible, health and safety issues in evaluating the appropriateness of an individual's participation in a study abroad program. Students may have medical problems that are difficult to control or treat in off-campus locations, which could interfere with the students' ability to fully participate in off-campus programs, or which could prove troublesome for the faculty director or the other students in the program. Faculty directors may become aware of such medical problems from student responses on Confidential Health Forms, or they may suspect them from knowledge of the students. In either case, faculty directors should feel free to consult with staff at the College Health Services, who may then discuss the issues with the students and consider with them potential problems of participation in the programs.

Our programs rely on students to self-report medical/psychological conditions that may impair participation in programs. The College Health Services will not be asked to screen the medical records of students accepted into off-campus programs for the purpose of identifying potential problems.

First, there is a very important privacy issue, which would prevent the College Health Services from releasing confidential information in students' medical records to program directors.

Second, since students may have medical or psychological conditions not treated at the College Health Services, the College Health Services may be unaware of, or not completely informed about, such conditions.

Third, even if medical records were to be screened, there would be an issue in judging if conditions were sufficiently serious to warrant the release of information and the possible prejudicial treatment of students with such conditions. If students should have health problems abroad, program directors may consult with the College Health Services, which will use its resources in Hanover to help resolve the problems.

6. Either provide appropriate health and travel accident (emergency evacuation, repatriation) insurance to participants, or provide information about how to obtain appropriate coverage. Require participants to show evidence of appropriate coverage. Note that students enrolled in the Dartmouth Student Group Health Plan (DSGHP) are covered, and that students may purchase DSGHP by the term.

7. Communicate applicable codes of conduct and the consequences of noncompliance to participants. Take appropriate action when aware that participants are in violation.

8. In cases of serious health problems, injury, or other significant health/safety/disciplinary circumstances, contact the Dean of the College.