

Foreign Travel Guide for Graduate & Professional Students

INTRODUCTION

This guide outlines rules, guidelines, procedures, and resources related to graduate and professional students traveling abroad. For questions, contact Education Abroad at abroad@tamu.edu or 979-845-0544.

Which Texas A&M University policies apply to foreign travel and to whom? Texas A&M University-College Station, Texas A&M University at Galveston, Texas A&M Higher Education Center at McAllen, Texas A&M School of Law, and Texas A&M Health are firmly committed to the welfare, health, and safety of all students and, as such, have established rules and guidelines to ensure support for students abroad for any university related activities. Per the [University Rule on Student Travel \(13.04.99.M1\)](#), **all students traveling abroad must register their travel** with [Education Abroad](#) prior to traveling.

What type of international experience does Texas A&M Education Abroad monitor? Per the University travel rules, Education Abroad is charged to monitor international mobility from undergraduate and graduate students, whether the experience is credit or non-credit bearing. International experiences may include:

- Academic Competition
- Athletic Competition
- Workshop/Training
- Conference
- Internship
- Research
- Study
- Teach Abroad
- Volunteer
- Capstone Project
- Other University Business

Graduate students traveling with employment-related duties: While these experiences may include work-related duties in the capacity of GAT, GAL, GAR, or GANT, and that role may necessitate travel, they remain *students* while traveling and therefore must register with Education Abroad. Please note that certain employment-related travel may also require the submission and approval of an [International Alternate Work Location](#).

EDUCATION ABROAD

What is the role of Education Abroad? Registration ensures [Education Abroad](#) can provide several valuable services to students traveling internationally. This includes:

- Access to Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI), a comprehensive and affordable international travel medical insurance and emergency evacuation plan contracted by the Texas A&M University System;
- Student advising, online pre-departure orientation, and web resources (on funding, health and safety, support);
- Trip-specific risk assessments, monitoring of world events and travel advisories, notification of relevant information pertaining to travel plans; and,
- Access to Education Abroad's 24/7 hotline and assistance in emergency response and evacuation

Note that countries and regions listed on the [TAMU System International Travel Advisory List](#) may require pre-approval from System Risk Management and University leadership. Travelers are encouraged to contact Education Abroad at abroad@tamu.edu for questions and to start the process as early as possible. Additionally, some travel to countries considered high risk (China, Hong Kong, Macao, Iran, North Korea, and Russia) falls under System Regulation 15.05.04 and will require additional review and approval.



Passport Services: Education Abroad is a U.S. Passport Acceptance Facility. Students, faculty, staff, and members of the community can apply for a U.S. passport at its College Station campus location by Evans Library. The office also provides photo services for passports and visa applications. The office is open to the public. For information, visit the Education Abroad website at [Global Engagement - Passports \(tamu.edu\)](https://global.tamu.edu/ea/students/passports).

NOTE: If the student will travel on a non-U.S. passport (as an international student or [U.S. permanent resident](#)), they will need to verify and obtain the required paperwork for travel. International students will also need to work with [International Student & Scholar Services](#) to obtain necessary paperwork for exit and re-entry into the U.S.

PROGRAM TYPES & REGISTRATION PROCESS

For an overview of the different program types, visit <https://global.tamu.edu/ea/students/programs> or schedule to [meet with an advisor](#) in Education Abroad. Each program or registration process will have different deadlines and a designated Education Abroad staff member to assist with questions, the application process, and general trip preparations. A [search](#) engine is also available to review program options and access the application portal.

Programs graduate and professional students frequently choose, but are not limited to:

- **International Independent Experiences & Research Abroad**

Students participating in experiences *not coordinated* by a Texas A&M entity, affiliate provider, or exchange partner are required to register with Education Abroad. The independent experience registration may apply when:

- Traveling on approved University business
- Serving as a Trip Leader (but not enrolled in the program course)
- Participating in non-credit-bearing experiences (e.g. to research, intern, teach abroad, volunteer, or attend a conference/workshop/training)
- Receiving any support from a Texas A&M entity (e.g. funding, approved leave, or wages)
- Traveling to satisfy a degree or graduation requirement (e.g. thesis or dissertation research)

The independent experience registration links through Education Abroad include: [Independent Experience for No Credit](#); [Independent Experience for TAMU Credit](#) (pre-arranged through an academic department); [Independent Experience for Transfer Credit](#) (coursework transcribed by another institution).

- **Texas A&M Faculty-Led Program**

The study abroad courses are taught by a Texas A&M faculty member for TAMU credits, and the program may include research or internship components. The duration varies from 2 to 18 weeks. A department and faculty leader may provide the opportunity to add a graduate assistant role to the program. Learn more at: [Link](#)

- **Texas A&M International Field Trips**

Typically 1-2 weeks, these short-term experiences are led by a Texas A&M faculty or Trip Leader. They are connected to an on-campus course. Learn more at: [Link](#)

- **Texas A&M Exchange Programs**

Reciprocal exchanges provide students the opportunity to study and live at an international university for either a semester or an academic year, while paying Texas A&M tuition and fees. Learn more at: [Link](#)

- **International Internships**

Graduate students who wish to complete an international internship may find opportunities through [Education Abroad](#), [Graduate Student Career Services](#), their academic department, and other campus units. Internships may be paid or unpaid. For more information, contact Education Abroad and the Texas A&M Career Center.

- **Direct Enrollment with Foreign Universities**

Graduate students who wish to enroll in classes at an accredited foreign university may contact the institution of their choice for information about its admissions process for visiting, non-degree seeking students. They also must work with their academic advisor, graduate committee, and Education Abroad on the [course pre-approval](#) before departure.



Education Abroad provides different levels of service depending on the program type. Upon committing to an international experience, a non-refundable [service fee](#) will be assessed. Students registering an independent experience multiple times within the same semester will be charged the fee only once and may not need to complete the online pre-departure orientation again for that academic year.

REGISTERING WITH CONCUR

All foreign travel by University employees and students on official University business must be approved in advance according to University Rule [21.01.03.M0.02](#). The authorization for travel must be submitted and processed through [Concur's Travel Request module](#) prior to the travel start date. This allows for proper review and approval. For example, if any TAMU equipment or any materials, including biological, chemical, or composites will be taken or shipped related to the travel, an export control review is also necessary. Concur requests may be initiated by the student's department or business office. Many units are part of the Concur review and approval process. To ensure there is adequate time for each office to complete their review, Concur submissions and Education Abroad registration should be completed at least 6 weeks prior to the planned departure date.

NOTE: Graduate and professional students traveling on University business must submit the appropriate program application or registration through Education Abroad *before* Education Abroad can approve a Concur travel request.

Next steps:

1. Verify with a department business coordinator if a Concur travel request is needed and regulations to keep in mind. For students who don't have access to the Concur portal, travel requests may be initiated by the student's department or business office on their behalf.
2. Submit a Concur travel request through the Texas A&M Single Sign On ([SSO](#)). A video on How to [Create a Foreign Travel Request in Concur](#) is hyperlinked. Concur has multiple approval flows and it may take weeks for a request to be fully executed.
3. Depending on the destination selection in Concur, a Global Risk Manager may follow up for supplementary information and to complete a questionnaire.

NOTE: Situational risk assessments are conducted on an ongoing basis. Therefore, the decision to proceed with travel may be reconsidered even after Concur approval is granted.

MEDICAL INSURANCE & EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Education Abroad strongly recommends that all students traveling overseas have international health insurance coverage. Most domestic policies do not cover foreign medical care, overseas medical/security evacuation, or repatriation of remains—items that can be extraordinarily expensive. International health insurance will provide students with the necessary coverage should they need to visit a doctor or hospital while abroad. Some hospitals abroad might require payment up front. Therefore, students must then file a claim upon returning to the U.S. to receive reimbursement. Refer to the program's insurance policy for more details.

International Medical Insurance Coverage When Participating on Texas A&M Programs: [CISI](#)

For programs coordinated by a Texas A&M department or student organization, Trip Leaders and participants are enrolled by Education Abroad into the University policy with **Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI)**. CISI is medical insurance and emergency assistance providing coverage and reimbursement for subscribers. The plan includes accident and sickness coverage, evacuation and repatriation insurance, and other benefits and resources that are helpful in case of emergencies, delays, and more.



International Medical Insurance Coverage When Participating on Non-Texas A&M Programs

For programs that are not managed by Texas A&M University and for independent experiences, students are strongly encouraged to self-enroll in the affordable and comprehensive CISI plan if their provider/host institution doesn't have international health insurance coverage. Please check with the program contact to verify coverage details. Access to enroll at a reduced cost in CISI is provided at the time of registration in the Education Abroad portal. Students are responsible for ensuring they have sufficient health and accident insurance for the duration of their time abroad.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Education Abroad has a team of staff trained to monitor events around the world and travel plans from students, groups, and Trip Leaders. In the event of an incident abroad, students and Trip Leaders may reach Education Abroad 24/7 through its emergency phone at **+1-979-255-6103** (call only), and for less urgent reports with response within 24 hours, email: abroademergency@tamu.edu. Students may also contact their international insurance provider's emergency number for medical support and information.

ADDITIONAL TRAVEL PREPARATION RESOURCES

- Scholarships & Funding Opportunities
 - [Scholarships & Financial Aid - Types of Aid](#)
 - [Education Abroad Funding Resources](#)
 - [L.A.U.N.C.H. Database of National Fellowships](#)
 - [Graduate Research & Presentation Travel Awards](#)
 - [Graduate and Professional Student Government \(GPSG\) Travel Award](#)

- Health & Safety Resources
 - [Education Abroad Health & Safety Resources](#)
 - [Education Abroad Safety & Culture Resources](#)
 - [Traveler's Health \(CDC\)](#)
 - Texas A&M [University Health Services](#)
 - Travel Health Clinic (*available for any currently enrolled TAMU student*)
 - [Travel Safely Information](#)
 - [Mental Health Resources](#)
 - [Mobility International USA](#)

- U.S. Department of State
 - [Learn About Your Destination](#)
 - [US Dept. of State STEP Program](#)
 - [US Dept. of State – Warnings & Alerts](#)

The information included in this document is subject to change.

Please visit the links and contact Education Abroad or the relevant office if you have questions.

Education Abroad

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