

## **Academic Overnight Travel Policy - January 2024**

### Summary Process:

- Submit the appropriate forms from this document to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies 3 weeks prior to course registration.
- Associate Dean of Graduate Studies will review with Dean of Graduate/Undergraduate Studies, Dean of Budget and Administration, Student Affairs, Risk Management, and Dean of Faculty and provide additional requirements and/or approval within 7 days.

*This policy is intended for Graduate level trips within the United States for 7 days or less. In special circumstances, Undergraduate and mixed level trips may be considered.*

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*Questions regarding this process/policy should be directed to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, Nicole Hall (nhall1@saic.edu).*

## ***Welcome and thank you***

SAIC is fortunate to have dedicated faculty willing to invest the extra time, resources and care needed to develop courses that include overnight travel for our students. Faculty-led academic trips deeply impact our students' academic and personal development. In planning a course that includes overnight travel, SAIC recommends that you:

- Plan ahead – proposals are due no less than three weeks in advance of registration for the semester of intended travel
- Propose a course in a location with which you have a high level of experience and expertise
- Be familiar with the logistics of your destination for organized planning and the ability to offer a quality academic experience
- Be familiar with the language of the location, or consider how you will address any associated communication needs
- Consider the challenges involved in leading a group of students in a travel capacity and whether you are comfortable with extending your role as Faculty Leader beyond that of instructor - recruiter, administrator, financial manager, institutional representative, adviser, facilitator, student affairs administrator and crisis manager.
- Expect to be fully engaged in what can be a significant amount of time-consuming logistical preparation and promotion, beginning far in advance of your trip and regardless of whether or not your proposal is ultimately approved
- The details of the trip must be in the syllabus (available when students are registering for the class)
- If a course is required, the course population must be of a shared cohort where missing other coursework is not necessary

When evaluating a study trip proposal, the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies looks at:

- Curricular significance
- Expertise of the faculty within the geographic region
- Expertise of the faculty in the subject/content
- Previous course evaluations involving academic overnight study trips
- Other feasibility questions: budget, risk, timetable, support

This development guide is intended to:

- communicate guidelines on course development and SAIC travel policies
- explain the full proposal process
- provide fill-able/printable proposal forms for submission to Study Abroad for new trips and for re-proposals.

## Part 1 Academic Overnight Travel Proposal

This is the first of a two-step proposal process. Download the document and edit it in Acrobat; do not edit in Preview (edits will not save). Complete the rest of the document, obtain approval signatures from the correct department(s), and submit the signed proposal to Associate Dean of Graduate Studies - Nicole Hall, nhall1@saic.edu, or directly to the Graduate Dean's office in Sharp 818.

Department offering the course: \_\_\_\_\_

Semester and Year of course offering: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Number, Title: \_\_\_\_\_

SAIC Faculty Leader

Additional SAIC Faculty Leader

Name Title

Name Title

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Department/s

Department/s

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email Phone

Email Phone

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Additional SAIC Staff Leader

Name Title \_\_\_\_\_

Department/s \_\_\_\_\_

Email Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Note: The use of a Part-Time Faculty member as the sole SAIC representative on an Graduate Academic Overnight Trip of longer than three nights' duration is discouraged. Departments should consider allocating an additional faculty or staff member to the trip (this allocation would need to be proposed and approved) or identifying a personnel resource at the site of travel who may be contracted for short-term assistance. Such assistance may be required by the School, should the duration and/or complexity of the proposed travel demand enhanced support. Any non-SAIC personnel will need to be vetted by SAIC before being contracted.

FACULTY PROPOSING A NEW ACADEMIC OVERNIGHT TRIP complete Option 1.

FACULTY PROPOSING A REPEAT ACADEMIC OVERNIGHT TRIP\* complete Option 2.

\* previously approved by the Dean's Selection Committee

Attach PDFs if you require additional space for any of the questions

OPTION 1

FACULTY PROPOSING A NEW ACADEMIC OVERNIGHT TRIP

1. Briefly outline your trip.
2. Provide a draft itinerary (including estimated dates, locations, activities and transportation).
3. How is this an exciting learning opportunity for SAIC students? How does it serve course/curricular objectives?
4. What is your familiarity with the trip location?
5. What related activities or coursework will occur at SAIC prior to/post trip?

OPTION 2

FACULTY PROPOSING A REPEAT ACADEMIC OVERNIGHT TRIP\*

\* previously approved by the Dean's Selection Committee

1. Briefly outline your trip.

2. Are there any significant changes planned to the previous dates, duration, itinerary, locations, accommodation, activities and transportation?

3. Reflecting on your experience from the last overnight trip and students' evaluations, what worked well and what, if anything, didn't work so well? How will your new proposal build on successes and address any issues?

4. What related activities or coursework will occur at SAIC prior to/post trip?

**Departmental Approval**

Submit this 4-page proposal to the appropriate Department Chair/s for completion. If the course is cross-listed or if faculty/staff from multiple departments are participating in the course travel proposals must be approved and endorsed by all Chairs.

Course Title \_\_\_\_\_

Term \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Leader 1 Dept. \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Leader 2 Dept. \_\_\_\_\_

I approve this Academic Overnight Trip Proposal

Department  
\_\_\_\_\_

Department  
\_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name  
\_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I approve this Academic Overnight Trip Proposal

**Approval Board**

Associate Dean of Graduate Studies will obtain approvals from Dean of Graduate/Undergraduate Studies, Dean of Faculty, Dean of Budget and Administration, and Risk Management.

Academic Overnight Study Proposal is Approved.

Associate Dean of Graduate Studies Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Part 2 Roles of Graduate Overnight Trip Planners

Associate Dean of Graduate Studies Responsibilities:	Faculty Leader Responsibilities:	Student Affairs (Study Abroad, Dean on Call, Academic Advising)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that SAIC/AIC legal counsel has reviewed all partner organization contracts according to institutional policies before they are signed, as applicable.</li> <li>• Verify compliance with SAIC's responsibilities according to partner organization contract requirements.</li> <li>• Assist faculty with program logistics and development as well as pre-departure preparation</li> <li>• Provide Faculty Leader and the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies with participants' emergency contact, insurance information and any medical history that has been disclosed</li> <li>• Facilitate accommodations with the DLRC for participants with disabilities</li> <li>• With Faculty Leader, conduct pre-departure orientation/s. Discuss logistics, expectations, country-specific information, health and safety issues, visas, passports and emergency contacts, and conduct.</li> <li>• Set up a Canvas course. All courses that include overnight travel must utilize Canvas, and the Canvas course must include the following: travel information, recommendations, applicable policies.</li> <li>• Assist Faculty Leader with reconciliation of cash advances and program expenses as budgeted. Include original receipts within 21-30 days of end of program or via Concur.</li> <li>• Coordinate honoraria payments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In consultation with the Senior Administrative Director, establish preliminary and final travel budgets</li> <li>• Develop and finalize trip itinerary</li> <li>• Identify potential agents and vendors (hotels/hostels, guest speakers, transportation, etc)</li> <li>• Design the academic aspects of the program and plan academic, professional and cultural tours and lectures according to a detailed schedule</li> <li>• Attend mandatory Study Trip Health and Safety Workshop. Trip leaders are required to attend this every year.</li> <li>• Organize at least one mandatory pre-departure orientation meeting that explains course content, readings, expectations, country-specific information, health and safety.</li> <li>• Disseminate accurate, clear, site-specific orientation materials to students, including faculty pre departure and on-site contact information and student housing information (via Canvas and in-person).</li> <li>• Ensure that all participants complete online waiver and health disclosure forms.</li> <li>• Be informed about student pre-departure materials required by SA.</li> <li>• Communicate with students via Canvas.</li> <li>• Respond to students in crisis (accident, illness, family problems at home, etc.); follow the SA Communication Plan in critical situations; promptly report to the Dean on Call and document inappropriate or concerning student behavior).</li> <li>• Monitor group dynamics and activities and intervene as needed.</li> <li>• Document Clery reportable events.</li> <li>• Adhere to all SAIC institutional policies • Model appropriate conduct and hold students accountable for SAIC Code of Conduct.</li> <li>• Notify the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies of the arrival of all participants at program site.</li> <li>• Monitor spending and keep required documentation for accounting purposes against the program budget.</li> <li>• Participate in all group excursions and events.</li> <li>• Provide students and SA with contact information during program's "free time."</li> <li>• Proactively assist students with logistical challenges (explain how to use public transportation, exchange money, purchase phones, etc).</li> <li>• With your Administrative Director, reconcile cash advances and program expenses as budgeted. Include original receipts within 21-30 days of end of program or via Concur.</li> <li>• Provide written or oral feedback to students related to work created during or after trip.</li> <li>• Submit Clery reports to Security.</li> <li>• Encourage students to complete online evaluations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate Study Trip Health &amp; Safety Workshop (risk assessment, crisis management, legal, etc)</li> <li>• Facilitate academic/disciplinary and accommodations history review (DOC, AA)</li> <li>• Report students with Significant academic/disciplinary histories to the faculty leader (DOC, AA)</li> <li>• Monitor U.S. State Department Travel Advisories, CDC updates, etc (SA)</li> <li>• Respond to Student Affairs issues and crises reported by faculty and staff leaders during the course of the trip.</li> </ul>

## **Part 3 Itinerary Development**

Your daily itinerary should consistently reflect your course syllabus. Consider the following when planning your itinerary:

- Activities lacking connection to course content should be kept to a minimum
- Avoid excessive time on buses, planes and trains; overnight road travel is not permitted
- Venture beyond the obvious tourist activities to provide your students the opportunity to absorb their surroundings and relate them to their work, but bear in mind this might be the only opportunity for students to see global icons
- Consolidate your destinations/visits to provide a more compact trip. Consider choosing a city as a base with the option of day trips to additional sites
- Build in down time for the students, however, half-days are preferable and weekends off are not permitted; encourage them to schedule any personal travel before or after the class
- Include some method of check-in each morning so that each person is accounted for (e.g. group breakfasts)
- Scheduling morning activities will discourage students from potentially disruptive extracurricular activities
- The excursions you plan will also have an impact on the overall cost of the program. Is the cost of traveling to a particular site and the associated expenses worth it based on its connection to the course content?
- Is the location safe? Use the Department of State Travel Advisory, OSAC (<https://www.osac.gov/>), and local news for determination of safety.

### ***Travel Agent Assistance***

Travel agents may be very helpful when planning a trip to:

- A remote location
- A location where English proficiency is not common
- Multiple locations with travel between them

If you need to use a travel agent, please refer to the preferred vendors list on ArtMe (SAIC Intranet) can provide the names of travel agents who have successfully arranged trips in the past. Be prepared to provide the following:

- Full details regarding expected numbers of participants
- Size and standards of rooms (confirm that all beds are separated, singles) • Travel between countries/cities, if applicable
- Any other requirements as specified by Student Affairs

### ***Student Travel***

Students typically arrange their own travel to and from the start/end of the trip to allow for maximum flexibility. Look into visa requirements for U.S. citizens, and keep in mind SAIC's large population of international students.

### ***Faculty Travel***

The AIC Comptroller does not require exclusive use of AIC's travel agents (Intranet > Departments > Travel & Entertainment), however ticketing through the AIC travel agents allows for direct payment by SAIC. You can contact the travel agent directly to get a quote SA will then provide the account number to process the booking.



First-class flights, business flights, fees for extra legroom, personal layovers, detours, etc. will not be covered by the student program fees.

### ***On-the-Ground Travel***

Estimate public transportation, chartered bus, internal flight, taxi, and any other possible costs. Locate reasonably priced, feasible transportation for each stage of the trip and remember to plan for the maximum size of the group (including trip leaders).

Students are never permitted to drive other students in vehicles; only trip leaders may drive rental vehicles and will have their driving records reviewed in accordance with SAIC policy before being permitted to transport students.

It is recommended that faculty/staff going on off-campus trips utilize public transportation (e.g., a scheduled train or bus). For road trips involving 12 or more travelers a distance of more than 500 miles, SAIC strongly recommends the use of a charter bus. Each participant is responsible for wearing a seat belt and the trip organizer(s) should remind each participant of this responsibility. If a charter bus is being used, please refer to the AIC standard template for renting charter buses, available on AIC's Intranet page at <https://information.artic.edu/depts/legal/index.shtml> under Travel Program Agreements. Campus Life can provide a list of commonly used charter bus providers.

When public or chartered transportation is not an option, the faculty or staff member may rent a vehicle. However, the faculty/staff member must adhere to the following guidelines:

- The vehicle will:
  - o Seat 12 or fewer people including faculty and staff (no 15-passenger vans are permitted)
  - o Be driving on paved roads only
  - o Be equipped with emergency supplies (e.g., spare tire and jack, cell phone, ice scraper)
- The driver will:
  - o Be an SAIC faculty or staff member (students, including TAs and student employees may not drive)
  - o Be 25 years of age or older
  - o Obey all traffic laws
  - o Submit a copy of his/her drivers license and driving record check form at least two weeks prior to the trip. Faculty and staff are not allowed to transport students until they receive confirmation they have been approved to drive.
  - o Use common sense and good judgment
  - o Accept all insurance offered by the rental company
  - o Wear a seat belt at all times
  - o Not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including prescription drugs that may impair driving
  - o Be well rested and prepared to drive
  - o Not use a cell phone or headphones while driving
  - o Not drive more than 3 hours consecutively
  - o Not drive more than 8 hours out of 24 hours
  - o Not move the vehicle until everyone is wearing a seat belt

### ***Accommodations***

When considering hostels/hotels use the following standards to guide the search:

- Trip leaders – Faculty must stay with students at all times, near or same accommodation (and by near, adjacent building no further).

- Room conditions - inexpensive but clean rooms, with an acceptable level of security and safety. All doors must lock, students never share beds, how many students share accommodation/ is the bathroom private (if shared with other guests - does that lock), accommodation accessible for students who may have a disability, if not, what support may be needed (like camping in a tent). Consideration for how roommates are assigned.
- Hostel vs. hotel - hostels provide budget-oriented, sociable accommodation where guests can rent a [typically bunk] bed, in a dormitory-style setting with shared bathroom, lounge and sometimes a kitchen. Rooms must be single-sex. Private rooms may also be available..
- Multi-bedded rooms - “double” rooms should have 2 beds, “triple” rooms, 3 beds, etc. Students cannot share a double/full bed. Students should expect to share rooms with each other, while trip leaders typically have their own rooms.
- Breakfast - it is preferred that breakfasts are included to help students get started and to provide a place where everyone can “check-in” before the day begins.
- Single Supplement - while not a common option, some students may request a single room for an additional cost. Ask the accommodation if they offer this single room option, which we could offer to interested students upon registration. SAIC never guarantees single rooms as an option.
- Should a request for rooms be held in advance of a formal reservation, book for the full number of anticipated students, plus trip leaders, and request the hotel email or fax their quote and terms to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies for further management of the reservation.
- Access to pharmacy, access to options for food (grocery store, or are meals provided, are there options for cheaper meals - not just one expensive restaurant).
- Access to medical and mental health care (close, accessible).

## **Part 4 Budget Development**

Administrative Directors and Department Heads are available to provide guidance with the design of travel budgets. Faculty leaders are responsible for researching all program costs prior to proposing a course that includes overnight travel. Use the Budget Worksheet to assist in this process. A reasonably close estimated travel cost must be submitted with the Academic Overnight Travel Proposal and included in the Course Description.

## **Part 5 Course Description**

The course syllabus must emphasize the travel component, its optional nature (if it is optional), and the estimated additional expenses required to participate in the travel component.

This information must also be emphasized during the first class meeting of the semester.

## Part 6 Policies

### ***SAIC/AIC Travel Policy***

Travel educational experiences can provide invaluable learning and should be available to our students, however, SAIC recognizes that all travel involves risks that may or may not be present on campus and employs the following travel policies:

Academic overnight travel may not approved and/or may be canceled in the event that travel involves a location where any of the following conditions exist:

- a) U.S. Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs has issued a Travel Warning or Travel Alert
- b) World Health Organization or U.S. Centers for Disease Control have issued a Travel Advisory
- c) Department of Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control has imposed Travel Restrictions

Faculty leaders coordinating student travel as part of an academic course or SAIC sponsored co-curricular experience must work through the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies with the offices of Study Abroad, Risk Management, Campus Security, and General Counsel to ensure that conditions at the host site are conducive to maintaining the health and safety of participants and to achieving the academic goals of the study trip/program. Careful consideration should be made of the location and type of accommodations and transportation (including airline safety records) used during the course of any trip. SAIC seeks to ensure that all education practices are lawful and compliant by SAIC standards including employment, visa, registration, tax, insurance and contract issues.

#### Student Affairs Health/Safety Support

The VP/Dean of Student Affairs and the Study Trip Committee are particularly concerned that best practices and Student Affairs policies be adhered to during each overnight trip. The Dean’s Office may direct that a staff member accompany the group to provide assistance in the event of student or group crisis/emergency. Staff expenses are not typically factored into Program Fees, and no additional wages are paid since they are salaried employees.

Occasionally trip leaders inquire whether a family member/s can accompany the group. This is not viewed as best practice as priority/focus must be the students. Dependents add risk in that they themselves may experience a crisis/emergency. A minor child may only accompany the group if suitable supervision is arranged for him/her during all group activities. Faculty/student host must pay in full for any expenses of anyone accompanying (i.e. the difference between a single and a double room) and complete liability waiver/s. Note that anyone who is not SAIC faculty/staff is strictly prohibited from handling student affairs issues and student health crises/emergencies. SAIC will not handle travel arrangements or bookings related to non-SAIC faculty/staff/students. These must be arranged directly with accommodations, airlines, etc., and associated payments must be made directly with the appropriate vendors, organizations, etc.

The Dean’s Office will work with Student Affairs to schedule a two-hour, mandatory pre departure Study Trip Health & Safety Workshop prior to departure. Plan to gather with other trip leaders as a group, along with General Counsel, Counseling Services, Campus Security to review how Student Affairs and SAIC will offer support during the trip. The workshop will review the expectations of the students and the communication plan faculty should follow in the event of emergencies, minor or major. This meeting is the ideal opportunity to raise any Student Affairs questions anyone might have. All faculty/staff leading a study trip must attend; faculty will ultimately be expected to consult together should an emergency/crisis arise.

Prior to departure, Faculty Leaders will work with their Administrative Directors to assemble information on accommodations, transportation, payments that have been made and those that are due, student emergency contacts and health disclosures, student flight details and ID/passport copies, emergency/crisis communication plan, student conduct, mental health crisis intervention articles, contact sheets for all hotels/hostels, course evaluations, tax and receipt forms, and more.

### ***Student Conduct***

As a trip leader, in consultation with the Dean of Students and Study Abroad staff, faculty have the full authority to act in the event that a student does not adhere to the standards of behavior and/or conduct as outlined in the Student Handbook and during the student orientations provided.

### ***Student Registration Information***

Only registered students may participate in Academic Overnight Travel. Friends and family who happen to be in the same location/city and wish to accompany the group are not permitted to do so.

## Part 7 Faculty Payment

Faculty are paid their standard per course rate for the course including the trip. Part-time faculty may also request to be compensated for any additional work per the Part-Time Faculty Additional Work policy. This additional compensation must be paid for by the Department.

All expenses are reported and reimbursements are claimed using the Concur system. Note that faculty must always provide receipts for non per-diem purchases made with a corporate card, personal credit card, or cash. Departments should plan to provide payment for as many expenses as possible.

Concur advance payments – SAIC’s preferred direct deposit payment system. If faculty have not set this up, they must do so in order to receive travel advances. This is separate from direct deposit salary payments. The form is available on the Intranet > Departments > Travel & Entertainment.

Per Diems – This is determined in consultation with Student Affairs. The maximum rate advanced is usually set at 50% of the U.S. Department of State’s foreign per diem “Meal and Incidental” rate. These rates are based on local costs and are adjusted monthly. Domestic trip per diems are set at the applicable U.S. city rates. This amount will be reduced if breakfasts or group meals are provided. Please consult with the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies for the relevant rate. Faculty will not have to account for personal per diem expenses with receipts and may elect to use a lower rate than this maximum.

On-the-Ground Money – Will faculty use a credit card to pay for expenses abroad? Will credit cards be readily accepted where the trip is going? Will faculty be withdrawing cash from ATMs? Expect to reconcile program expenses against receipts both during and after the trip is concluded when submitting Concur reports. Keep all receipts related to the trip advance.

*Questions regarding this process/policy should be directed to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, Nicole Hall ([nhall@saic.edu](mailto:nhall@saic.edu)).*