



# OCS FACULTY LEADERS' HANDBOOK

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A HANDBOOK FOR WHITMAN FACULTY LEADING  
OFF-CAMPUS ACADEMIC TRIPS

CREATED BY:  
OFF-CAMPUS STUDIES  
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**Front Cover Photo:  
Crossroads Pollination Biology in Sweden**

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# Introduction

Dear faculty leader,

We are delighted that you will be serving as a faculty leader of a Whitman off-campus academic program. These programs offer an incredible opportunity for our students to study in a particular locale abroad with the benefit of the academic expertise of a member of the Whitman faculty.

The responsibilities of faculty members leading such trips go well beyond the classroom. During your time abroad with students, you are likely at some point to serve as instructor, academic advisor, travel and excursion coordinator, budget manager, and substitute parent. The guidelines in this handbook are designed to help faculty trip leaders manage day-to-day responsibilities, on-site orientations, inappropriate student conduct, health issues and emergencies.

Most of the guidelines and topics covered in this Handbook are based on real cases that have arisen on Whitman off-campus programs or those of other colleges. We hope that you will find the information enclosed of benefit when trying to resolve any situation that may arise overseas and encourage you to contact the Whitman Off-Campus Studies Office (OCS) or other staff on campus for support at any time.

We wish you a rewarding and safe experience abroad with your students!

Elisabeth Mermann-Jozwiak  
Provost and Dean of the Faculty

## **Faculty Leader Responsibilities**

### **Student Recruitment and Orientation**

- Determine eligibility criteria and create an application form (samples available in OCS)
- Promote program in conjunction with the Off-Campus Studies Office (through emails, informational meetings, class visits, etc.)
- Interview and select applicants with assistance of other faculty/staff such as Off-Campus Studies Committee (OCSC) or OCS staff
- Determine appropriate scholarship amounts (when available) in coordination with OCS and Office of Financial Aid Services
- Create a Predeparture Handbook for students in coordination with the Off-Campus Studies Office with site-specific information including emergency contact information on-site
- Organize at least one Predeparture Orientation meeting required for the group
- Recommend pre-departure readings and/or a suitable travel guidebook for students to take with them on the trip
- Register group members for the U.S. Department of State STEP program at [http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/registration/registration\\_4789.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/registration/registration_4789.html). By signing up for the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) you will receive the latest travel updates and assistance from the local Embassy in the event of an emergency. (International trips only).
- Complete and submit Emergency Contact Form

### **Program Planning and Design**

- Create a program budget in coordination with Off-Campus Studies
- Develop a program itinerary
- Develop course syllabi and obtain approval for courses offered through the standard Whitman course approval process, including approval for courses taught by non-Whitman faculty
- Coordinate program needs with host institutions and vendors overseas
- Identify housing arrangements that are safe and, when possible, provide as much cultural immersion as possible to maximize learning abroad

### **On-Site Responsibilities**

- Check in with Off-Campus Studies when the group has arrived in-country (OCS will email the parents of all students about the safe arrival)
- Conduct an On-site Orientation (details on p 2)
- Remind students of health/safety precautions upon arrival at each new destination
- Give students faculty leader's cell phone/satellite phone number
- Monitor the academic program overall including the quality of the courses taught by non-Whitman faculty, guest lectures, etc.
- When staying at hotels, residence halls, hostels, homestays provide students with the complete address and contact information of where they are staying so that they can return if they get lost or separated from the group
- Monitor suitability of housing accommodations and home stay placements in terms of safety and in terms of whether the housing contributes to a positive learning experience

- Proactively assist students with challenges upon arrival, such as how to ride public transportation, and how to obtain and use cell phones and access to internet.
- Remind students to notify you or other program staff in the event of illness, accident, or other problems and respond to this in a timely manner.
- Report to Cassandre Beccai, Title IX Coordinator, any instances of sex or gender-based harassment, discrimination or misconduct. (see p. 8). Report crimes committed that may impact our students under the Clery Act (see p.8).
- Hold periodic meetings to touch bases with students about cross-cultural differences, observations, frustrations and group dynamics issues. Monitor group dynamics to the extent possible and intervene when needed.
- Manage program budget and monitor spending. Report unanticipated emergency expenses to the OCS.
- Model culturally appropriate conduct in country and hold students accountable to the expectations outlined in the Rights and Responsibilities of the Participants form.
- If you are not accompanying the students in the group back to the U.S./Walla Walla, accompany the students to the airport or assist with other travel arrangements to ensure a safe departure home.

## **Post-Program Responsibilities**

- Submit budget report to OCS within 30 days of the end of the program by reconciling cash advances against receipts
- Submit leader's program report to OCS within 30 days of the end of the program
- Submit grades to the Registrar's Office according to their timetable

## **On-Site Orientation**

The following are essential elements of an on-site Orientation:

### **1. Academic Orientation**

Review class schedules, classroom locations, attendance policies, how the credits will be posted on the Whitman transcript, etc.

### **2. Role of Program Leader**

Define your role and the role of other Whitman staff, if any. Give the students your cell number (and land line, if any) and the phone number(s) of other Whitman staff. When possible, give the students the telephone number of at least one local non-Whitman contact person, such as a staff member of the international office at the host university, as a backup.

### **3. Group Dynamics**

Describe the challenges of traveling with a group and the fact that group dynamics can make or break a study abroad experience. Since short-term study abroad programs are intense, and the leader and students spend a lot of time together as a group, harmony and mutual respect within the group is vital. Describe your expectations (about punctuality, looking out for each other, etc.). Encourage the students to discuss problems with you

early on. Mention that there may be times when the needs of the group will need to take priority over individual wishes, such as when a few students, but not the majority, may ask to alter the itinerary on an excursion.

#### **4. Money**

Assist students in finding an ATM machine or bank for exchanging money and explain appropriate places to do this in the host country. Discuss local tipping practices. Remind students about which meals and other expenses are not covered by the program and how to budget (i.e., to wait to buy souvenirs until they understand the local economy better).

#### **5. Health and Safety**

- Remind students to notify you or other program staff in the event of illness, accident, mental health issue or other problems. Emphasize that they should contact Whitman staff to identify a suitable doctor or clinic to go to rather than trying to find one alone.
- Remind students about their medical insurance benefits and the fact that they will have to pay for their own medical expenses up front when they seek care abroad and then submit receipts with claims to the insurance company for reimbursement.
- Discuss local safety issues, such as neighborhoods to avoid or places where they should not travel independently.
- For developing world destinations in particular, remind students about safe drinking water and other food safety issues.
- Remind students to contact you immediately if they feel their safety is in doubt at any time.
- Remind students about the College's policy on sexual harassment and sexual misconduct.
- Remind students not to travel outside the city/town where the program is based without permission from the program leader. In addition, inform the students that they should leave an itinerary and contact information with you, if they travel in their free time independently of the group.

#### **6. Alcohol and Illegal Drugs**

Remind students of the College's policy on alcohol consumption on off-campus programs. Describe the prohibition against buying, selling or using illegal drugs and the fact that the leader can dismiss students from the program for illegal drug use or other serious conduct issues. Now that marijuana is legalized in Washington State, it is important to emphasize that students must adhere to the laws of the host country, or U.S. State they are in and that U.S. law will not protect them if they break laws of their host country.



## **7. Communication**

Provide students with instructions about how to access the internet in country. Let the students know how you plan to communicate with them about assignments or group activities, such as via email, WhatsApp, or WeChat. Assist students with obtaining a local cell phone or SIM card for their unlocked U.S. phone, if needed. Show them what internet cafes are or other locations where they can access the internet (if applicable). Show them where the nearest post office is located.

## **8. Transportation**

Explain the various local means of transportation and traffic patterns that might be different from the U.S., such as lack of pedestrian right-of-way. Demonstrate how to take the local buses. Describe the pros and cons of using taxis and safety issues around taking taxis. Remind the students that Whitman strongly recommends against students operating any motorized vehicles while abroad due to differences in driving cultures, and discourages them from being passengers on motor scooters.

## **9. Cultural Norms**

Brief students about appropriate cultural norms and taboos in your host country, including proper greetings, meal etiquette, appropriate dress, and personal relations (such as gender relations).

## **10. Maps and Walking Tour**

Provide students with a local city/town map, or tell them about suitable phone apps for local maps, if available, and consider giving them a walking tour of the immediate area where they will be living and of the host university campus, if any. Suggested places to point out are local bus stops, bank/ATM machines, post office, markets, drug store, police station, good cheap restaurants, internet cafes, local places of interest such as churches, temples, historical sights. Asking a local colleague or local student to come along to assist with the tour can be beneficial.

# **Policies**

## **Basic Philosophy**

Whitman College's office-campus programming seeks to provide students with a rich educational experience in another country or locale in the U.S. maintaining high academic standards and paying careful attention to safety. Student safety and well-being is a top priority for the College and safety should not be compromised for the sake of a particular learning opportunity or experience abroad.

Faculty leaders should be assured that the support of the College's staff on campus is available to them at any time in the event of any problems that arise while administering the program off campus. Faculty leaders are expected to contact the relevant staff on campus whenever any problem arises for which the faculty members feel they need consultation or help. Notification of the relevant staff member at Whitman is expected when the problem is serious. (See details under *Emergency Response Procedures* below.)

## **Academic Policies/Class Attendance**

Faculty leaders should make academic policies clear to students regarding class attendance and whether or not guest lectures, workshops, excursions and community service projects are required or optional. As is the case on campus, course syllabi should spell out clearly course requirements, learning outcomes, means of assessment and grading philosophy. Faculty leaders should also inform students of the academic policies of host institutions abroad, which may be different from those at Whitman and could impact a student's academic standing/grade for courses taught at host institutions.

When non-Whitman faculty teach courses in the program, the faculty leader should provide guidance to them regarding the structure and content of the syllabus so that it conforms with Whitman standards.

## **Grade/Transcripts**

Faculty leaders are responsible for collecting the grades from guest faculty and/or the transcript from the host institution and delivering them to the Whitman Registrar at the conclusion of the program in a timely manner.

## **Human Subjects Research (IRB)**

If your student plans to do any human subjects research while off-campus (including interviewing people in your host country) that they think might possibly be included in their senior thesis, presented at a conference (even Whitman's Undergraduate Conference), or published in any way, they must have approval from Whitman's Institutional Review Board (IRB) BEFORE the research begins, or from the federally-sanctioned IRB of the study abroad provider (such as SIT, IES). Due to federal laws protecting human subjects, any information the students gather before getting IRB approval cannot be included in their thesis, conference presentations, or publications.

To apply for IRB approval, please direct students to the guidelines at [www.whitman.edu/irb](http://www.whitman.edu/irb) and have them submit their proposal directly to the IRB committee at [irb@whitman.edu](mailto:irb@whitman.edu). Students should simply email their IRB application from off-campus. To do that, they should download the IRB application in MS Word from the IRB website and fill it out electronically and then submit it to [irb@whitman.edu](mailto:irb@whitman.edu). It is recommended that those apply for IRB approval apply at least three weeks prior to when your research will begin in order to give the Whitman Committee enough time to review your proposal. Proposals received less than two weeks prior to the commencement of research will not be accepted.

## **Medical Insurance**

U.S. medical insurance policies typically do not cover international medical expenses comprehensively, nor do they cover emergency medical evacuation. All students travelling outside the U.S. on a Whitman-sponsored program must have international medical insurance, and it is also highly recommended for Whitman faculty and staff who accompany the group.

For Perry trips, athletics and other faculty-led trips, faculty leaders should build in the cost of international medical insurance into the program budget.

## **iNext International Medical Insurance**

Whitman College works with iNext International Insurance, offering worldwide travel assistance and international medical insurance. For detailed information about iNext coverage, please visit <http://www.inext.com/plans/supplemental/platinum.aspx>

Typically, physicians and hospitals outside of the US do not bill US medical insurance companies directly. Students and faculty should anticipate paying for medical expenses out of pocket and should bring some spending money for that purpose.

Students and faculty leaders who have medical expenses abroad should be sure to keep receipts for medical expenses to submit to the insurance company with your claims. If possible, obtain the receipts in English as this will help expedite reimbursement. In addition, if you believe someone in the group may need to be hospitalized, the insurance company should be contacted as soon as possible so that they can assist with referrals and billing. Sometimes insurance companies can bill foreign hospitals directly but it is important to notify the insurance company early so that they can advise you about this.

## **Telus Health Student Support**

Also offered through iNext is Telus Health Student Support offering mental health counseling support 24/7 via phone and chat. Support is available for students abroad who experience distress or any level of mental health challenge. For detailed information about Telus Health Student Support, visit <https://www.inext.com/why/mental-health/>.

## **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual Harassment is defined as unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive and objectively offensive such that it unreasonably interferes with, limits, or deprives someone of the ability to participate in or benefit from the College's educational programs or employment opportunities. The unwelcome behavior may be based on power differentials (quid pro quo), the creation of a hostile environment, or retaliation. A single instance of sexual assault may be sufficient to constitute a hostile environment. Further examples include:

- Unwelcome sexual advances or propositions that interfere with one's education or employment opportunities
- Unwelcome statements, jokes, gestures, pictures, intentional nonconsensual touching of an intimate body area, gender-based bullying, stereotyping, or other conduct that demeans, harasses, or intimidates
- Using electronic devices or technology (e.g., cell phone, camera, email, Internet sites, or social networks) to record or transmit nudity or sexual acts without a person's knowledge and/or permission
- Coercion or an attempt to coerce an unwilling person into a sexual relationship
- Repeatedly subjecting a person to unwelcome sexual attention

- Conditioning a benefit on submitting to sexual advances (quid pro quo). Examples include:
  - Seeking sexual favors or relationships in return for the promise of a favorable grade or other academic opportunity
  - Basing an employment-related action (hiring, salary increase, performance appraisal rating, promotion, etc.) on a sexual favor or relationship
- Punishing a refusal to comply with sexual advances
- Sexual violence, committing violence within a relationship (domestic/ dating/intimate partner violence)
- Repetitive and/or menacing pursuit, following, harassment either in person or with electronic devices (stalking)
- Intentionally observing nudity or sexual acts of another person without the person's knowledge or permission (voyeurism)
- Unwelcome touching of the genitals, buttocks, or breasts that is intentional or other unwelcome touching or groping
- Forcing/coercing someone to touch you or someone else in a sexual manner
- Threatening to sexually harm someone
- Initiating sexual activity with a person who is incapacitated and unable to provide consent due to alcohol and/or drug consumption or other condition
- Inducing incapacitation for the purpose of sexual exploitation
- Ignoring a sexual limit that has been communicated
- Coercing or intimidating or attempting to coerce or intimidate someone into sexual behavior
- Sexual assault, including non-consensual penetration of, or forcing someone to penetrate, an orifice (anal, vaginal, oral) with the penis, finger, tongue, or objects
- Sexual harassment is particularly damaging when it exploits the educational dependence and trust between students and faculty/staff. When the authority and power inherent in faculty/staff relationships with students is abused in any way, there is potentially great damage to the individual student, to the accused individual, and to the climate of the institution.

A complete copy of the Whitman sexual harassment policy is available in the College's Sexual Misconduct and Grievance policies at:

- Whitman College Grievance Policy -- <http://www.whitman.edu/grievance-policy>
- Sexual Misconduct Policy & Title IX -- <https://www.whitman.edu/about/inclusive-excellence/title-ix-and-sexual-misconduct>

Details about how to handle an allegation of sexual harassment or assault can be found at:

- Sexual Misconduct Policy & Title IX -- <http://www.whitman.edu/sexual-misconduct-prevention-and-response-network>

## Reporting Obligations under Title IX

Whitman College employees (including Faculty and Staff who take students off-campus) are required to promptly notify Whitman's Title IX Coordinator no later than 24 hours after learning of, or when on notice of, instances of sex- or gender-based harassment, discrimination, or misconduct. Excluded from this requirement are the College's licensed counselors, health professionals, or victim's

advocate working in that capacity at the College. The College has an affirmative obligation to investigate and to act to resolve such complaints in a prompt and effective manner.

Whitman College has a Title IX Coordinator who will oversee an investigation conducted by a trained investigator or team of investigators, of any allegations of sex- or gender-based discrimination or misconduct.

## **Reporting Obligations under Clery**

The Clery Act requires campuses to report crimes committed on facilities owned or contracted by the college. Faculty and staff who lead trips are considered to be “Campus Security Authority” under Clery. For that reason and in order for the college to keep up to date on safety conditions where we take our students, the faculty leader is expected to report to Laura Cummings, Assistant Director of ISSS and Faculty-Led Off-Campus Studies, all crimes committed against or by our students when off campus as soon as possible after learning of the crime. Similarly, faculty are expected to promptly report to Off-Campus Studies crimes against others in the facilities used by our programs.

## **Non-Fraternization**

Whitman College is committed to maintaining an off-campus study environment in which faculty and students are safe and respected, with a central philosophy of focusing on interactions that contribute positively to the students’ academic development. To avoid 1) conflict of interest and 2) potential exploitation of students arising from the inherent power differential between faculty and student participants, the College strongly discourages faculty participants from entering into dual-role relationships with students during the course of the program. A dual-role relationship is defined as a personal relationship of any kind that extends beyond a normal, traditionally acceptable faculty/student interaction. Such relationships may include, but are not necessarily limited to, romantic or amorous relationships, exclusive fraternizations or blatant favoritism. Even if such relationships are consensual, the potential impairment of faculty objectivity detracts from student development and impacts the dynamics of the research group. Such dual-role relationships can become problematic, with the possibility of charges of sexual harassment, or physical or psychological abuse.

## **Alcohol**

The College allows faculty leaders to set their own policies with respect to alcohol consumption with the following limitations:

- all program participants are expected to obey local laws with respect to alcohol consumption
- no drinking is allowed where driving might be a possibility
- no College funds can be spent on alcohol for students or faculty
- purchasing alcohol for underage students is against the law and anyone who does so assumes full responsibility
- use of alcohol on program-sponsored events should be held to a minimum and faculty leaders and other Whitman staff should refrain from drinking when on duty

## **Illegal Drugs**

Buying, selling, or using illegal drugs/substances is prohibited and any violation of this can be grounds for the student's immediate expulsion from the program. If a student is caught engaging in such activities, an incident report should be filled out by a faculty trip leader. The Dean of Student's Office at Whitman should then be notified for consultation about the appropriate response and consequences.

## **Local Laws and Regulations**

Faculty leaders, other Whitman staff and student participants are all expected to abide by the local laws of the host country (or U.S. state) and host institution regulations. Neither Whitman College nor the United States Embassy staff abroad has the authority to override local police enforcement if someone in the group is detained or arrested. If a local law is broken, the offender will be subject to the laws of that country.

## **Emergency Response Procedures**

### **Serious Health or Safety Incident**

The health and safety of all participants in its programs is a primary concern of the College. Serious health and safety issues can include: illness, injury or death, emotional or psychological stress that appears to require removal from the situation or professional attention, being the victim of a crime or being accused of committing a crime, a situation at the project site that causes serious concern such as a political uprising or natural disaster.

Examples of common problems that faculty leaders of off-campus programs may face are incidents such as:

- student is mugged and has her passport and wallet with all money, ATM and credit cards stolen
- student(s) are involved in a traffic accident
- student has an unforeseen health problem such as dysentery, food poisoning or appendicitis
- student appears to be depressed, or displays symptoms of an eating disorder or other mental health problem
- outbreak of political unrest and street demonstrations occur suddenly in your vicinity
- death of a student's relative or close friend back at home

A wide range of unique and unexpected emergencies can occur during your time abroad with students. The purpose of this handbook is to give you some guidelines and tools for handling problems and emergencies that could occur while leading the trip.

### **First and foremost, the faculty leader should not handle the crisis alone.**

There are staff on campus with a wide range of expertise in student matters and there will be resources on site that you will need to rely upon when problems surface. The College expects the faculty leader to contact relevant staff on the Whitman campus (Provost, Dean of Students office, or Director of Off-Campus Studies) as soon as is feasible in response any of the following affecting either

Whitman students or Whitman staff. What incidents occur outside of business hours, the faculty leader should call Whitman Security 24/7 at 509.527.5777.

- student departs from the program for any reason either temporarily or permanently
- accident
- serious illness
- psychological distress
- hospitalization
- crime
- sexual assault
- arrest by local authorities
- natural disaster
- political unrest
- problem with visa status in host country
- other serious problem in the U.S. or abroad that might impact one or more of your students

## **Principles**

Safety of all participants is primary and must be addressed first. Situations must be stabilized on-site as quickly as possible.

- Clear, timely, and on-going communication between faculty leader and the relevant staff at Whitman (OCS, Provost or Dean of Students) should be established as soon as feasible. Whitman staff will provide expertise about how to handle the problem to support the faculty leader.
- Affected participants will be encouraged to contact family. If appropriate, a Whitman staff member on campus will make contact with the participant's emergency contact.

## **Course of Action**

In the event of a serious health or safety issue, the faculty leader will:

- First take appropriate action to address immediate health and safety needs on site. It will usually be appropriate to contact local authorities (i.e. police, US Embassy, medical personnel) to begin the local action necessary to handle the situation.
- Accompany the student or faculty member to the hospital and be sure to take the student's health information and insurance information to relay to hospital officials. An interpreter may need to accompany you and the student to the hospital if there is a possibility of a language barrier with medical terminology. Be prepared to help cover the costs of the care initially if the student is unable to retrieve his/her spending money for medical expenses during the emergency. If possible, allow the student to call home and report the injury to her/his parents. If not, make the call yourself, once the status of the injured student has been assessed.
- If medical evacuation or medical referral is required, contact immediately IMG (International Medical Group) at 463-274-2241 or email [assist@imglobal.com](mailto:assist@imglobal.com). iNext has IMG as a single point of contact in place as an emergency service provider.

- Write up an accident/health incident report as soon as possible. Provide location and details of the incident, including who was at the scene at the time of the incident/accident, who responded to the emergency call, and what first aid procedures were administered on site. Include names and phone numbers of witnesses and ask all witnesses read and sign the report. Keep a written record of all conversations.
- The faculty leader should take any immediate appropriate action to assist in stabilizing the situation on site and will contact the relevant staff at Whitman as soon as feasible. The leader and relevant Whitman staff will comprise the crisis team and will work with the affected program participants and local authorities, and will utilize college resources, as appropriate, to collect needed information and respond appropriately.
- Due to FERPA regulations all information related to a student's educational records are confidential and should not be shared with others without the student's permission. This includes information about academic performance and disciplinary issues. If, for example, a student has a disciplinary incident, because of FERPA Whitman would not normally notify the parents nor should staff share the details with other students. However, faculty trip leaders should inform Whitman Student Affairs staff or others Whitman about academic and disciplinary issues on a "need to know" basis.
- Due to medical privacy and common courtesy, medical information is also considered confidential and should not be shared with others without permission of the student, except when necessary to provide care. In a program with a small group this can be awkward because students will often inquire about the well-being of fellow students if they are ill or hospitalized. If it is a contagious condition that other students may have been exposed to and need to be informed about, then it is acceptable to share information with the group. But for other health matters, the information should remain confidential. Faculty leaders can suggest to those who inquire about the student's well-being that they may contact the student directly with get well wishes.

## Reporting Incidents

Document the incident and response to it using the ***Off-Campus Incident Report Form*** in the Appendix. Also, please keep a written record of conversations. Document every step taken by noting the following:

- Date
- Time
- Action
- Who was affected on site
- Who undertook any action on site
- Who made decisions

## Sexual Harassment or Assault Incident

Federal educational guidelines proposed by the Office of Civil Rights require all colleges to respond to allegations of sexual harassment or assault even if they arise in off-campus programs. Whitman is obligated to take allegations seriously, investigate them and, when founded, take action to prevent further harm to the person making a complaint (the complainant) or other participants on the program.



Members of the Whitman community who know about an incident or believe they have been subjected to a civil rights violation such as harassment or discrimination, or who have a grievance concerning a serious interpersonal conflict should contact the following offices:

- Students who have a complaint or who would like information about the grievance process should contact Dean of Students Office (Memorial 325) or the Title IX Coordinator.
- Employees who have a complaint or would like information about the grievance process should contact the Human Resources Office (Memorial 104), the Title IX Coordinator, or the Provost and Dean of the Faculty. See Emergency contact list in Appendix for email addresses and phone numbers.

## **Homestay Issue**

Faculty leaders should exercise the utmost care in selecting host families for Whitman students participating in off-campus programs bearing in mind that both a safe living environment and positive cultural experience are top priorities. In general, it is best to select families in consultation with a member of the host community who may know the families personally and have insights into local norms. Living conditions in homestays will vary from country to country but basic safety standards should be kept in mind regardless of the type of homes in the locale. Minimum levels of safety include clean drinking water, ability for the student to lock his/her bedroom door from the inside and outside, and adequate egress in the event of fire.

Even when a faculty leader exercises care in selection of families, problems can arise. There are many reasons why a student might feel uncomfortable or no longer welcome in a host family, such as sexual harassment by a host family member, theft of personal belongings by host family member or visitors, domestic violence within the host family, serious illness or death of a host family member or close relative, irreconcilable misunderstanding between the student and the family, extreme jealousy of a host sibling, or damage to the relationship because the student has broken a rule of the household (such as a prohibition against overnight guests or coming home too late at night). When a student no longer feels comfortable or welcome in a particular host family, the faculty leader should do his/her utmost to place the student in a different family as soon as possible. If a student dreads going home to his/her host family at night or spends much of his/her free time with another student's family, then this is often a sign of a serious problem. In cases where the student's safety could be in jeopardy, the College expects the faculty leader to act very quickly in placing the student either in a different household or alternative housing. In some cases, moving a student from a family can mean loss of face for the family involved and may result in some damage in the relations between the program and the local community. But student safety should take priority over the possible hurt feelings of a host family.

## **Culture Shock/Cultural Adjustment**

Most people who live abroad for an extended period experience culture shock and even those who travel abroad for short visits can experience this, especially when they have specific tasks that need to be accomplished in the host country.

In order to understand culture shock, you have to remember that our ability to function in the world depends on our capacity to read hundreds of signs, respond to subtle cues, and behave according to

countless explicit and implicit rules. At home, we know how to read street signs, how to use the telephone, how much to tip, etc. Much of what we do in our daily lives is automatic and requires little thought. Abroad, the reverse is true and simple tasks become difficult because we don't know how to behave, our actions and words don't get the expected responses, and we don't understand the messages we are getting. We are confronted continuously with new ways of thinking, valuing, and doing things. Sometimes, our common sense is no longer useful. This is culture shock, the disorientation that can cause severe stress. Fortunately, culture shock is predictable and manageable and, if you are prepared for it, you can do a great deal to control it.

Culture shock is a cycle of adjustment that may take quite some time. The cycle is marked by four basic phases, and most people experience at least two low periods during their stay abroad. However, the length and severity of these low periods vary greatly for different individuals. The four basic phases are: Euphoria, Irritation and Hostility, Gradual Adjustment, and Adaptation or Bi-Culturalism.

Faculty leaders should be aware that when individuals are experiencing the low periods of cultural adjustment, it could manifest itself in various ways. Here are some signs that you might observe among your students:

- Individual becomes short tempered or seems depressed
- Individual begins to say disparaging things about the local people or environment and/or talk about how much better the US is in various ways
- Individual avoids interactions with the local community by staying in their room, sleeping more, drinking to excess, reading excessive amounts of pulp fiction from home, immersing themselves in Facebook and other social media from home, etc.

If you observe such behaviors in your students, there are certain things the student can do that might get them through the hard phase:

- Assure the student that some "down" periods when adjusting to a new culture is normal and that over time it does subside. Often one day the frustrations with the local culture seem to have suddenly dissipated.
- Suggest that they reflect on what they are experiencing by journaling or blogging
- Help the student identify someone who is bicultural who can help explain to them the aspects of the local culture that they find annoying or inexplicable
- Encourage the student to set small weekly or daily goals so that they see the benefit of living abroad (such as setting a goal to independently explore a new site in the local city each week)
- Urge students to avoid hanging out with other expatriates who simply complain about the host culture as this won't help them become more bi-cultural
- If you notice that several students are in a slump, consider holding a group meeting to discuss ways to mitigate culture shock

If a student seems to have persistent or serious stress or depression because of culture shock, the faculty leader should contact Laura Cummings, Assistant Director of ISSS and Faculty-Led Off-Campus Studies, for support about next steps. Sometimes a Skype or Facetime call between the student and an Off-Campus Studies adviser can help the student put their experience in a broader context. In some extreme cases, a student may need to seek the services of a mental health professional abroad.

## **Dismissal from Program**

A student may be dismissed from the program at the discretion of the faculty leader for violations of any of the prohibitions listed in the Rights and Responsibilities of Participants form that the students sign (see Appendix). Faculty leaders should consult with at least one relevant staff member on campus (Provost, Dean of Students or OCS) before making the decision to send a student home, as legal counsel may need to be consulted. Students dismissed from the program may be sent home at their own expense and may be responsible for making their own flight/hotel arrangements for the return trip. If a student is dismissed from the program for conduct problems, they are not eligible for a refund of program fees and they may forego all credit that might otherwise have been earned on the program.

Depending on the nature of the conduct violation, the faculty leader may opt to work out a Behavior Contract with the student to give the student a second chance. A sample *Behavior Contract* is attached in the Appendix for your reference.

## **Early Departure from Program**

Occasionally a student will choose to depart early from an off-campus program for personal reasons, medical reasons or because they simply cannot overcome homesickness or culture shock. The faculty leader should work with the student to determine why they wish to leave and offer to be a sounding board for making the decision. If the student is determined to withdraw from the program, they must submit a written statement notifying the College of their intention to withdraw. The statement could be emailed to the faculty leader or handwritten, but it must be forwarded to the Off-Campus Studies Office via email right away. Depending on the circumstances of the departure, the student may not be eligible for a refund for program fees and may forego program credit. We recommend that the faculty leader consult with the Off-Campus Studies Office staff about the refund/credit policies and inform the student of those policies as quickly as possible so that the student can make an informed decision about whether or not to stay.

In general, students withdrawing early from a program will be responsible for making their own travel arrangements home and for paying any applicable change fees on their airline ticket. However, the faculty leader may choose to provide some logistical support for the student if the circumstances of the withdrawal and emotional state of the student warrant it.

## Appendix

Emergency Resources-- *iNext CIEE Insurance for International Travel*, US Embassy, CDC, etc.

Rights and Responsibilities of Participants

Incident Report Form

Behavior Contract

Title IX Incident - How to Explain your Duty to Report

Intention to Withdraw from Whitman OCS Program

## EMERGENCY RESOURCES

### INEXT INSURANCE | WHO DO I CALL FOR HELP IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY?

International Medial Group (IMG) is available 24/7 to assist.

Contact them at:

+1-463-274-2241 (collect/outside U.S.)

assist@imglobal.com

Be certain to identify yourself as an iNext client and OPEN A MEDICAL CASE

### US Embassy/Consulate Information

<http://www.usembassy.gov>

This website lists the US embassy and all US consulates in each country with web links to their websites.

### US Embassy Emergency Assistance

<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/emergencies.html>

This site has information about what to do in the event of an emergency abroad such as a disappearance, death or medical emergency of a US citizen, arrest/detention, victim of crime, or crisis in host country.

### Overseas Citizens Services

This US Department of State Office can assist with crises involving US citizens abroad such as disappearance, death or medical emergency of a US citizen, arrest/detention, victim of crime, or crisis in host country.

**From outside US:** tel 202.501.444

**From inside US:** tel 1.888.407.4747

### US Department of State Country Information

<http://travel.state.gov>

This site contains *Travel Advisories* for various countries, as well as *Country Information Sheets* about health, crime, road conditions, medical services, and terrorist activity for each country. When a problem in a particular country surfaces and is serious enough for the DOS to warn U.S. citizens about the danger, the information usually appears fairly quickly on this site under the name of the country.

### US Department of State Citizen's Emergency Center

Tel 202.647.5225

They maintain information in times of crises abroad with updated reports. They can also assist in the event of a disappearance of a US citizen abroad.

## **Centers for Disease Control**

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

Provides excellent pre-departure immunization information as well as updates about disease outbreaks.

## **World Health Organization**

[www.who.int/en](http://www.who.int/en)

Provides excellent information and reports in the event of an infectious disease outbreak, such as Avian flu.

## **Transportation Security Administration**

<http://www.tsa.gov>

Provides up to date information on airline and baggage security information and regulations.

## **Travel Agencies:**

The Whitman OCS Office uses the following travel agencies for Whitman travel.

Worldwide Travel  
11 S 1st Avenue  
Walla Walla, WA 99362  
Tel: 800-283-9987 or 509-525-8040  
Email: [travel@wwts.bz](mailto:travel@wwts.bz)  
Website: [www.wwts.bz](http://www.wwts.bz)

## Whitman College Off-Campus Study Program Rights and Responsibilities of Participants

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Whitman College expects students participating in off-campus programs to be fully engaged in the academic program while studying off campus and to display appropriate conduct to foster a positive learning environment for all the participants in the group. We expect participants to be respectful of their fellow students in the group, respectful of their off-campus program hosts and of those in the local community in which they are living. Due to the unique circumstances of studying off-campus as part of a group, we expect students to conform to the following ***Rights and Responsibilities of Participants***.

Please read this document carefully and then complete and sign it acknowledging that you understand it.

- Whitman students participating in off-campus programs are expected to conform to the conduct guidelines set forth in *Whitman's Student Handbook* under *Student Rights and Responsibilities* which can be found on-line at <https://www.whitman.edu/dean-of-students/student-handbook>
- Participants on this Whitman program are expected to engage in all academic aspects of the program including (but not limited to) attending classes, workshops and guest lectures, completion of assignments, as well as participation in required field trips, service learning projects and group meetings. I understand that if I must miss an activity due to illness, I must notify the program leader and/or the instructor.
- Participants are expected to respect the property and privacy of fellow participants and those in the local community. Furthermore, I understand that damaging program or community property is not permitted and that I may be financially responsible for any damages.
- Participants are not permitted to create excessive noise or disturb the peace and to respect local norms for quiet hours in hotels, hostels and residence halls.
- Participants are expected to abide by the laws of the host country (or U.S. state) and the rules of the host institution, such as residence hall regulations and host family guidelines. I understand that violation of local laws may result in fines, punishment, imprisonment or deportation in addition to appropriate sanctions by Whitman College.
- Conduct that negatively impacts other participants or impacts the health or safety of one or more of the other members of the group is prohibited.
- Participants are not permitted to abuse alcohol or drink in excess.
- Participants are prohibited from buying, selling, or using illegal drugs/substances and any violation of this policy will be grounds for immediate expulsion from the program.
- Participants must abide by cultural norms, standards of dress, and standards of hygiene appropriate to the foreign host culture/local community.

- Participants are expected to exercise reasonable care for their own safety while on the program. I understand that while there may be opportunities to travel independently while attending the program, Whitman College undertakes no responsibility for me when I am traveling independently prior to, during, or after the program.
- Participants may not engage in any conduct that jeopardizes Whitman's ability to maintain positive relations in the host communities or to carry out its program now or in the future in that location.
  - Sexual and gender-based misconduct can be an issue during off-campus studies (OCS) just as it can be on campus. Your safety and well-being while abroad is a top priority for us. Whitman students are protected by and held accountable to Whitman's policies on sexual and gender-based misconduct while studying off campus. Participants are expected to abide by Whitman College's Sexual Misconduct Policy and Title IX Policy prohibiting sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. Detailed Information can be found at <https://www.whitman.edu/about/inclusive-excellence/title-ix-and-sexual-misconduct>
- If you think you may have been involved in a sexual harassment, sexual assault or gender-based incident, you should report the incident to the Whitman program staff and/or local program staff to access local support resources such as confidential victim services, access to medical assistance, help with reporting to police (only if you choose to do so), potential housing changes, academic accommodations, etc. Know that Whitman on-campus support services are available to you from a distance regardless of where you are studying and regardless of who else (fellow student, stranger, etc.) is involved in the incident.

We recommend that you report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator. If you are a responding student and an incident report is brought against you, you will be held to the standards and adjudication of your program and those of Whitman College.

- I understand that participants who fail to observe these ***Rights and Responsibilities of Participants*** may be dismissed from the program at the discretion of the faculty leader. In the event of expulsion from the program, I may be sent home at my own expense with no program refund and may forego credits that would have otherwise been earned on the program.

I have read, understand and accept the above ***Rights and Responsibilities of Participants***.

Student Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

WID: \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## Whitman College Off-Campus Program Incident Report

Whitman College Off-Campus Program Incident Report				
<b>Incident Date</b>		<b>Incident Time AM/PM</b>		<b>Location of Incident</b>
<b>Nature of Incident: (eg. loss of property, medical emergency, traffic accident, alcohol abuse)</b>				
_____		_____		_____
<b>Reported by Name (print)</b>		<b>Date</b>		<b>Signature</b>
<b>People Involved</b>	<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Email</u></b>	<b><u>Tel.</u></b>	<b><u>Student or not?</u></b>
<b>Witnesses</b>	<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Email</u></b>	<b><u>Tel.</u></b>	<b><u>Student or not?</u></b>
<b>Relevant Information (Describe in detail, attach additional sheets if needed)</b>				
_____		_____		_____
<b>Student Name (print)</b>		<b>Date</b>		<b>Signature</b>
<p align="center">Return to Off-Campus Studies  email: <a href="mailto:offcampusstudies@whitman.edu">offcampusstudies@whitman.edu</a></p>				

## Behavior Contract

STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

INFRACTION: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that by failing to follow the requirements set forth by this program and violating the student *Code of Conduct* my behavior is a disruption to the successful functioning of this academic program.

I understand that my actions impact the group, and that I must keep the group interests in mind when making decisions about my behavior from henceforth.

I understand that if a similar infraction of course requirements occurs, I will be sent home at my expense without academic credit, in accordance with policy.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Title IX Incident - How to Explain your Duty to Report

### Practice your verbiage so that you'll be calm.

- Frame your obligation to report as something that is very positive – it will help them get the help they need.
- Let them know the information remains private - only the people who can help will know.
- Have an idea of the next steps and what resources are available.
- Avoid pushing them to share all the details.

### Things you can speak to...

- *"I believe you"*
- *"You'll get any needed support."*
- *"There's someone trained to respond."*
- *"Your information will be kept private."*
- *"I can take you to her office."*

### Example Script (before they disclose)

- *"It seems like you're about to share something significant, and I want you to feel comfortable doing so. Before you do so, please understand that as a faculty/staff member, I have a responsibility to report any incidents of harassment to the Title IX Coordinator to ensure that the college can provide you with the necessary support."*
- *"If you are not yet ready to have this information passed on to the Title IX Coordinator, I still want to make sure you get necessary support. Please let me help connect you with one of my colleagues who can keep this information confidential."*

### Example Script (after they disclosed and before you could tell them your obligation)

- *"I believe you and I appreciate you trusting me with this very personal and private information. I promise to keep this information private, but I do need to let you know that as a staff member, I am obligated to pass on this information to the Title IX Coordinator. The main purpose of this is so that someone with much more training than me can share with you your rights under Title IX policy and ensure that you know what supportive measures you can access."*

## **Intention to Withdraw from Whitman OCS Program**

**(For use after program start date)**

I [insert name here] have decided to withdraw from the Semester in the West Program effective [insert date here].

- I understand that I will need to take a Leave of Absence through the Whitman Registrar.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to arrange and pay for transportation from the Semester in the West group location at the time of my departure to my destination.
- I also understand that departing from the program early will be subject to Whitman's tuition, fee, and room and board refund policy as outlined in the current Whitman Catalog.
- I understand that early departure may have an impact on the credits and/or grades that I earn on the program.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Leader Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Leader Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_