

2.08.10.00 Development & Operation of Off-Campus International Educational Programs



Policy/Guideline Area

Academic Policies

Applicable Divisions

TCATs, Community Colleges

Purpose

The Tennessee Board of Regents will provide students with opportunities to earn postsecondary credit and non-credit service and internship experiences at off-campus international sites.

Definitions

- Tennessee Consortium for International Studies (TnCIS) - TnCIS represents nineteen colleges and universities devoted to making international education and cultural understanding a central goal of higher education throughout the state of Tennessee. TnCIS welcomes membership from all colleges, universities and other organizations seeking to expand opportunities for international educational exchanges.

Policy/Guideline

I. Policy

The Tennessee Board of Regents System (TBR) supports off-campus international educational programs, service, internship or courses as a valid and valuable part of undergraduate education. The TBR encourages all TBR institutions to engage in international opportunities that meet the legitimate academic needs of their students and in cooperation with consortia both internal to the TBR system in which TBR institutions hold membership and those external to the system.

Procedures

I. Introduction

- A. All international education programs or courses operated, sponsored or approved for academic credit by any TBR institution are expected to maintain standards of quality in the delivery of instruction, support services, and administration which are consistent with educational excellence.
- B. In general, programs or courses operated or sponsored by or in combination with any TBR institution abroad shall be:
 - 1. Within the scope of the mission of the institution;
 - 2. Integrated into the undergraduate curricula of the sponsoring institution;
 - 3. Feasible and sustainable;
 - 4. Subject to regular, periodic evaluation and assessment according to the institution's normal review procedures for academic programs; and
 - 5. In compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.
- C. Tennessee Consortium for International Studies (TnCIS)
 - 1. The Tennessee Consortium for International Studies was formally established by the TBR President's Council in 2006.
 - 2. TnCIS operates under the administration and fiscal oversight of Pellissippi State Community College.
 - a. The Executive Director reports to the President of Pellissippi State Community College or their designee
 - b. All TnCIS staff are employees of Pellissippi State Community College.

- c. All TnCIS faculty will sign dual-service contracts with
Pellissippi State Community College
- 3. TnCIS protocols and guidelines must be vetted through the TBR
Vice Chancellor of Student Success or designee.
- D. Governance
 - 1. All TBR institutions are members of TnCIS
 - 2. Each TBR institution may have up to two representatives serve on
the TnCIS Advisory Council.
 - 3. The President at each TBR institution appoints representatives to
serve on the Advisory Council.
 - a. The TnCIS Advisory Council will meet on a bi-annual basis.
 - b. The Advisory Council will make recommendations on any
membership fees to TBR institutions.
 - c. Non-TBR institutions may join the consortium at the
discretion of Pellissippi State Community College.
- E. All institutions including the TnCIS must establish guidelines for operation
of international programs.
 - 1. Institutions engaged in any international activities which are not
coordinated through the TnCIS must establish international policies
or guidelines for the individual institution and submit them annually
to the TBR Office of Student Success.
 - 2. Institutions may adopt the policies and procedures embraced
through TnCIS as a whole, if the institution engages solely in TnCIS
study abroad programs.
 - 3. All policies and procedures established by institutions must be
vetted through the appropriate institutional channels including TBR
Office of General Counsel, as applicable.

4. The TnCIS protocols and guidelines must be vetted through the TBR Vice Chancellor of Student Success or designee as well as the TBR General Counsel.
 5. All institutions and TBR sponsored consortia must develop structures for international education programs or courses to be approved by the home institution.
- F. In addition, programs or courses operated or sponsored by any TBR institution abroad shall adhere to the specific policies listed below.
- G. Memorandum of Understanding or Agreement related to international studies requires approval of the institutional Chief Academic Officer, President or the President's Designee.
- H. All approvals must be forwarded to the TBR Vice Chancellor of Student Success upon completion.

II. [Types of Programs](#)

- A. Institutions may sponsor and administer their own international programs and/or courses or participate in partnerships with international institutions or consortia to offer opportunities for global study to their students.
1. Institutions must establish policies regarding enrolling TBR students and awarding credit in a timely fashion to these students for international education programs or courses.
 2. Institutions must have in place a policy regarding the acceptance of international transfer credit. Only credit from institutions recognized by their country's ministry of education should be considered acceptable to transfer.
 3. Institutions must have policies regarding the enrollment, awarding and transfer of credit for their students matriculating in another TBR or non-TBR affiliated institution or consortia. The institution must

also have policies for non-TBR students matriculating in institutional courses or TBR related consortia.

4. Non-institutional faculty must meet SACS standards.

III. Defining Roles

A. Participants

1. Students currently enrolled in TBR institutions.
 - a. In keeping with best practices, only individuals enrolled in a TBR institution may participate in study abroad programs.
 - b. Students enrolled in TBR institutions must be registered at their home institutions in order to participate in international study courses if the course is sponsored by their home institution or by another institution within the TBR system.
 - c. Individual institutions should establish guidelines to determine the required preparation necessary for a student to participate in the desired international experience (e.g., GPA, tenure in academic program, academic preparedness, and contributions to the program of study). The TnCIS will employ institutional guidelines and notify individual institutions if they are not in compliance with the guidelines.
 - d. Students from non-TBR schools who elect to participate in TBR institution-sponsored international education programs as fulltime transfer students are responsible for transferring credit back to their home institutions.
 - e. Individuals who are students at non-TBR institutions or are not students at any institution of higher education must enroll in a TBR institution under “Non-Degree” or “Continuing Education” or “Transient” or “Transfer” student status for the

duration of the international education experience. Enrolling in one of these classifications requires that these individuals meet all qualifications, prerequisites, and requirements for selection as a participant in an international education program, participate in all orientation meetings, and pay all tuition and fees to the sponsoring TBR institution.

2. Faculty or staff employed by the institution serving in an advisory or coordinating capacity to the student or student group while abroad.
3. Community partnering organization members who serve a coordinating or mentoring role to students engaged in the experience. In such instances, the community partner members must be registered as a volunteer with the institution.

B. Program Directors and Group Leaders

1. These are TBR employees who administratively lead and/or teach international education experiences, including individuals outside the institution and those employed at another higher education institution outside the TBR system, who serve in the role of Program Director or Group Leader. Program directors and group leaders, including faculty directing and teaching in the TnCIS programs, must have their role defined and documented by the unit sponsoring the program. This documentation must be on file with the TBR Vice Chancellor of Student Success.
2. For non-credit bearing service and internship experiences, a group leader may consist of:
 - a. Student leaders for an institutionally recognized student organization coordinating the experience for a group of students.

- b. Faculty or staff employed by the institution serving in an advisory or coordinating capacity to the student or student group.
 3. Program directors serve as institutional representatives and as such must maintain current certification as a Study Abroad Leader through the TBR Office of Student Success, the individual institutional training, or the TnCIS study abroad training programs. Individual faculty are responsible for providing documentation of qualifications at the time of application to offer a study abroad program at individual institutions or through the TnCIS.
 4. All program directors of institutionally sponsored trips must create a campus-appropriate training structure and implement institutional assessment guidelines for the completion of such training prior to faculty leading a trip.
 5. Faculty teaching for the TnCIS must submit their academic credentials to Pellissippi State Community College (PSCC) and be appointed as an adjunct faculty member at PSCC.
- C. Faculty Instructors
1. Faculty who are teaching the international course, but may not be the designated program director, must have their role defined and documented by the unit sponsoring the program.
- D. Non-Credit Experience Program Sponsors
1. For non-credit bearing service and internship experiences, program sponsors may be:
 - a. Faculty
 - b. Institutionally recognized student organizations.
 - c. Student support services office or academic department.

- d. Sponsoring entity - organization where the student will be placed to do internship or service experience. This would include any non-profit organizations, business or associations located abroad who agree to host the student(s).

E. Accompanying Spouses and Minors

- 1. In cases where a program director or faculty instructor will be traveling abroad for an extended period of time (more than 30 days), it is left to the discretion of the home institution as to whether to allow spouses and minors to travel with the employee.
- 2. Spouses and minor children, if allowed to participate, cannot impair the operation or administration of the program, or otherwise infringe on the participants, or incorporate any of their expenses into the program budget.
- 3. Spouses and minor children, if allowed to participate, must complete an Assumption of Risk form for the program, consortia (if relevant) and TBR institutions prior to departure.

IV. **Best Practices**

- A. The TBR is committed to having our institutions identify and adopt relevant practices which can assist our institutions in enhancing and improving their education abroad activities and processes including:
 - 1. undertaking reasonable steps to be informed of and comply with applicable laws both at home and in the host country;
 - 2. avoiding arrangements which might violate those laws or accepted business practices of the U.S. or host country;

3. establishing and maintaining reasonably safe and non-discriminatory, work, study and living conditions for employees and students;
4. communicating clearly with students the anticipated environmental conditions of the location abroad;
5. making available current policies, procedures and job descriptions;
6. exercising due diligence in cost control and adopting clear and reasonable billing procedures for participants;
7. establishing transparent protocols for data collected;
8. maintaining sufficient financial resources to meet obligations and exigencies for unanticipated obligations;
9. enforcing research including human subject research protocols and those of the host country in accordance with standards outlined by the Department of Health and Human Services and National Institutes of Health;
10. engaging in continuous improvement;
11. emphasizing academic integrity within the international education experience;
12. managing all provider arrangements for oversight and evaluation; and
13. following the established US Import/Export Guidelines.

V. **Types of Programs & Program Documentation**

- A. Courses for academic credit, hosted abroad, should provide academic learning opportunities appropriate to the mission of the program and that align to courses in a student's area of study or which meet general education requirements.

- B. Institutional or campus administered programs led by institutional faculty including:
 - 1. Course-embedded study abroad;
 - 2. Course-embedded internships;
 - 3. Course-embedded service-learning.
 - a. Service-learning abroad or community-engaged learning combines structured participation in a community-based project to achieve specified learning outcomes as part of the study abroad program.
 - b. Service learning is not the equivalent of civic engagement.
 - c. Determination of service learning activities should be mindful of the culture and politics of the location in which the program is offered.
- C. Programs where the institution maintains a central office or facility in another country which is staffed by a resident director and is under close supervision and the TBR institution which awards credit.
- D. Programs at international branch campuses.
- E. Reciprocal exchange programs which are bilateral or multilateral exchanges require either an MOA or MOU.
 - 1. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a document signifying the mutual interest in the development of collaborative educational activities related to instruction, research, and extension between units at cooperating institutions. No financial or legal obligations are incurred with an MOU. It is often the preliminary step to a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).
 - 2. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is a contract between units at cooperating institutions to develop collaborative activities related to

instruction, research, and/or extension and thus, establishes the parameters for student exchanges between two institutions.

3. All collaborations involving either a MOU OR MOA through which a TBR institution agrees to work with a non-TBR institution, whether domestic or international, must be vetted through the General Counsel's Office either on the individual campus or through the TBR System Office.
 4. Partner institutions may be proposed by anyone in the institution but the decision to pursue a formal agreement with any institution abroad must be supported by the Chief Academic Officer, President of the institution, or the President's designee.
 5. Institutions must have an official, written agreement with institutions abroad or consortia prior to commencing an international studies program and such agreement must be reviewed by legal counsel prior to its execution.
- F. Programs requiring direct enrollment in institutions outside the United States.
- G. Consortia sponsored programs including programs sponsored through the TnCIS.
- H. Programs sponsored by American universities and colleges overseas.
- I. Hybrid or mixed programs which combine two or more of the program types to a significant degree, or
- J. Programs contracted with a third party vendor or independent program provider.
1. Institutions should use the services of third party or independent program providers, which offer education abroad program services

to students from multiple institutions within and outside of the TBR,
with caution.

2. Institutions maintain liability for the welfare of students enrolled in their institutions while they are engaged in study abroad provided through a third party program provider.

K. Non-Credit-bearing experiences abroad

1. Volunteer or service programs - placements abroad in which the primary emphasis of the trip is for students to engage with the local community in a structured, unpaid capacity, but with a cultural focus. The activity of a volunteer or service program is designed to fill needs present in the on-site community and should be developed based on an analysis of host/sponsoring entity's community needs.
2. Internship programs abroad - provide professional experience with a primary emphasis that is educational, but with a cultural focus. Internships provide students opportunities to gain skills and content area knowledge while immersed in a professional or work context. The practical learning enhances, but may not be necessary to, the student's academic degree or future career or educational goals. The experience may be paid or unpaid, full-time or part-time.

L. All institutions including the TnCIS must establish guidelines for operation of international programs.

1. Institutions engaged in any international activities which are not coordinated through the TnCIS must establish international policies or guidelines for the individual institution and submit them annually to the TBR Office of Student Success.

2. Institutions may adopt the policies and procedures embraced through TnCIS as a whole, if the institution engages solely in TnCIS study abroad programs.
3. All policies and procedures established by institutions must be vetted through the appropriate institutional channels including TBR Office of General Counsel, as applicable.
4. The TnCIS protocols and guidelines must be vetted through the TBR Vice Chancellor of Student Success or designee as well as the TBR General Counsel.

VI. **Safety, Welfare, and Student Conduct**

- A. Institutions should not permit travel to countries or portions of countries where the U. S. Department of State currently advises against travel or tourism by Americans.
- B. Institutions may further restrict travel where, in their opinion, the U.S. Department of State or other credible authority has identified safety risks.
- C. Institutions must develop a policy for terminating an existing program if the situation arises where student and/or faculty are in danger. Program participants including faculty, staff, and students must be informed that any program may end in such an event.
- D. Faculty and staff directing and teaching in study abroad programs should be trained in the liabilities of the responsibilities accompanying their role when not on U.S. soil.
- E. Institutions should have operational policies and procedures in place for faculty leading international education experiences to refer to as needed which include:

1. Health and safety, insurance, payments of health care expenses when abroad, contact information for medical assistance in the area(s) in which the program is in operation;
 2. Crisis management and response;
 3. Disciplinary actions ranging from reporting to expulsion; and
 4. Student appeals.
- F. In case of medical emergency, program directors should take reasonable action on behalf of the student participant.
- G. Crisis Response Plans
1. All institutions that direct study abroad programs should have a detailed critical response protocol in place to address emergencies.
 - a. Institutions offering campus based international educational experiences, as well as the TnCIS based programs, must ensure that all program directors, faculty and students receive clear training on how any crisis is to be handled.
 2. Institutions must establish a clear, written reporting chain with identified contact person(s) on the campus to which all incidents and potential actions to take within a crisis situation are reported.
 - a. All incidents should be reported at the earliest possible time.
 - b. Program directors for international study courses should have clear guidelines with relevant contact information for airlines, insurance and medical personnel in the event of a crisis including the need to evacuate.
 3. A copy of the institution's crisis response plan should be on file with the TBR Office of Student Success by April 1 of each year.

4. Institutions are expected to comply with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act).
 - a. Each institution must develop a policy for compliance with the Clery Act regarding all international programs.
 - b. At a minimum, each institutional policy must require that each program designate an individual responsible for complying with the Clery Act.
 - c. For programs managed by a third party or a foreign institution, where the TBR institution has control of the property, the TBR institution should designate an official to collect any crime reports.

H. Student Rights

1. Study Abroad programs are expected to comply with the American Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act when possible and the policy for addressing requests for accommodations should be included in the institution's international education policy.
 - a. Issues related to accessibility should be resolved after a student is accepted into an international educational experience, but before the student departs on the trip.
 - b. Appropriate institutional offices including those responsible for international programs and disability services should be contacted to assist in the determination of reasonable accommodation.
2. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

- a. Generally, institutions and their respective faculty members must have written and signed permission from a student in order to release information from a student's educational record or personally identifiable information to only those persons designated by the student on the permission form.
- b. FERPA consent includes the type of record to be disclosed, to whom the record will be released and the student's signature.
- c. When a student turns 18 years old or enrolls in an institution of higher education at any age the rights under the FERPA transfer from the parents to the student with some exceptions which include: when a student is claimed by either parent as a dependent for tax purposes; for school officials with legitimate educational interest, and; appropriate officials in the case of health and safety emergencies.

I. Travel Alerts

1. Within six weeks prior to travel for an international program or course, institutions must disclose to participants U.S. State Department Consular Information Sheets and Public Announcements or Travel Alerts and crime and safety reports from the Overseas Security Advisement Council as well as essential health and safety considerations, including the Center for Disease Control Travel Information Health Recommendations.
2. During the overseas program or course offering, institutions should monitor and evaluate any new information and report to the Program Director, as appropriate.

J. Information to be Provided to Students

1. Institutions must establish policies and procedures to inform participants who enroll in international opportunities that the institution:
 - a. Cannot guarantee or assure the safety of participants or eliminate all risks from the international education environments.
 - b. Cannot monitor or control all of the daily personal decisions, choices, and activities of individual participants.
 - c. Cannot assure that U.S. standards of due process apply in overseas legal proceedings and cannot provide or pay for legal representation for participants.
 - d. Cannot assume responsibility for the actions of persons not employed or otherwise engaged by the program sponsor for events that are not part of the program or that are beyond the control of the sponsor, or for situations that may arise due to the failure of a participant to disclose pertinent information.
 - e. Cannot assure that home-country cultural values and norms will apply in the host country.
 - f. Cannot assure that U.S. standards of hygiene, medical practice, food and product safety will apply in the host country.

K. Insurance Coverage

1. Institutions are responsible for informing participants about the coverage, availability, and mandatory purchase of accident and health insurance and medical evacuation and repatriation insurance

prior to departure for any international education program either through the TBR insurance program or other insuring parties.

2. Institutions must provide information on available medical care in the host country; if available medical care is a cause for concern, participants must be informed.

L. Conduct and Discipline Issues

1. Unless a policy indicates that it does not apply outside of the U. S., Institutional policies regarding student conduct apply to TBR students registered for credit regardless of their attendance at one of the TBR campuses in Tennessee or while participating in international opportunities.
2. All participants, whether enrolled for credit or not, must attend a program pre-departure and on-site orientation, including emergency contact information and repatriation information including issues relevant to the culture, social and health conditions of the host country, in addition to information about registration, fee payment and re-enrollment, as appropriate.
3. All international education programs must brief program participants regarding student conduct expectations including but not limited to alcohol and drug use, visitation, prohibited locations, and abuse of laws and customs of the country to be visited.
4. A student's removal from an international program may be conducted in accordance with TBR Policy 3.02.00.01 General Regulations on Student Conduct and Disciplinary Sanctions and/or the host institution policies on student conduct, whichever is more conservative in keeping with Policy 3.02.01.00 Due Process. Students should become familiarized with the host

institution's policies governing student conduct, and a discussion of such policies should be a part of the student's orientation session.

5. Every TBR Institution engaged in a study abroad or international education programs must develop a policy for addressing complaints of discrimination and harassment arising during the course of a program. Policies must be consistent with TBR Policies 3.01.00.00, 3.02.00.00, and 3.03.00.00.
 - a. Faculty and staff involved in study abroad activities who receive complaints of harassment whether student-to-student, staff-to-student, student-to-staff or any other individuals for which harassment is alleged during an international education experience, must report the incident to the institution immediately.
 - b. The procedure set out must provide for due process for any student accused of misconduct.
6. Students from other institutions who participate in international study programs at any TBR institution regardless of their classification must adhere to the sponsoring institution's student conduct rules and regulations and all rules of the international program in which they are enrolled.
7. The Tennessee Board of Regents institutions do not tolerate harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, ethnic or national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, disability, age (as applicable), status as a covered veteran, genetic information, and any other category protected by federal or state civil rights law.

8. Institutions have the right to take disciplinary action including expulsion of students during an international educational experience using the same guidelines and processes of action and appeal as those in place on the home campus.
9. Due Process
 - a. Campuses must establish minimum due process procedures for students who are participating in international study courses.
 - b. Campus due process must be enacted consistent with TBR Policy No. 3.02.00.01, General Regulations on Student Conduct & Disciplinary Sanctions.
 - c. Due process procedures must be clearly outlined in international study course materials and provided to students in pre-trip trainings.
10. Authority
 - a. Administrative leaders of international study courses have the authority to establish more stringent guidelines than those set either by the TBR or individual institutional policies regarding student conduct which might be disruptive to the program or individual participants. These may include guidelines regarding the use and abuse of drugs, alcohol, engaging in behaviors which may be culturally inappropriate in the host country, or actions that may put the student or others at risk. Students should be advised that standards of personal conduct differ from those in the United States and what is expected in a host country before traveling abroad.

M. Media Inquiries

1. Each institution will establish policies for media inquiries regarding any incident involving a TBR institution faculty, staff or student involved in any TBR-endorsed international education experience.
2. The media policy must require that administrators consult Chief Student Affairs Officers and/or legal counsel regarding the release of student information on student records in accordance with the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

VII. **Student Outreach, Placement, Training, and Supervision for Non-Credit Service and Internship Experiences Abroad**

- A. Prior to a sponsor recruiting students to participate, institutions should review and approve the following information submitted by the sponsor during the planning stage:
 1. Name and description of the sponsoring entity, and its context (cultural, economic, community);
 2. Scope and nature of the assigned responsibilities;
 3. Responsibilities of the home institution or host organization, the sponsoring entity, and the student;
 4. Primary contact on-site;
 5. Required time commitment (hours per day, number of weeks);
 6. Requirements and competencies that will impact the student's success in the experience;
 7. Expectations of professionalism and appropriate conduct;
 8. Expectations of the student's obligation to act within the limits of their knowledge and competencies, and within the role prescribed for them;
 9. Learning objectives for internship and job experiences; and

10. Any other institutional policies and procedures that govern travel abroad or student travel.
- B. Prior to signing up to participate in the experience, students should receive communication with the following information:
1. Accurate description of the program, housing options, and any associated additional costs;
 2. Accurate description of the distance between the location where volunteer, internship, or work experiences will take place and student housing and available transportation and cost;
 3. Deadlines and timetables for placement, application, interviews, confirmation of placement, start and end dates; and
 4. Learning objectives and requirements for student participation.
- C. Prior to advising or supervising students who travel abroad in non-credit bearing experiences, the institution should ensure that:
1. Faculty/staff working with the program are effectively trained to oversee, monitor, and maintain ongoing communication with the student(s);
 2. The institution maintains open channels of communication throughout the experience with the advisor, the sponsoring entity, and the student(s);
 3. There is a mechanism for filing grievances or complaints;
 4. There is an emergency plan in place for the student(s) while abroad, including appropriate emergency contact information for the student(s) and sponsoring entity, secondary contact information, and emergency contact information that can be shared with the student's designated family members;

5. There is a clear distinction between the learning role and the work or service role of the student(s), and that the sponsoring entity is prepared to anticipate or navigate any conflicts that might arise between these roles;
6. The overseas environment of the sponsoring entity is safe and non-threatening. Program sponsors are responsible for assuring that all State Department Travel and Health Advisories have been shared with participants. If the State Department advisory includes language stating "avoid travel," then the sponsoring entity should not travel to that location; and
7. The student(s) are adequately supervised and supported.

D. Health, Safety, Security, and Risk Management for Non-Credit Trips
Abroad

1. All student organization travel must adhere to TBR Policy 4.03.03.50.
2. Program sponsors should provide clear information on any potential health and safety risks specific to the context in which the students will be working, including, but not limited to CDC travel notices.
3. Program sponsors should review relevant individual health information prior to the arrival on site, to identify any special considerations or accommodations that might need to be taken into account.
4. Program sponsors should clearly articulate policies and practices that protect the health and safety of student participants in the event of an outbreak of diseases or other health/safety risks.
5. Program sponsors should educate student participants on their personal responsibility for their own physical and mental health and

safety while abroad, on available resources to support their health and safety, and on their right to decline when asked to perform activities outside their scope of training or their abilities.

6. It is required that each participant have their own medical, travel, and accident insurance. Any costs not covered by insurance will be the responsibility of the traveler.
7. Student participation in activities which are non-credit bearing and off-campus require student acknowledgement of inherent risk and waivers of liability. Program sponsors are responsible for collecting these documents and maintaining the files in a central location in accordance with TBR Guideline G-070.
8. Dual-enrolled students are not eligible to participate. Students under the age of 18 must have a liability waiver signed by their parent or legal guardian.
9. Students are subject to enforcement of the home institution's student code of conduct and local, state, and federal laws at all times while traveling. Disciplinary issues must be reported by the group leaders to the appropriate campus official upon return to campus.

VIII. [Recruitment, Admission, Orientation, Participation, Program Evaluation and Re-entry](#)

- A. TBR Office of Student Success will publish on the system office website, links to international education programs offered by individual TBR institutions.
 1. All institutions and the TnCIS are responsible for notifying the Vice Chancellor for Student Success of all international education

courses when schedules are confirmed regardless of the direction of the course or program to be offered.

2. Institutions are responsible for creating program recruitment/advising materials and/or advising and recruitment efforts which accurately represent the program and include selection criteria based on appropriate academic standards, cultural and educational objectives, estimated cost, financial aid, health insurance requirements, services provided, vaccinations, visa responsibilities and legal proceedings. Students should be informed of these issues at the time of admission.

IX. [Admission/Educational Standards](#)

- A. Institutions must have pre-established educational standards for all students whether from TBR institutions or from outside who elect to study in an international setting.
 1. Each institution will develop minimum GPA requirements, selection criteria, and enrollment status for students studying internationally either independently or in international education programs.
- B. Credit is offered for individual courses within international education programs with the full measure of demand and academic rigor, not merely for the purpose of travel or touring in a foreign location. Institutions must establish a comprehensive policy on the transfer of credit and transcript evaluation from international institutions.
- C. TBR System institutions, in consultation with faculty and departments, will grant appropriate academic credit for coursework successfully completed on educational programs abroad which they operate or sponsor.
- D. Each TBR institution will inform participants as completely and accurately as possible as to the process that it follows in awarding credit for

international education and provide academic advising to facilitate integration of coursework abroad with a participant's major field and degree requirements.

- E. Individual institutions must have policies as to the acceptability of academic courses completed in an international setting to the major field requirements.
- F. Institutions must have grade appeal policies in place to assist students wishing to appeal an unsatisfactory grade or removal from an academic course taught in an international setting by non-TBR faculty.
- G. All international study offerings including study-abroad programs awarding academic credit to students enrolled in TBR institutions or consortia within or outside the TBR system must comply with regional accreditation and/or TBR standards.
- H. Institutions must ensure that global study opportunities regardless of the provider equate in contact hours with those expected of students matriculating at the home institution per TBR instructional hour policy.
- I. Institutions must establish an equivalency for international study courses offered by the institution itself or through an international education program, TBR sponsored or external consortia, or international institution in order to offer credit at the home institution.
- J. Financial Aid
 - 1. Due to the complexity of offering classes or programs internationally, institutions are responsible for developing appropriate implementation timelines which allow for the student to apply for financial aid.
 - 2. Students who are receiving financial aid are not allowed to change from credit to audit once funds have been disbursed.

3. Proof of Acceptance

- a. Students must provide documentation of acceptance into international education programs to the student's financial aid office as requested and establish policies for payment schedules for tuition and program fees which take in consideration both the disbursement schedule of financial aid monies and the departure dates for international education programs.

K. Orientation and Participation

1. Students with Disabilities

- a. TBR institutions shall attempt to work with institutions abroad to provide reasonable access for students with disabilities.
- b. Institutions shall inform students that it cannot, however, guarantee any particular access.

2. Individual institutions may, at their discretion, require students, faculty or staff to provide signed documentation of having received pre-travel advice and counseling, as well as relevant vaccinations, anti-malarial prophylaxis, and other medical interventions consistent with appropriate medical practice.

3. Institutions may restrict participation in an international program for participants, program directors and group leaders, and faculty instructors determined to be at excessive medical risk.

4. All students and faculty, whether program directors or instructional faculty, are required to have documentable medical insurance with covered medical treatment outside of U.S. borders at a minimum of \$100,000 per accident or sickness as well as evacuation and repatriation insurance combined minimum of \$50,000 in order to

participate in study abroad. Institutions are encouraged to purchase group insurance to cover evacuation and repatriation on behalf of students and faculty. (Currently, the TnCIS purchases group insurance on behalf of students and faculty engaging in TnCIS programs.)

L. Evaluations

1. All participants and international program leaders are expected to complete post-program evaluation forms to gather data on the effectiveness of recruitment, admissions, pre-departure orientation, the educational and personal value of program components while abroad, re-entry, and recommendations for continuation or termination of the trip in the future.
2. For programs operated by the TnCIS, the TnCIS will summarize the results of the evaluations and forward a summary to all campuses with enrolled students in order to facilitate data-based decision-making on each campus.
3. For all non-TnCIS international engagements, institutions must conduct their own evaluations for inclusion in campus planning of internationalization activities.

X. [Host Country Consideration](#)

- A. To promote the free exchange of ideas and knowledge, no restrictions shall be placed on the establishment or maintenance of programs in other countries based on the political, religious, racial, ethnic, or ideological characteristics of a host country or its government.

XI. [Fiscal, Management and Educational Standards](#)

- A. Individual institutions must have fiscal, risk management and educational standards for international education programs whether offered by the institution through consortia or other arrangement.
 - 1. Institutions are responsible for determining if there are additional demands for international education programs in any specific location or for any specific field unmet by any TBR institution or affiliate program.
 - 2. Institutions must consider affordability including startup costs, convenience and stability of a site when developing an international education program.
 - 3. Each institution must establish and include in their general student information published policies which allow students to register for classes, earn credit, obtain financial aid, pay tuition and international education fees, and to obtain refund and or withdraw for all international education programs.
 - 4. Institutional policies must be established including deadlines for the collection of tuition and fees from TBR students for international education and the transfer to the TBR related consortium.
 - 5. Institutions must make appropriate arrangements to use existing accounting and reporting procedures for all international travel for program directors or group leaders.
- B. Program Audits and Course Evaluations
 - 1. Individual institutions shall establish an evaluation for individual courses and for all international education programs to determine the continued academic value and financial viability of each program.

2. Course evaluation procedures and measures must be the same or equivalent to those of the home institution.
3. At a minimum the program evaluation must include perceived strengths and weaknesses, the projected and actual costs of the program, both in terms of financial cost and in-kind costs contributed by the program director and program staff, program enhancements or improvements needed, strategies for improvement and lessons learned that can be a good tool for future Program Directors or Group Leaders.
4. The evaluation should include student assessments, as appropriate, as well as a full evaluation completed by the Program Director or Group Leader.

XII. Financial Management

A. Financial Policies

1. Institutions must establish financial policies specific to international education programs using approved state accounts, with appropriate management and auditing procedures.

B. Financial procedures for institution-based study abroad programs

1. Budgeting
 - a. Each study abroad program is expected to be financially self-sustaining over time and be accountable for good financial management practices.
 - b. A projected budget must be completed by the Study Abroad Program Director and submitted to the sponsoring institution's Chief Business Officer or his/her designee.

2. The budgeting process for study abroad programs should be based on a reasonable projection of operating costs in the host country, including consideration of projected currency exchange rates.
 - a. The budget should clearly identify which expenses are to be paid from tuition and mandatory course fees and which expenses are to be paid from the student-specific program fee revenue.
 - b. The budget should specify if the expense is for the employee or students.
 - c. Program fee revenue should only be used for student expenses.
3. Budgeting for instructional costs paid from the unrestricted educational & general fund may consider both tuition revenues and state appropriations generated by student enrollments in study abroad programs, consistent with budgeting for other academic programs.
4. The college as a whole should maintain sufficient unrestricted fund balances to ensure that the institution can meet reasonable contingencies that may arise during the operation of the program.

C. Registration and Fee Payment

1. Each institution is responsible for the charging of tuition (maintenance fees and/or out-of-state tuition) and fees, receipt of student payments, administering financial aid, registering students and reporting of grades in the same manner as domestic programs.
2. Study Abroad Offices and program directors should provide the Business Office necessary information about each student and his/her appropriate program charges no later than three weeks prior

to travel, so that these can be entered into the institution's student information system.

3. Study abroad fees generally consist of two components:
 - a. Tuition and mandatory student fees related to the actual registration for classes.
 - (1) All study abroad students (with the exception of TnCIS students-see 3.a.(3)) pay a minimum of tuition and applicable mandatory fees. However, this does not prohibit the use of scholarships from any source of funding to pay for the tuition and applicable mandatory fees.
 - (2) Tuition and mandatory fees should be assessed by the regular student information system when registration occurs.
 - (3) Institutions should not collect tuition for students enrolled in TnCIS study abroad programs. Regular tuition and any regular mandatory fees should be assessed and charged to an institutional scholarship expense account. However, TnCIS students will be assessed a TnCIS program fee.
 - b. Program specific fees (for travel, lodging, meals, exchange rate variance, etc.)
 - (1) These program fees should be assessed in the student information system whenever possible.
 - (2) The payment deadlines and refund schedules for these fees will vary from program to program.
4. Accounting

- a. Financial activity attributable to institutional study abroad programs is recorded as follows:
 - (1) Student tuition and applicable mandatory fee revenue is assessed and recorded in General funds (E&G) as unrestricted revenue.
 - (2) Salaries and benefits of program instructional faculty should be paid from applicable departmental unrestricted E&G funds unless there is an applicable restricted grant for the faculty salary and benefits.
 - (3) Program fee revenue and related expenses are recorded in a restricted E&G account specific to the responsible program or office. Only student-specific expenses should be paid from the restricted E&G account. Typical student-specific costs include travel, lodging, tours, meals, event fees, and student supplies.
 - (4) If an account has been inactive for eighteen months, with no deposits or expenditures, any excess funds remaining in the account must be transferred to another study abroad program fund or to a contingency fund.
- b. The activity's restricted program funds should be monitored and regularly reconciled by the institution's Business Office or Study Abroad Office.
 - (1) It should also be verified that only student activity-related expenses are charged to the restricted self-supporting funds.

- (2) The institution may choose to refund residual balances in the restricted program fund among activity participants, within 60 days of completion of the trip, or use this money to establish and maintain a contingency account.
 - (3) The use of contingency funds must have the prior approval of the Study Abroad Office and the Business Office.
 - c. Financial activity attributable to TnCIS study abroad program revenues and disbursements should be recorded in the institution's agency fund.
- 5. Acquiring Goods and Services Abroad
 - a. To the maximum extent possible, arrangements for goods and services needed while abroad should be paid by the institution directly to the vendor.
 - (1) However, there are situations where payment for goods and services abroad must be rendered at the time they are acquired. In these situations, institutions may utilize several methods to make payments while abroad.
 - (2) Any of the following can be used for purchases and expenses associated with a study abroad program:
 - (a) Procurement card;
 - (b) Check request;
 - (c) Stored value/pre-paid card;
 - (d) Traveler's check;

- (e) Cash advance/petty cash advance to an authorized institutional representative;
 - (f) Direct payment by an authorized institutional representative from personal funds, with a reimbursement request to follow.
 - b. Study abroad programs should comply with all applicable TBR and institution policies regarding procurement and use of these payment methods.
- 6. Travel Advances/Petty Cash Advances
 - a. Each institution will have the authority to determine the best way to handle payment of purchases and expenses for its study abroad programs.
 - b. Institutions may also allow for travel advances/petty cash to pay for large expenses abroad. However, due to the risks and responsibilities associated with petty cash, its use should be limited to those situations where other payment alternatives are not an option.
 - c. All cash advances should follow current institution policies.
 - d. The employee must include the estimated foreign expenses that will be required to be paid in cash, along with an explanation of why they cannot be paid for with a credit card or direct billing arrangement.
 - e. The employee must provide information to clearly show the business purpose of the expenses and documentation to support the expenses claimed.

- f. Within 30 days of return, the employee must complete a travel expense voucher and submit itemized receipts for all expenses paid from the advance.
 - (1) If the expenses were less than the amount of advance received, all remaining funds must be returned to the institution.
 - (2) If costs were more than what was provided in the advance for expenses that are approved or integrally related to the educational aspects of the program, the employee may receive reimbursement for these expenses.

7. Reimbursement

- a. Employees are responsible for keeping copies of original receipts to verify that expenses were valid and related to the program.
 - (1) If it isn't possible to obtain original receipts for program-related expenses, the employee must keep a log listing all expenses and ask the person providing the service or another person on the trip (preferably another employee) to sign and document what was provided.
 - (2) The institution will hold the employee financially responsible for all charges for which there are no receipts or log entries.
 - (3) The employee will also be responsible for all expenses that are not approved according to TBR or institution regulations, as well as those not integrally related to the educational aspects of the program.

- b. Whether the employee owes money back to the institution or is eligible for reimbursement, he/she is responsible for completing the Travel Expense Report and submitting it with all appropriate receipts within 30 days following their return to the United States.
 - (1) Reimbursements that are not submitted within a reasonable amount of time are considered taxable by the IRS and must be processed through the payroll system.
- c. The following items must be completed and submitted to the Business Office no later than 30 days after the conclusion of the study abroad trip:
 - (1) Documentation of foreign exchange rates used.
 - (a) This will only apply if funds were exchanged during the program. (www.oanda.com is a good resource for currency conversion)
 - (b) If currency is bought in advance, please provide documentation of the rate at which the currency was originally purchased.
- d. Required documentation of expenses – including receipts for goods and services purchased, and signature sheets for cash allowances distributed during the program.
 - (1) Do not include disallowed expenses on the Travel Expense Summary and Travel Expense Report. Examples of disallowed expenses include personal items, alcohol, etc.

- e. The Travel Expense Summary and a summary of travel advances should be submitted with the Travel Expense Report.
 - f. The Travel Expense Report must be filled out in U.S. dollars and signed by the Study Abroad Program Director or his/her designee, as well as the department chair before being submitted to the Business Office.
 - g. Upon return from the trip, remaining institution funds must be deposited in the Business Office.
 - h. If foreign currency was distributed to the program director in advance of the trip, documentation must be submitted with the Travel Expense Report. This also applies if foreign currency was returned to the Study Abroad/Business Office.
8. International Education Fee Usage
- a. Recognizing the need for flexibility while maintaining accountability, the TBR has established the optional assessment of an international education fee to be paid by each student enrolled in the institutions.
 - b. Individual institutions have authority to allocate funds to activities in support of globalization efforts for the campus, including international professional development of the faculty.
 - c. Institutions should use a portion of the revenue generated through the internationalization fee for study abroad scholarships.
 - d. Individual institutions are responsible for establishing an infrastructure to determine the allocation of the international

education fees collected from students to promote internationalization at the home institution. The infrastructure should include student representation or input received from the entire study body.

- e. Employee Compensation/Benefits provided by Program Abroad
 - (1) An allocation of salary and benefit costs for those involved in providing direct support for international programs are allowable but should be controlled and kept to a minimum.
 - (2) A program shall provide upon request disclosure of any salaries and/or other benefits provided to any employee of a TBR institution which are paid for or subsidized by international education fees or secured from any vendor that is providing services to students.
- f. Faculty Compensation
 - (1) Faculty engaged in directing or teaching study abroad courses receive remuneration from their home institutions. Again, direct instructional cost should be charged to the appropriate departmental budget and not to the international education fee budget.
 - (2) Faculty compensation for summer session and inter-session international educational programs whether campus-based or operated through the TnCIS are not subject to Policy 5.02.04.10 Faculty Compensation during Summer Session and Inter-sessions.

- (3) Faculty teaching or directing study abroad courses on behalf of the TnCIS must submit an Adjunct Faculty Contract and a travel authorization form at their home institution, which will be forwarded to the TnCIS Office by the home institution.
 - (4) For non-PSCC faculty, the TnCIS will process the contract through the PSCC Accounting Office, which will issue a Dual Services Agreement to the faculty member's home institution along with a purchase order.
 - (5) Institutions will invoice PSCC for the services to receive reimbursement for paying the faculty members directly for their service.
 - g. Faculty are expected to follow through on the agreed upon international study course and adhere to all institutional policies once abroad. In the event that a faculty member cancels their participation in the trip or is directed to return from a trip due to failure to follow institutional policies, the faculty member will be charged for any travel costs assumed by the institution in advance of the trip or the faculty member will be held responsible for costs associated with their return home.
- 9. Emergency Reserve/Contingency Fund
 - a. The college, as a whole, should maintain sufficient unrestricted fund balances to ensure that the institution can meet reasonable contingencies, emergencies, and unforeseen problems of students, faculty, and staff engaged

in TBR sponsored or supported international programs or courses.

XIII. Use of Technology Abroad

- A. The TBR requires that its institutions fully comply with federal regulations that control the conditions under which certain information, technologies and commodities can be exported to a foreign country, person, or entity, including U.S. citizens in a foreign country.
 1. Institutions are responsible for implementing export control procedures to determine whether an activity is covered under export control regulations, whether the U.S. Department of State's International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) 22 CFR §120-130, U. S. Department of Commerce's Export Administration regulations (EAR) 15 CFR § 734-774 or the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) 31 CFR §500-599.
 2. All faculty, staff, or students involved in international travel including study abroad, restricted research, international collaborations, or foreign exchanges that risk export or violation of the regulations must comply with the provisions of any license (or other governmental approval), policy, procedure, or campus based Technology Control Plan (TCP) as required by ITAR. Before traveling internationally, faculty/staff/students should determine whether any item, device, component, or document is covered by ITAR and/or requires a license or other government approval/agreement for export or import as defined in those regulations. Where unsure, faculty/staff/students should consult with their general counsel's office or institutional research office.
 3. Institutions are responsible for determining if self-disclosure of any violations, real or perceived, of the export control regulations or

TCP occurs during the courses of the sponsored activity to the federal agency is required.

B. European Union General Data Protection – EU GDPR

1. Faculty and institutions must comply with the provisions of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (“Regulation on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data”, “the EU GDPR”), when students are participating in a program taking place in the European Union.
2. All students participating in programs in the European Union must sign NOTICE REGARDING PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA AND REQUEST OF CONSENT FOR THEIR PROCESSING - STUDENTS FROM THE HOME CAMPUS ON STUDY ABROAD IN THE EUROPEAN UNION (Ex. 1.).

Exhibits

For Exhibits, click the Attachments button at the top right of the page.



Sources

Authority

T.C.A. § 49-8-203; All State and Federal statutes, codes, Acts, rules and regulations referenced in this procedure.

History

Board Meeting, March 26, 2009; Revision and incorporation of Guidelines A-076, B-130, and S-040 approved by Board on December 13, 2018, Revised at Board meeting April 7, 2020; Revisions approved at August 12, 2020 Special Called Board Meeting.

Related Policies

[4.02.01.00 Approvals of Agreements and Contracts \(formerly 1:03:02:10\)](#)

[4.02.10.00 Purchasing Policy](#)

[3.02.00.01 General Policy on Student Conduct & Disciplinary Sanctions](#)

[3.02.01.00 Student Due Process Procedure](#)

[S-020 Confidentiality of Student Records](#)