One of the many responsibilities of the Faculty Leader is to handle any emergencies or crises that may affect program students and faculty while the program is in session. This section will assist you in understanding what constitutes an emergency in the terms of a study abroad program and will explain what your responsibilities are in the face of one. It will also introduce specific emergencies and outline the procedures you should follow if one of them occurs. After any incident, the Study Abroad Office may request a debrief meeting upon the faculty leader’s return to campus in order to determine how best to assist in future incidents. These guidelines were developed with resources provided, in part, by University of Iowa, University of Southern Alabama and other individuals and institutions.

What is an emergency?
The word “emergency” is quite broad in meaning. It can include any number of potential situations - illness, injury, crime, natural disaster, or political upheaval - and it can involve any number of individuals. The first actions taken in response to an emergency and the readiness of the response determine whether the situation is contained or if it worsens.

The Study Abroad office defines an emergency in relation to a study abroad program as the following:

- A serious injury or illness can be defined as one requiring hospitalization of a participant or faculty member, or one that makes it impossible for the participant or faculty member to continue the program.
- A situation involving a criminal act against one or more participants in the program; an act of terrorism that poses a threat to the security of the program participants; a natural disaster; an act of war; or other event causing or threatening harm to one or more participants in the program.
- A “perceived emergency” results from events that are not immediately threatening to the health or safety of program students or staff, but which may be viewed as such by family and friends at home, or by the media. In many instances, a perceived emergency must be treated as a real emergency.

Planning ahead
Prior to departure, The Study Abroad Office routinely gathers information from students to keep on file in the event of an emergency situation. This includes information about who to contact in the event of an emergency, flight itinerary, and medical insurance policy information. All students on Ball State University study abroad programs are enrolled in sufficient coverage for the duration of the program. We provide students with information about their coverage and Insurance cards prior to departure.

Students on the program and Study Abroad Office staff should know how to reach you at all times during the program. A 24/7 contact number is required of all programs. It is extremely helpful if students carry emergency contact information with them at all times. If all emergency contact information is not available prior to departure (for example, if you are activating a cell phone to carry with you upon arrival and cannot know the number in advance) you should provide this information to students and Study Abroad Office staff as soon as possible. You may want to create wallet-sized cards for your students with emergency contact information, or ask students to create their own during in-country program orientation. Aside from
your own in-country contact information, other useful numbers for students to keep with them at all times are: the main Study Abroad Office number and the Ball State University Police emergency number; the number for the Program Assistant in-country in the event that a student needs help and you cannot be reached; the number (and address) of the student’s host family, if applicable; and the number of a reliable and secure taxi service.

It is helpful to have the following information from you and any other faculty or staff traveling with you prior to departure: your own flight itinerary and emergency contact information, a copy of your passport, and information about how to contact you and the group at any given time during the program.

Before a program starts, you should register the program dates and location(s) with the US State Department STEP program. This will allow the group to be notified if the US embassy in your host country reports any changes in local conditions deemed to present a potential threat to US citizens abroad.

Faculty Leader's general responsibilities
As Faculty Leader, you have the duty to fulfill the following responsibilities in the face of an emergency:

- Attend to the immediate needs of the student(s) involved.
- Remove other participants from danger (if applicable).
- Contact (as appropriate) local medical emergency officials, law enforcement officers, the U.S. Embassy/Consulate, and the BSU Study Abroad Office.
- Record all steps taken in response to the incident.

Ball State University infrastructure for dealing with emergencies
Many emergencies or crises affecting study abroad programs can be properly addressed by the Faculty Leader and the Study Abroad Office. Proper communication between these two parties, along with consultation with any appropriate BSU office, can usually lead to the resolution of the problem. However, should a serious injury, death or emergency take place while the program is in session, the Study Abroad Office will likely reach out to various academic and administrative units and personnel across campus to develop a plan of action to deal with all aspects of the emergency.

Releasing information to the media
As Faculty Leader, you should not speak to the media (domestic or international) unless authorized to do so by the Study Abroad Office or the BSU Office of University Relations. Whenever possible, statements to the media should be made exclusively through the BSU Office of University Relations or another designated spokesperson. Adhering to this policy ensures that only one source releases information to the media and limits conflicting or misinformation from being released.

If necessary, the Office of University Relations, in consultation with the Study Abroad Office, BSU General Counsel and the Faculty Leader, will prepare a statement for the press and (depending upon the scope of the incident) set up a system for responding to telephone inquiries.

Contact with parents and home campuses
In emergency situations, parents, immediate family members or friends of students involved may contact you directly. If non-BSU students are attending your program, representatives from their home campuses may also attempt to contact you directly. As any emergency presents a stressful and potentially confusing situation, you are asked to:

- Briefly reiterate whatever information you have already provided to the Study Abroad Office to date;
- Ask anyone calling, emailing or otherwise contacting you from the US to contact the Study Abroad Office directly for further information and inquiries rather than contacting you directly; and
- If necessary, politely explain that your request is based on standing policy intended to ensure a clear chain of communication to free your time to address the situation at hand.
- Any new information or changes in the situation should be reported as soon as possible to the Study Abroad Office. Our staff will be available to play a key role in disseminating emergency-related information as necessary. During any emergency, your efforts as the Faculty Leader are
invaluable, and your time will be best spent focusing on the situation at hand and any steps that can be taken locally to remedy, improve, assess and report the situation.
Medical and Mental Health Emergencies

Preparing for health emergencies
Before a health emergency presents itself, it is important to first understand how health insurance may (or may not) cover students while abroad and to understand what students learn about preventing or dealing with health problems prior to their departure. Also, there are steps that you should take as Faculty Leader to prepare for any health situation (emergency or otherwise) that might occur.

Health insurance
All BSU study abroad program participants are required to have approved health insurance that provides coverage while they are overseas. Prior to departure, students are provided information about coverage and an insurance card. This information assists students in determining their health plan coverage while outside the United States. It is the responsibility of the student to understand their health insurance policy. However, you should be aware that their plan generally requires that the student pay up front for all medical expenses incurred while abroad. (Credit cards are invaluable for such situations and students are instructed to bring at least one credit card with them.) The student will then submit a claim to the insurance company for reimbursement of expenses. Full time students working towards a degree are eligible to apply for an International Student Identity Card (ISIC), a common supplemental insurance option that provides additional medical coverage along with other benefits.

Student preparation
The Study Abroad Office provides a general online pre-departure orientation that all Ball State University students are required to complete prior to participation in the program. The orientation discusses health insurance, immunizations, and tips for staying healthy. In addition to the online pre-departure orientation module, each individual study abroad Program Leader should provide program specific pre-departure meeting that addresses health issues in relation to the specific host country. If a student becomes ill while abroad, they are instructed to seek appropriate medical care and to inform the Faculty Leader.

Faculty Leader’s preparation responsibilities
As the Faculty Leader, you are responsible for familiarizing yourself with health facilities in the host city – for example, health services on campuses, local doctors, and/or hospitals. In preparation for any emergency, you should locate the office of both a general practitioner and an ob/gyn. Also, you should find a reputable hospital or clinic for emergency situations. If the host country is not English-speaking it is beneficial to locate at least one, if not two, English-speaking physicians. Host institution and your insurance provider contacts are often helpful in orienting you to local health resources.

During on-site orientation, distribute a list of the health resources you have located to the students. Review with the students the procedures they should follow if they become sick – inform program staff and seek medical care. Assure them that, if necessary, a member of the program staff will accompany them to the doctor. You should also review any general health precautions (if any) that students should follow while abroad. For example, don’t drink the tap water, don’t eat raw vegetables, etc. If you think important, you can have a local physician speak at orientation about health issues. In some countries, students are able to obtain medications over the counter that in the US would only be available with a prescription. Encourage students to seek medical advice from a doctor rather than taking new medications on their own.

Provide the students with a phone number where they can reach you or another program contact 24 hours a day in the event of serious illness or injury.

If a student informs you that s/he is sick and medical care seems warranted, it is your duty to advise them on how to seek care. You may have reviewed these details with them during orientation, but it is wise to reiterate it. Some students may need a little encouragement or pushing to see a physician while abroad.
Specific Medical and Mental Health Emergency Procedures

During the course of the program, it is likely that at least several of the students will become ill. The most common health problems are not likely to be serious. Rather, they will be respiratory ailments or gastrointestinal disorders caused by a change in diet, drinking water or climate. However, a situation may occur that is much more serious in nature – for example, a student may be involved in a car accident, fall while hiking, contract a serious illness, stop taking medication for a mental health problem, or abuse drugs or alcohol. While these types of situations are not the norm, as Faculty Leader, you still need to familiar with the action you should take in case they do occur.

This section will provide procedures you should follow in the case of serious injury or illness, a mental health problem, substance abuse, or death of a student. Please note that it is impossible to provide specific procedures for every possible situation. Use the following procedures as a guide to your response.

Eating disorders
Eating disorders are often exacerbated abroad when students do not have as much control over their diet as they typically do at home. The signs and symptoms of eating disorders that may be recognized by a Faculty Leader, or by fellow program participants include:

**Anorexia Nervosa**
- Significant weight loss (to less than 85% of ideal weight for height with no known medical reason for the weight loss)
- Denial of the seriousness of the weight loss or low body weight
- Distortion of how one's body is experienced
- Excessive influence of body and weight on self-evaluation
- Intense fear of gaining weight, even when underweight
- Dry skin or sallow complexion
- Appearance or increase in fine hair on the body
- Lightheadedness and dizziness or fainting
- Sensitivity to cold

**Bulimia Nervosa or Binge-Eating Disorder**
- Episodic binge-eating (eating an unusually large amount of food within a certain period of time)
- Episodic purging behavior, including vomiting, laxative use, diuretic use, or enemas to prevent weight gain; or fasting or excessive exercise to prevent weight gain
- Over concern with body weight and shape
- Swelling of cheeks, hands, and feet
- Abrasions on knuckles
- Headaches
- Fatigue

**How to help a person with an eating disorder**
If you suspect a program participant has an eating disorder, first contact the Study Abroad Office. We will reach out to on-campus student health and counseling resources for direction. When working with the student, in a caring and nonjudgmental way, tell the person what you have observed (anorexic or bulimic behavior) and suggest they seek appropriate physical and psychological assessment. If the individual denies there is a problem, consult with the Study Abroad Office to determine what to do next. If you learn that the individual has sought, or agrees to begin treatment, be natural and caring, but do not discuss eating, weight, or appearance. Do not insist that the person eat or change attitudes. In extreme situations, hospitalization may be required. Foreign medical services for eating disorders (especially counseling centers) are often unavailable. Under such circumstances, it may be preferable for the student to return to the U.S. for treatment. Consult with the Study Abroad Office concerning parental involvement.
Serious injury or illness
Sample situations that fall under the category of a serious injury or illness might include:
• an auto accident
• an accident resulting from recreational activities (mountain climbing, hiking, skiing etc.)
• a serious illness
• a loss of consciousness
• a drug overdose

Your response to a serious accident or injury should be as follows:
• Assist the student in finding appropriate medical care at a reputable hospital/clinic.
• Talk to the physician treating the student to assess the severity of the situation.
• Keep a log of your discussions with the attending physician, the student involved, and/or staff from the host institution. Record the circumstances that led up to the accident/illness.
• Contact the Study Abroad Office to inform them of what has happened. Depending on the severity of the illness/injury, the Study Abroad Office may contact the student’s “emergency contact”. The Study Abroad Office may also inform other campus officials if it appears necessary. Do not speak to the media unless you have been instructed to do so by the Study Abroad Office.
• Continue to monitor the situation by maintaining contact with the attending physician. Also, continue your contact with the Study Abroad Office. In some situations, the student may need to be evacuated in order to receive appropriate medical treatment.
• Provide appropriate information to the other program participants.
• If the student should die as a result of their injuries/illness, follow the procedures outlined in the corresponding section of these guidelines.

Mental health or substance abuse problems
Mental health or substance abuse problems can develop into potentially dangerous situations if not addressed appropriately. Behaviors that may be indicative of a mental health or substance abuse problem include:
• missing classes on a frequent basis
• asking to take less than a full academic load
• withdrawing from friends and activities
• exhibiting unusual behavior

These behaviors could be indicative of any number of problems, such as clinical depression, an eating disorder, or alcohol or drug abuse. Each mental health case is unique and requires that an appropriate treatment plan be developed in consultation with a mental healthcare professional. If you observe a student with any of the above symptoms/behaviors, take the following actions so that an appropriate treatment plan can be developed.
• Gather details of the situation by speaking to the student, their homestay family, friends, and/or instructors. Record what you learn.
• Contact the Study Abroad Office and inform them of your observations. The Study Abroad Office will contact appropriate BSU services, including Counseling Services, Health Center and Student Rights office to discuss the potential causes of the student’s behavior and ascertain an appropriate course of action.
• If recommended by the Study Abroad Office, arrange for the student to see a local psychologist/psychiatrist. The student’s insurance provider will assist you with this.
• If the student receives treatment from a local psychologist/psychiatrist, the insurance provider will maintain contact with the local professional to monitor the student’s treatment. (This takes place only with student approval.)
• Continue to monitor the student’s behavior and inform the Study Abroad Office of any changes.
Severe psychiatric or substance abuse problems
If a student’s behavior is more extreme than that outlined in the previous section, a more aggressive response is warranted. A student with a more serious psychiatric or substance abuse problem might:
• exhibit severe disruptive behavior with a suspected psychiatric basis
• be severely emotionally disturbed, create disturbances, or be a danger to themselves or others
• attempt suicide or speak to someone about doing so
• be severely disruptive due to alcohol or drug use

Your response should be as follows:
• Gather information about the situation by talking to the student and any other key people. Try to learn about the history of the problem and record specific behaviors. Keep a log of what you learn.
• Assess the extent of the emergency and the student’s support network (family, friends, roommates etc.)
• Assess whether the student will voluntarily seek help. Refer to the subsections below for next steps.

If the student will voluntarily seek help:
• Arrange for the student to see a counseling professional immediately. Have the student escorted to the appointment by the Faculty Leader or Program Assistant, as well as one or two supportive people.
• If necessary, arrange for the student to be hospitalized. In some cases, a student may need to be evacuated in order to receive appropriate treatment.
• As soon as the student is stable, contact the Study Abroad Office to brief them about the situation.
• With the student’s consent, the Study Abroad Office will notify the student’s designated emergency contact person and other involved parties on a need-to-know basis. Be prepared to talk to the emergency contact yourself, if requested.
• If the student does not give consent to contact their designated contact person, continue to work with the student’s local counselor and the Study Abroad Office (who will consult BSU’s Health Services, Student Rights, and Counseling Center) to plan follow-up support.
• Prepare to assist and support other involved persons.
• If the student’s condition continues to be a threat to their own or others’ safety or if it is disrupting the educational process for their themselves or others, contact the Study Abroad Office. The Study Abroad Office, in consultation with BSU offices, will decide upon appropriate action.

If the student will not voluntarily seek help, but does not appear to be dangerous to themselves and/or others:
• Assess who can be called upon to persuade the student to seek help. Work with those persons to persuade the student to obtain treatment.
• Contact the Study Abroad Office to brief them on the situation. The Study Abroad Office will consult with the BSU support offices about appropriate steps/treatment.
• Establish behavioral limits with the student. Put the limits in writing. Make it clear to the student that if the behavior continues, further limits, including dismissal from the program, will be instituted.
• If the disruptive behavior continues, notify the Study Abroad Office. After consulting with BSU support offices, the Study Abroad Office will determine whether additional measures (including dismissal) are appropriate.

If the student will not voluntarily seek help and appears to be dangerous to themselves and/or others:
• Assess who can be called upon to persuade the student to seek help. Work with those persons to persuade the student to obtain treatment.
• Contact the Study Abroad Office and brief them on the situation. Study Abroad will consult with BSU support offices about appropriate steps/treatment.
If necessary, and if such procedures exist in the host country, the Faculty Leader may petition to have the student involuntarily committed to a hospital. In most circumstances, however, arrangements will be made to have the student sent back to the United States for treatment.
Legal Emergencies

Health emergencies are not the only type of crisis that can affect a study abroad program. Legal emergencies or situations that affect the personal safety of a student and/or involve local law enforcement officials can also take place. For example: a student may be the victim of a crime, be reported missing, or be arrested for committing a crime.

Preparing for legal emergencies
Legal emergencies do not always involve a crime against a student. There are times when a student may be the one who has committed the crime. In the pre-departure orientation module, students are informed that while abroad, they are subject to the laws of the host country. If they are arrested, there is little that the U.S. Embassy or program staff can do to get them out of jail. Prior to departing, all program participants sign a form called “Conduct Agreement”. By signing this form, a student affirms the following, I will obey local law and custom and behave in a manner that is respectful of the rights and well-being of others. I understand that in the event I violate any law of another country and am arrested, imprisoned or prosecuted, neither Ball State University nor the United States of America can necessarily bring to bear an amelioration or reversal of judgment in any such situation.

Faculty Leader’s responsibilities
As Faculty Leader, you are responsible with familiarizing yourself with the phone numbers and location of local law enforcement and the U.S. Embassy in the host country and providing those numbers to the students.

During on-site orientation, review general safety precautions with the group. Discuss what areas or neighborhoods of the city are not safe (day and/or night) and review what modes of transportation are the most secure. Remind students that it is always good policy to let someone (a host family member, staff member, or fellow student) know where they will be and when they expect to be back, especially at night. If they are traveling out of town for the night, they must inform program staff where they are going, where they plan to stay, and when they expect to be back. Inform students that if they do not follow this policy and if they are reported missing by a friend or host family, the program has the right to contact their emergency contact person in an attempt to determine their whereabouts. It is also important to talk about particular behaviors that would be normal for them to do in the U.S. (for example: drinking alcohol, going out at night alone, taking a taxi at night), but that might put them at risk in the new culture. Stress that if they are the victim of a crime that they should not hesitate to inform program staff. Provide them with a phone number where they can reach you or another program contact 24 hours a day.

It is also important to again review with the group that they are subject to the laws of the host country. Tell them about any differences between U.S and the host country’s laws of which they should be aware. (differences in drug laws are especially important.) Explain that there is likely to be little that you can do to assist them if they are arrested. Remind them that if arrested, their emergency contact person may be contacted by the Study Abroad Office.

Specific Legal Emergency Procedures
This section will outline procedures you should follow in the event of a specific legal emergency – crime against a student, sexual assault against a student, a missing student, and arrest of a student. Please note that no two emergencies are alike. The procedures discussed below should serve as a guide for your response. They may not cover every possible situation or case.
Crime against a student

When a student is a victim of a crime, it is most likely to be an incident such as a robbery, assault, or a fight. Sexual assault is covered below. If one of the students on your program is involved in such an incident, follow these procedures.

• Determine the identity and present location of the victim(s) and perpetrator(s). Ensure that the physical and emotional needs of the victim(s) are being attended to. Talk to the person who reported the crime and gain as many facts as possible. Identify the key persons involved. Keep a log of all information you gain.
• Contact campus security (if applicable) and the local police.
• Contact the Study Abroad Office and inform them about the incident. The Study Abroad Office will determine if any other individuals or offices at BSU or the host institution should be involved, especially in regard to supporting the victim.
• Brief the Study Abroad Office on a daily basis until the crisis has subsided. Inform the Study Abroad Office of any media inquiries. Remember that you should not talk to the media unless authorized to do so by the Study Abroad Office.

Sexual harassment/misconduct

If a student reports an incident sexual harassment/misconduct, including but not limited to non-consensual touching, non-consensual intercourse, dating domestic violence, stalking, rape or attempted rape, or other violent sexual assault, follow these procedures:

• Talk to the person reporting the incident and determine the identity and location of the victim.
• Discern if there is any physical injury or emotional disturbance and clarify with the victim the degree to which they wish to involve local authorities, i.e. the host institution and/or the local police.
• If there is obvious physical injury, ensure that the student receives urgent care. If there is no obvious physical injury, with the victim’s consent, have them transported to a local health facility.
• If there are obvious signs of emotional disturbance, consult a psychologist/psychiatrist and provide immediate support to the victim.
• Inform the student of the laws and procedures for dealing with sexual assault in the host country, as these may vary from those in the U.S. (For example, in the U.S. it is important to preserve evidence for court.)
• Maintain a log throughout the crisis.
• Contact the Study Abroad Office and inform them about the incident. The Study Abroad Office will consult with the BSU Title IX Coordinators to obtain advice about dealing with the crisis. With the student’s consent, the Study Abroad Office will also inform the student’s designated Emergency Contact person and aid the student in activating their support network.
• Do not talk to the media unless authorized to do so by the Study Abroad Office.
• Where the offender is a Ball State Student, please contact the Director of Study Abroad.

If the victim DECLINES assistance:

• Escort/transport the victim to home or designated location, if not already there.
• Inform the victim that you will contact them later to determine if assistance is desired.
• Provide the victim with the phone number of reputable hospital/clinic, psychologist/psychiatrist, and any other rape crisis resources that may exist (your insurance provider can assist). Provide law enforcement information as well. **See below for advice on how to encourage the victim to seek assistance.
• Contact the psychologist/psychiatrist and brief them of the situation. Inform them that the victim has refused assistance, but that they may be in contact.
• Contact the Study Abroad Office and brief them on the situation. The Study Abroad Office will consult with the Office of Student Rights to obtain advice about dealing with the crisis. With the student’s consent, the Study Abroad Office will also inform the student’s designated emergency contact person and aid the student in activating their support network.
• Write a log and clearly note the circumstances surrounding the offer of assistance and the student’s refusal to accept such assistance. Update the log as the crisis continues.
• Brief the Study Abroad Office on a regular basis.
• Do not speak to the media unless authorized to do so by the Study Abroad Office.
• Inform the student that the Study Abroad Office will relay details to the Title IX Coordinator

Encouraging the victim to seek assistance

**The following information is a guideline for encouraging the victim to seek assistance. The text is written as if you are speaking to a person who has been sexually assaulted.**

• Do not blame yourself. You did not ask to be assaulted and you are a victim of what happened.
• This is not the time to be alone. I am here to offer emotional support. You can get that support now, no matter when the assault occurred.
• Someone can accompany you to receive medical attention. Staff can provide assistance to go to the hospital or student health service to be examined immediately and treated for possible sexually transmitted diseases. You may have internal injuries of which you are not aware.
• Someone can accompany you when you speak to the authorities.
• Help and support, such as professional counseling, are available to you. You have been through a trauma and you owe it to yourself to get the help you need to deal with the event and your feelings.
• Additional information on Ball State University's Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Policy, as well as additional information about academic and accommodation measures, and be found here: [http://cms.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/studentrights/policiesandprocedures/studentcode/appen dixk](http://cms.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/studentrights/policiesandprocedures/studentcode/appen dixk)

Report of a missing student

If a student is reported missing (by a roommate, other program participant, host family or professor, for example), take the following action:
• Talk to the individual who has reported the student missing and any others (friends, professors, host family members, roommates) who might have knowledge of the student’s whereabouts. Try to determine when the student was last seen and/or the circumstances around which the student has been missing. Find out if s/he left information with anyone as to where s/he might be going. Also, find out if the student was engaging in any unusual behavior. Gather as much information as possible. Maintain a log.
• If you are unsuccessful in determining where the student is, inform host institution authorities of the situation. Contact the local police and check hospital admissions.
• Contact the Study Abroad Office and inform them of the situation.
• If the student has not been located within 24 hours of the first report of a disappearance, file a report with the local police.
• Contact the Study Abroad Office. If necessary, the Study Abroad Office contact the students designated emergency contact person.
• Provide appropriate information to other program participants.
• Once the student has been located, inform the Study Abroad Office and all appropriate persons on-site. The Study Abroad Office will notify the appropriate persons in the U.S. If necessary, activate procedures for “Serious Accident or Illness” or “Crime Against a Student”.
• Do not speak to the media unless authorized to do so by the Study Abroad Office.

Crime committed by a student

Typical crimes committed by study abroad students include theft, assault or possession of drugs. If a student is arrested, follow these procedures:
• Assess the situation as quickly as possible. Determine who, what, when, where, how and why. Begin writing a log.
• Immediately contact the U.S. Embassy Consular Officer. Ask the Consular Officer for the names of lawyers who can give the student legal help s/he requires and provide this information to the student (if possible). The Consular Officer should also work to ensure that the student’s human rights are not violated.
• When possible, contact the Study Abroad Office and brief them on the situation. The Study Abroad Office will contact the student’s emergency contact person. This person will be provided with contact information for the U.S. Embassy Officer.
• Visit the student wherever s/he is being held. Explain the legal procedures of the host country. Maintain close contact with the U.S. Embassy Officer assigned to the student.
• Provide regular updates to the Study Abroad Office until the crisis is resolved. The Study Abroad Office will maintain contact with the student’s emergency contact person.
• Do not speak to the media unless authorized to do so by the Study Abroad Office.
Political Emergencies and Natural Disasters

Political emergencies (coup d’etat, violence toward Americans, severe rioting, and civil unrest) and natural disasters (earthquake, flood, and typhoons) can also affect study abroad programs. This section of the handbook will outline how you should prepare to handle such an event and specific procedures you should follow should one take place.

Preparing for political emergencies and natural disasters
Many of the policies and structures that need to be in place to deal with a political emergency or natural disaster are those that ensure the safe running of the program on a daily basis. Below you will find a list of general security precautions that will aid in the handling of a potential crisis.

General security precautions
(adapted from Council on International Education Exchange (CIEE) General Security Precautions to be Taken On Site)

- Make sure there are no signs posted that identify your program as having an affiliation with the U.S.
- Familiarize yourself with the phone numbers and location of campus security (if applicable), the local police, and the U.S. Embassy. Keep these contact numbers within easy access.
- Keep up to date contact information for each student. Establish a procedure for contacting them in case of emergency.
- Make sure the students know how to reach you 24 hours a day in case of emergency.
- If a student is going away overnight, ask them to provide you with contact information.
- Discourage students from congregating in groups of Americans or foreigners and from spending time in restaurants and bars that are known to be frequented primarily by foreigners. (This helps with cultural integration as well.)
- Identify a travel agency that you would trust in case students need to be evacuated (the Study Abroad Office can assist).

Specific Political Emergency and Natural Disaster Procedures
In the event of a political crisis or a natural disaster, take the following action:

1. Contact all students to make sure they are safe and accounted for. If a student has been injured, make sure s/he seeks medical care. Caution all students about speculating on the situation and advise them to wait until clear information is available before contacting their family or friends in the U.S. Tell them that the Study Abroad Office will contact their Emergency Contacts to brief them on the situation.

2. Contact the U.S. Embassy or other official government agency and ask for advice and assistance. If the U.S. Embassy is closed, determine the location from which the Embassy is operating (i.e., another embassy in the host country or a U.S. Embassy in a neighboring country). Gather as much information as possible regarding the following:
- the target of the unrest and possible danger to U.S. citizens
- how to minimize danger to students
- the probable impact of the event on the availability of food, water, and medical supplies
- the intensity of the crisis
- the presence of emergency or military personnel
- the feasibility of continuing classes and other program activities

3. Immediately contact the Study Abroad Office and brief them about the situation. Your contact at the Study Abroad Office will:
- contact the U.S. Department of State’s Citizen Emergency Center at 1.202.501.4444 for suggestions and assistance
- contact the U.S. Embassy abroad
- contact U.S. study abroad offices at other institutions that have programs in the region;
- Contact students’ emergency contacts to inform them of the situation
- The Study Abroad Office will likely reach out to various academic and administrative units and personnel across campus to develop plans for maintaining communication with key people and organizations, for handling the media, and for maintaining contact with the students’ emergency contacts.
- The Study Abroad Office will brief you on the plan of action developed. If you think the plan needs to be modified, notify the Study Abroad Office.

4. Utilize all resources available to carry out the plan of action.

5. Once the crisis has ended, the Study Abroad Office will work with you to assess the impact of the event and determine what follow-up may or may not be required.

Some of the above procedures were adapted from “Special Report: Real and Perceived Emergencies in Study Abroad.” Brenda A. Robinson, California State University. NAFSA Newsletter, November 1990.
Death of a Student Procedures

The death of a student should be handled in the following manner:

- Verify the identity of the student. Gather as much information about the circumstances surrounding the death. Record all information that you gain.
- Contact the Study Abroad Office and speak with the Director of Study Abroad. The Study Abroad Office, in conjunction with other BSU officials, will notify the student’s designated emergency contact person and offer appropriate support; i.e., transportation arrangements, accommodations, arranging to meet with the physicians etc.
- Notify the U.S. Embassy or Consulate in the host country.
- The Study Abroad Office will coordinate a plan to deal with the situation. A network will be constructed to offer support to all involved parties, such as friends, roommates, and other program participants.
- The Study Abroad Office, working with the BSU Office of Student Affairs, will notify the appropriate offices at BSU. We will make sure that all appropriate paperwork is completed.
- If you are contacted by the media, do not give the name of the student or speak on behalf of BSU without the above step being completed. The Study Abroad Office, working with BSU’s Office of University Relations, will develop responses to media inquiries and make them available to you. See section on emergency management of this handbook for more details on how to handle media inquiries. Never speak on behalf of the host institution under any circumstance.
Ball State University Emergency Contact Information

BSU Study Abroad office
765 285-5422 - during business hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST
517 721-9540 - after business hours and on weekends. John Jensen, Director of Study Abroad

BSU University Police
765 285-1111

BSU Office of University Relations
765-285-1560 (After-hours calls will be directed to an on-call staff person.)
INCIDENT DOCUMENTATION FORM
Return to Study Abroad Office: Fax +1 (765) 285-3710

MY NAME: ____________________________________________

DATE: ________________________________________________

TIME: ________________________________________________

NAME OF CALLER: ____________________________________

CALLER CALL BACK NUMBER: ____________________________

LOCATION OF INCIDENT: ________________________________

WHO IS INVOLVED IN THE INCIDENT: ____________________

DATE OF INCIDENT: ____________________________________

TIME OF INCIDENT: ____________________________________

POLICE/EMERGENCY SERVICES NOTIFIED: Y/N

DESIGNATED TIME TO FOLLOW UP CALL: ____________________

DETAILS OF INCIDENT: __________________________________

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