



STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM
FACULTY HANDBOOK
2025-2028

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Study Abroad Program Overview

The Study Abroad Program is designed to broaden academic learning while equipping students with meaningful and impactful international experiences. The Study Abroad Program is overseen by the Study Abroad Committee Chair and the committee members, who support faculty and assists with the Travel Seminar course and program's administrative responsibilities. A Travel Seminar course is academic credit bearing course led by faculty that combines learning with a short-term international travel experience.

The Study Abroad Committee will offer guidance and support to faculty throughout the development and implementation of their Travel Seminar course. The Study Abroad Committee members support the belief that OCC's Study Abroad Program profoundly enriches students' educational and personal development.

Purpose of the Study Abroad Handbook

The Study Abroad Program Faculty Handbook is designed for Ocean County College (OCC) faculty who are interested in leading a Travel Seminar course and guiding students through an academically rich international experience. Faculty who take on this role will be responsible for planning and developing course content, submitting a proposal for travel, and providing instruction before, during, and after the study abroad trip.

Study Abroad Training

The Study Abroad Committee offers an online Study Abroad Training to help faculty understand the standards and requirements of a Travel Seminar course. This NeoEd self-paced training provides a comprehensive overview of the proposal process, student eligibility criteria, travel preparation, and crisis management protocols. Faculty are encouraged to complete the self-enrolled training before submitting a proposal. The course is accessible throughout the academic year.

Delivering a Travel Seminar Course

The Study Abroad Program is directly affiliated with a travel seminar course. The course integrates academic study with short-term international travel of less than two weeks which offers students a unique opportunity to engage with course content through experiential learning while abroad. A Travel Seminar course is taught in both face-to-face and online formats during the Spring and Summer academic terms.

Faculty interested in teaching a Travel Seminar course begin by expressing their interest to the Study Abroad Committee and submitting a Travel Seminar Proposal outlining their plan. The proposal process includes preliminary approval from the Study Abroad Committee, allocation of funds, and assistance from OCC's Purchasing Department in securing a travel vendor. Proposals should be submitted 18 months in advance as the first step in the planning process. Once approved, the faculty member becomes the "Faculty Leader" for the course and assumes responsibility for the program's planning, implementation, and oversight.

This handbook provides guidance and support for submitting a Travel Seminar proposal for a Study Abroad Program and includes information on:

- Planning a Proposal
- Funding and Expense Guidelines
- Proposal Submission Requirements and Approval Process
- Travel Seminar Proposal – Processes and Timeline
- Health, Safety and Emergency Preparedness

Planning a Proposal

Serving as a Faculty Leader in the Study Abroad Program is a dynamic and rewarding role that combines academic instruction with the planning, coordination, and leadership of an immersive international learning experience for students.

Role of a Faculty Leader

The Study Abroad Program will give faculty the opportunity to teach a Travel Seminar course and accompany students on an academic-based international travel experience. Participating faculty are designated as Faculty Leader and Co-Leader. Both of the Faculty Leaders are responsible for organizing and planning the entire travel abroad experience.

The Faculty Leaders provide guidance, instruction, and oversight to students throughout the Travel Seminar course—before, during, and after traveling abroad. Faculty will provide instruction both inside and outside the traditional classroom, creating immersive educational opportunities.

All Travel Seminar courses are credit-bearing courses, and faculty earn compensation for teaching the course as an in-load or overload course.

To be considered a Faculty Leader you must be a current employee of the college and be in good standing as defined by your respective contract or handbook.

Travel Seminar Course Outline

A Travel Seminar Course within the Study Abroad Program offer students enriching and inspiring international academic experiences. All Travel Seminars are credit-bearing courses and must adhere to the official course descriptions for each respective course. Faculty should select an approved Travel Seminar course when developing their proposal.

The approved Travel Seminar courses are listed below for each academic school, Business and Social Science, Arts and Humanities, and STEM. Course details can be found in the OCC Catalog:

- ANTH 240 Travel Seminar: Cultural Studies
- HUMN 252 Travel Seminar: Study in Humanities
- SCIE 129 Travel Seminar: Global Science

The course outline includes, but is not limited to, the following topics: course information, credit hours, catalog description, course learning objectives, and general education goals.

Proposal Guidelines

Faculty members interested in serving as Faculty Leaders should carefully follow the guidelines outlined in this handbook. These guidelines are designed to ensure that the academic rigor and preparation of the course align with the standards of the college. Travel Seminar proposals must be submitted to the Study Abroad Committee for review and consideration.

When creating a proposal, faculty should keep in mind that all Travel Seminar courses must be self-sustaining. This means that the total cost must fully cover all associated travel, tuition, and program-related costs. Faculty are expected to make every effort to keep expenses to a minimum without compromising the academic quality of the course.

Individual faculty members may submit multiple proposals. Each proposal must meet a minimum enrollment requirement of 15 participants. Students or members of the community can enroll in a Travel Seminar course. An individual who is currently enrolled and studying at Ocean County College is considered a student. Alternatively, a community member is someone who is *not* an OCC student and resides in Ocean County or the surrounding area.

Please note that community members are not eligible for Foundation financial support unless they are full-time or part-time Ocean County College employee in good standing. Community members may register for the course thirty days after registration officially opens to current OCC students.

Proposal Deadlines

Planning a Study Abroad trip typically requires eighteen months of preparation and planning. To support faculty in this process, specific proposal deadlines are established based on the anticipated dates of the trip. See timelines below:

Study and travel during Spring Break: The deadline to submit a proposal is September 1, eighteen months before the date of travel.

Study and travel during a Summer Term: The deadline to submit a proposal is November 1, eighteen months before the date of travel.

For example, if the proposed a spring break date of travel is March 16, 2028, the proposal would be due September 1, 2026, which is one year and eighteen before the date of travel.

Proposals may not be considered unless all procedures have been followed, and the documentation is completed by the due date(s).

Marketing Guidelines

College Relations will assist Faculty Leaders in creating informational materials to promote the Study Abroad Program. College Relations can assist with the following marketing material: Posters/flyer, digital outreach, website updates, email & direct mail campaigns, special events, and library display.

Faculty should submit an Intake Request Form (located in the Faculty and Staff Portal) as soon as the trip is Board approved. This initiates the project with College Relations and assigns it to the appropriate design, PR, digital, and/or web teams. The Intake Request System must be used for all communication with College Relations throughout the promotional process to ensure proper approvals and adherence to deadlines. Faculty should allow a minimum of four weeks for the production and delivery of marketing materials.

Funding and Expense Guidelines

The successful planning and execution of a Study Abroad Program at OCC involves securing funding, selecting a qualified travel vendor, and adhering to established procedures.

OCC Foundation Funding

The Study Abroad Committee submits an annual funding request to the OCC Foundation to support a Travel Seminar Course. The projected funding amount is primarily based on the Faculty Leader's proposal(s). Currently, the Foundation provides support for up to 50% of the

total cost of a Travel Seminar Course. The timeline for securing these funds begins in the spring of each academic year, and all funding requests must be approved by the Foundation Board of Trustees.

Vendor Selection Process

The Purchasing Department is responsible for securing quotes for the Study Abroad Program. All selected vendors will receive the Request for Proposal (RFP) form to provide a travel itinerary and pricing to OCC. Only the Purchasing Department staff can negotiate on behalf of the college for official quotes. Purchasing will provide the Faculty Leader and the Study Abroad Committee Chair with an email confirmation of the chosen vendor.

Faculty Supplemental Expenses

As a courtesy to participants, Faculty Leaders manage vendor gratuities for the program. The Faculty Leader will submit a request for a cash advance. The purpose of the cash advancement is for gratuities paid to vendors who provide transportation and trip excursions. Only expenses included on the budget form will be honored. Any expenses incurred without prior approval may not be eligible for reimbursement. Exceptions may be made only in cases of unforeseen emergencies, and such expenses will be reviewed and managed by OCC Finance Administration for consideration.

Proposal Submission Requirements and Approval Process

Faculty must complete and submit several documents, including the Study Abroad Proposal Packet, the Travel Seminar Proposal Form, and the Study Abroad Procurement Form for the proposal process. Faculty will be notified of the approval or non-approval by the Study Abroad Committee within a month after the proposal submission deadline.

Proposal Documents

The ***Study Abroad Proposal Packet*** requires faculty to complete the following components:

- Travel Seminar Course Outline selection
- Syllabus
- Travel Itinerary
- Budget
- Marketing plan

Faculty are required to complete the ***Travel Seminar Proposal Form***, which provides a detailed overview of the proposed trip, including:

- Faculty Leaders Contact Information
- Academic school affiliation
- Destination Information
- Course Title and Code
- Estimated number of Participants
- Grant Information (if any)
- Projected Foundation Funds (50% of total cost)

Additionally, the ***Study Abroad Travel Procurement Form*** outlines the projected expenses in the following budget categories:

- Participation Information
- Travel Abroad Information
- Flight Information
- Accommodation Information
- Ground Transportation
- Meals & Catering
- Special Requests

Proposal – Processes and Timeline

The Travel Seminar proposal process follows a structured timeline to ensure thorough planning, coordination, and approval. Submission deadlines are set according to the intended term of travel, with proposals due eighteen months before the planned departure date. The table below outlines the key stages in preparing a proposal and the steps required to establish a Travel Seminar course.

Tasks	Description
Travel Seminar Course Selection and Proposal	- The faculty will select a course outline from approved the Travel Seminar Course List. - The faculty will submit a Travel Seminar Proposal Packet to the Study Abroad Committee (course outline, syllabus(i), travel itineraries, marketing plan, and budget). - Upon approval by the Study Abroad Committee, the proposal packet will be submitted to the Purchasing Department to secure quotes from trip vendors. - The Purchasing Department will email faculty the vendor(s) RFP to review.
OCC Board Approval, Marketing, Purchase Order Submission, and Course Creation	The Accounting Department submits the Travel Seminar Packet to the OCC Board of Trustees for approval. Once approved by the Board, the designated Academic Affairs Coordinator will initiate a request for a blanket purchase order (PO) through the Procurement system and generate a course in Colleague for students to register for the course. Faculty Leaders can officially begin to market the program to recruit students.
Student Disciplinary Sanction Check	Upon receipt of student applications, Faculty Leaders will submit applications to Student Affairs to verify the student is in good standing.
Student Registration	Approved student applications will be manually registered in the course by the Registrar Office.
Student Payment	Students will pay for the Travel Seminar course cost directly to the OCC cashier's office.

Student Participation

Participation in the Study Abroad Program requires students to meet specific academic, conduct, and procedural standards to ensure they are prepared for the academic rigor, responsibilities, and safety requirements of international travel.

Grade-Point-Average Requirements

To be eligible for participation in a Study Abroad Program and to register for a Travel Seminar course, students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0.

Student Conduct Review

To be eligible for participation in a Study Abroad Program, each applicant must undergo a review by Student Affairs to confirm their student conduct record is in good standing.

All Ocean County College (OCC) policies regarding student conduct apply while traveling abroad. Any violations may result in disciplinary action, including probation or suspension. In such cases, no refunds will be issued for tuition, housing, travel, or other related expenses.

Additionally, any participant who leaves a Travel Seminar destination early, whether voluntarily or as a result of disciplinary action, will be responsible for arranging and funding their own transportation home. Students who have received financial support from the OCC Foundation and have violated the OCC Code of Student Conduct will be required to repay those funds.

Ocean County College Foundation Scholarship

The OCC Foundation supports the Study Abroad Program by providing financial assistance to approved students, helping to offset the cost of Travel Seminar courses. Students may apply for a Travel Seminar Scholarship through the Foundation to receive this support.

Student Orientation

All students enrolled in a Travel Seminar course are required to attend the Pre-Departure Student Orientation. The student orientation is held after all participants have registered and paid for the course. Led by the Faculty Leaders, this session prepares students for both the academic and travel components of the course. The orientation topics include course expectations, travel requirements, and essential preparation for the international experience.

Prior to or during the orientation, students must submit all required Travel Seminar forms along with a copy of their valid passport. The required forms include:

- Travel Abroad Application
- Release and Indemnification
- Voluntary Disclosure of Medical Information
- Voluntary Assumption of Risk and Release of Liability for International Travel
- Student Photo Consent and Release

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in removal from the program.

U.S. Embassy Consular Office Registration

All Travel Seminar participants are required to register with the U.S. Embassy Consular Office. This can be done by registering in the U.S. State Department Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP). This free service allows the Department of State to contact enrollees accurately and quickly in case of emergency. STEP can be accessed via the web; <http://travelregistration.state.gov>.

Health, Safety, and Emergency Preparedness

Health, Safety, and Crisis Management Protocols

The health and safety of our students and faculty are top priorities. Faculty leaders may face an emergency involving one or more students in their care, or an emergency of their own. Students can become ill, suffer accidents, or become victims of a crime. The Study Abroad Committee will provide a *Study Abroad Crisis Management Guide* with essential tools and resources to help faculty understand how to maintain safety and to understand the health, safety, and emergency management protocols.

Prior to the trip, faculty will provide students with a comprehensive overview of health, safety, and emergency management protocols during the Pre-Departure Orientation class meeting(s). These essential topics should be fully integrated into the course curriculum and addressed in depth throughout the duration of the course.

It is also important that Faculty Leaders complete research to create a comprehensive list of reputable local medical facilities or hospitals, in coordination with the vendor representative before traveling.

Upon arrival to the study abroad location the Faculty Leader, in conjunction with the travel coordination vendor, must provide students with a list of names and phone numbers for:

1. 24-hour emergency contact information for the travel vendor
2. Nearest U.S. Embassy or host country Consulate
3. Law enforcement/police department
4. Nearest hospital/emergency facility

Travel Restrictions

If the State of New Jersey Office of Emergency Management issues a State of Emergency, all travel within the state will be cancelled until the declaration is lifted.

Changes in the safety status of the host country may result in postponement or cancellation of the proposed Travel Seminar course. This decision is at the college's discretion.

Travel to countries with a travel advisory Level 3 or 4 by the U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories is prohibited.

Emergencies While Abroad

An emergency is any circumstance that poses a genuine risk to or that has already disturbed the safety and well-being of students or faculty. Each situation must be assessed and reported to the Study Abroad Committee Chair. In all cases, Faculty Leaders must complete a Maxient Incident Report Form upon return to the United States.

Outside of regular office hours or during campus closings, Faculty Leaders can contact the OCC Security Office Police, at 732-255-0451. The office is open 24/7 and will contact the college's administration.

Emergency Resources

The emergency resources provided are designed to help faculty evaluate the safety and security of their Study Abroad destination, enabling them to make informed decisions about travel readiness and implement necessary precautions to protect all participants. Faculty are encouraged to continuously monitor conditions in the host country throughout the program.

- U.S. Department of State – Travel Advisories
Up-to-date travel advisories and alerts by country
www.state.gov/travelers
- State Department Country Safety Assessments
Official safety and security assessments of travel destinations
www.travel.state.gov
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Travel Health Notices
Information on public health concerns, disease outbreaks, and emergency situations
<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>
- United Nations World Tourism Organization – Global Code of Ethics for Tourism
Guidelines promoting responsible and sustainable tourism practices
www.unwto.org/ethics-culture-and-social-responsibility
- U.S. General Services Administration
Passport guidelines are available on the website
www.usa.gov/passport

Disclaimer

All information in this handbook is subject to change. Additional guidance on developing a Study Abroad Program can be found in the self-paced faculty training module.

The College reserves the right to cancel a Travel Seminar for any of the following reasons:

- Low enrollment
- Transportation issues
- Other extenuating circumstances

Trip cancellation decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Study Abroad Forms

[Travel Seminar Proposal Form](#)

[Study Abroad Travel Procurement Form](#)

[Study Abroad Student Application Form](#)

[Release and Indemnification Form](#)

[Voluntary Disclosure of Medical Information Form](#)

[Voluntary Assumption of Risk and Release Liability for International Travel Form](#)

[Student Photo Consent Waiver and Release Form](#)

[Incident Report Form](#)

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