Roles and Responsibilities: Course Leader

The efforts of the Course Leader are the single largest determining factor in the success or failure of a study abroad program. Though leading a group of students in this type of endeavor is indeed rewarding, it is also a commitment of time and energy. A ideal Course Leader must enjoy working with students and possess strong administrative skills. S/he must be comfortable in providing basic student counseling and in taking disciplinary action, if necessary. In addition the Course Leader should be familiar with the host country and its culture, and have a basic understanding of the native language. Course Leaders must wear many hats in order to maintain involvement in most aspects of the program. Please review the succeeding sections that serve to clarify each role (and its relative responsibilities) the Course Leader holds: Developer, Recruiter, Administrative and Financial Manager, Institutional Representative, Advisor/Facilitator, and Crisis Manager.

Program Developer

As a Program Developer, the Course Leader addresses the academic side of programming, integrating site and curriculum as well as logistics and financial planning. The following are the responsibilities associated with this role:

- Seek approval of the program and course(s) by his/her respective department chair and college dean. In some cases additional approvals may be needed (i.e. for new Capstone courses);
- For new programs, complete the Program Proposal Application and submit it to the SAC by September 1*;
- Be responsible for all curricular matters related to the short-term program;
- Arrange regular pre-departure sessions (min. of 4) during the semester, as well as a debriefing meeting upon program’s return;
- Administer required evaluation and assessment instruments provided by the SAC to students

*Course Leaders who have proposed and coordinated a program in previous years may propose continuation of their program by completing and submitting a renewal form by May 1 of the year prior.

Program Recruiter

Course Leader involvement in recruiting is vital to the success of the program. High enrollment not only makes the program financially feasible for the SAC, it also lowers the cost for students and allows for more opportunity for academic collaboration. For this reason, Course Leaders must take an active role in the recruitment and retention of students as he/she is the primary guide to the new experience. Most students need an opportunity to interact with the person who will lead them in this venture before making the decision to apply. The following will aid Course Leaders in succeeding at recruiting and retaining interested students.

Course Leaders should:

- Meet or communicate regularly with the SAC Advisor for Short-Term Programs to create a marketing plan, including giving information sessions and classroom presentations and distributing publications;
- Stay in regular contact with program applicants/participants prior to the start of the program;
- Provide participants with program cost and detailed program itinerary that includes housing, contact addresses and telephone numbers, if necessary;
- Advise students of all changes in previously agreed upon travel, accommodations, or other course-related arrangements

It is reported that Course Leaders and Program Assistants who keep in contact with students prior to departure have better retention rates, a more timely return of student paperwork and less behavioral incidents during the program. For this reason the SAC encourages Course Leaders and Program Assistants to communicate with students via the group list-serv and Facebook page, sending a message to students listed on the enrollment update to serve as a personal introduction and reminder of timely program-specific information. See Page 24 for more information.

Administrative & Financial Manager

Course Leaders play a key role in carrying out administrative and financial duties in regards to program logistics. The following should guide Course Leaders on their responsibilities in these areas. They must:

- With the SAC, facilitate course creation in the Student Information System;
- Complete and submit required travel paperwork (Travel Authorization Form, Procurement Card Application, etc.) See Page 20 for more information;
- Comply with government, institutional, and department-
tal regulations regarding travel, study, and research in the host country. For example, if the host country is placed on the U.S. Travel Warning list, temporary suspension of the program may be necessary;

- Keep track of all program expenses made on-site and submit them to the SAC Program Coordinator upon return (See Page 22-23 for more information)

**Advisor/Facilitator**

Once abroad and upon return filling the role of Advisor/Facilitator becomes crucial to the success of the program. Whether or not culture is an academic focus of the program, Course Leaders are the intercultural facilitator, acting as the liaison between the home and host cultures. To aid in preventing issues before they become problems, Course Leaders should:

- Establish a leadership role and positive group dynamics from the start of pre-departure classes;
- Coordinate with SAC staff to ensure participation in the mandatory SAC pre-departure orientation by all students in the program;
- Create and conduct a comprehensive program-specific pre-departure sessions for student participants, with the support of the SAC staff;
- Clarify for the students their role on the program and expectations regarding academics and appropriate behavior as well as consequences;
- Maintain daily contact with program participants while abroad and upon return, providing assistance when needed and intervening when appropriate;
- Resolve any conflicts that may arise between program participants and update SAC on a regular basis (See Page 26 for more information)
- Communicate to student participants about assignments, grading policies, program evaluation and student assessment, and final reports

**Crisis Manager**

Ensuring the safety of all participants is top priority for the SAC. Though the SAC strives to lessen the chance of crises once groups are abroad, some crises cannot be prevented. At that point the institution and the students rely heavily on the Course Leader for strength, levelheadedness, direction, communication, and good judgment. To prepare for an emergency, the Course Leader must:

- Be familiar with & keep a copy of the emergency plan (See Page 29);
- Acquire an international cellular telephone, with assistance from the SAC, and provide the SAC and the students with contact information, but also have knowledge of other means of communication (fax, email) at each program location;
- Establish and maintain contact with U.S. authorities overseas near program location;
- Be familiar with various kinds of local transportation;
- Locate and know how to get to international airports and medical facilities in the area;
- Keep Program Folder of student information provided by the SAC at all times;
- Speak to students on matters of risk management before and during the program;
- Be available to students;
- Determine assembly points;
- Be aware of student whereabouts.

For more information on what to do in the event of an emergency, please see the Health and Safety section of the handbook.

**Institutional Representative**

Before, during and after the abroad experience, the Course-Leader acts as a representative for the University of Northern Iowa and the UNI Study Abroad Center. Specifically, Course Leaders should expect to:

- Be familiar with institutional policies, including the 3.14 International Study Programs Policy, UNI Student Conduct Code and the Incident Report Form;
- Attend mandatory Course Leader training, held by the SAC in the spring;
- Participate in all online training facilitated by the SAC;
- Follow all requests of the SAC set-forth in the Program Proposal Application and Course Leader Memorandum;
- Maintain open communication with the SAC.
Roles and Responsibilities: Study Abroad Center

The UNI Study Abroad Center reserves the right to alter or cancel a program as may be deemed necessary.

As part of its mission, the SAC strived in all things to support Course Leaders and students in pursuing international opportunities. Please review the following section that details the specific roles the SAC has (Program Developer Assistant, Program Recruiter, Administrative & Financial Manager and Crisis Manager) and the subsequent responsibilities of each of them.

Program Developer Assistant

From start to finish, the SAC will work to support Course Leaders in developing a successful program abroad. Specifically, the SAC will:

• Provide the Handbook to all Course Leaders;
• Supply all required forms and applications for the establishment of the program;
• Meet with Course Leaders on a regular basis to discuss program logistics and development;
• Provide regular updates through the Instructor-Led Program Newsletter;
• Conduct comprehensive online and in-person training for all Course Leaders;
• Select Student Program Assistants and provide training;
• Update Course Leaders on enrollment numbers;
• Assist with pre-departure sessions;
• Organize and deliver the mandatory online and in-person pre-departure orientations for all program participants, including the Global Perspectives Inventory (GPI);
• Conduct post-program evaluations and GPI and provide report to Course Leader(s) and UNI Administration.

Program Recruiter

Much of the work that the SAC does in relation to short-term instructor-led programs involves the recruitment and retention of students. Course Leaders can count on the SAC to:

• Edit and produce university-wide publications, including flyers, and brochures;
• Assist with publicity and promotion of the short-term Study Abroad program online;
• Conduct general information sessions and assist Course Leaders with program-specific presentations/advising;
• Provide scholarship support to eligible UNI students;
• Prepare estimated budget sheet for students.

Administrative & Financial Manager

Assisting Course Leaders with the following components of the process allows for consistency both in the individual program and in all UNI Short-Term Instructor-Led Programs abroad. The SAC will:

• Assist students in the application process and facilitate a Study Abroad 101 session for applicants;
• Handle all student documentation and monetary transactions, including collection and disbursement of funds;
• Issue International Student Identity Cards (ISIC);
• Take passport and ID photos;
• Facilitate student course registration;
• Assist Course Leader in acquiring and using a university procurement card;
• Prepare and facilitate processing of Course Leader travel authorizations, PAFs, and travel reimbursements;
• Assist with international travel arrangements;
• Facilitate necessary immigration paperwork for program participants, as needed;
• Make program-related bookings and payments to international service providers;
• Manage the program budget, determine the final cost of the program and control student billing;
• Enroll all students in the appropriate course(s).

Crisis Manager

As per the 3.14 International Study Programs Policy, the SAC acts as the central clearinghouse for records of all UNI students traveling abroad. This includes, but is not limited to:

• General student information;
• Emergency contact information;
• Legal waivers signed by students;
• Student health insurance verification;
• Student special medical needs information;
• Program & travel itineraries and housing;
• Student passport copies
• ISIC records

Beyond holding these records, the SAC does the following to prepare for emergency and reduce risk:
• Maintain constant alertness and communication while programs are on site;
• Create a comprehensive Program Folder containing student documentation, booking confirmations/invoices, and contact information for U.S. Consulates abroad;
• Disseminate emergency information to students at pre-departure orientations;
• Prepare & disseminate emergency plan & contact information to students & Course Leaders;
• Subscribe all program participants to the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP);

For more information on what to do in the event of an emergency, please see Health & Safety.

Roles and Responsibilities: Program Assistant

In most cases the SAC will assign each program a Program Assistant - a mature UNI undergraduate or graduate student - who will help the Course Leader with specific participant and program matters. In return for their efforts, the SAC will award them a scholarship covering the cost of program airfare, tuition, cultural activities and housing. Please review the following sections to better understand the roles and responsibilities of the Program Assistant.

Program Recruiter

Though the majority of program recruitment is done by the Course Leader and SAC Staff, the Program Assistant agrees to do the following:
• Assist the SAC and Course Leader by attending/giving information sessions, classroom presentations, etc.;
• Aid Course Leader in contacting students regarding meetings, deadlines, etc.

Peer Advisor/Facilitator

Student Program Assistants will spend a lot of time interacting with prospective and current student participants. In absence of the professor, the Student Program Assistant is sometimes the only person the students have to look to for direction. With that in mind, assistants are expected to:
• Attend all scheduled pre-departure meetings and assist the Course Leader;
• Prepare student participants for going abroad (facilitation of group-building and culture shock training, etc.)
• Travel with program to and from the international location;
• Assist Course Leader once abroad with coordinating travel, making general announcements to students when needed, etc.;
• Help resolve conflicts that arise between participants;
• Immediately notify the Course Leader and the SAC when an emergency event arises

Administrative Assistant

The amount of administrative assistance required from the Program Assistant depends on the nature of each program. This will be decided once the program has been approved. In general, Program Assistants will be expected to:
• Take notes at all pre-departure meetings and send them to participants and Course Leader;
• Conduct program-related research and make some provisional bookings based on program’s itinerary;
• Help coordinate student housing and meals, travel and cultural activities, and ticket/receipt collection;
• Assist Course Leader in following UNI Office of Business Operation procedures while abroad;
• Assist Course Leader in setting-up debriefing meeting after program has returned;
• Encourage student participants to complete the online evaluation and GPI

Other Responsibilities

• Attend training sessions with SAC throughout the year;
• Be responsible for the cost of the application process and required documentation (e.g., ISIC card, health insurance, SAC application fee) and all meals;
• Enroll for the mandatory Practicum in Study Abroad course and complete course assignments (including a final program summary paper – min. 5 pages long)

Course Leaders can nominate a past participant or other qualified student they feel would excel at this position.
Roles and Responsibilities: Student

Course Leaders and students on UNI Short-term Study Abroad programs are regarded as ambassadors of good will, as well as representatives of the University of Northern Iowa, the State of Iowa, and the United States of America. In order to encourage this further, all students are required to sign a copy of “Condition of Participation Statement” as a part of the UNI Study Abroad Online Registry, which outlines standards of behavior expected to be followed by student participants. Please review the following in order to get a better picture of what can be expected of them.

Student

Though they have added responsibilities to complete in order to study abroad through UNI, participants are first and foremost, students. They are expected to:

• Abide by the UNI Student Conduct Code;
• Attend all pre-departure meetings;
• Complete all required readings and assignments before and during program;
• Become familiar with the culture(s) in which the study abroad program takes place;
• Participate in all scheduled program events and lectures;
• Comply with all appropriate requests and directives of the Course Leader(s);
• Inform Course Leaders of whereabouts while abroad;
• Complete all required written work by the specified deadline;
• Attend the debriefing meeting upon return

Study Abroad Participant

The application process for students planning to travel on a UNI short-term instructor-led program is not difficult but involves many pieces. Once a student decides to travel on one of these programs, they must:

• Complete and submit all pieces of UNI Study Abroad Registration. See Page 23 for more information;
• Pay for all tuition, fees, and Foreign Travel related to study abroad through UNI;
• Provide accurate emergency contact information to the SAC;
• Disclose pertinent health & safety information in the online Study Abroad application;
• Purchase the International Student Identity Card (ISIC) that provides coverage for emergency medical evacuation and repatriation;
• Attend the SAC mandatory in-person pre-departure orientation session, as well as complete the online orientation;
• Be familiar with the emergency action plan and obey Course Leader’s instructions in case of emergency;
• Provide pertinent program information to emergency contacts prior to departure;
• Arrange and pay for transportation to and from respective departure airport;
• Assume responsibility for own health and safety while abroad;
• Obey all laws and regulations of the host country(ies) and host institution(s);
• Respect culture of host country;
• Complete GPI before and after the trip;
• Complete the online Program Evaluation