

FACULTY/STAFF TRIP LEADER STUDY AWAY HANDBOOK



Portions of this guide were adapted from the USC Office of Student Engagement
& USC-Upstate Studies Abroad Faculty Handbook

August 1, 2016

Dear Colleagues:

This handbook has been assembled to provide you with guidelines for creating study away programs in the United States. Some of the content will be subject to change as guidelines will require modification to fit the needs of some programs. However, the basic procedures for proposal and approval should remain intact. We welcome any comments or corrections that will improve this document and enhance our travel programs.

As indicated in this handbook the Trans4mations Program will be glad to assist you in preparing your study abroad experience.

Sincerely,

Darlene Small

Darlene Small
Assistant Dean
Director of Trans4mations

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission Statement	3	
Guidelines for faculty/Staff led Study Away Programs	3	
Policies	4	
Planning and Implementing a Study Away Program		6
• Steps In Planning and Implementing	6	
• Online Trip Leader Planning Forms	7	
Trip Leader Overview		7
Finances	8	
• Program Fee	8	
• Building a Budget	8	
• Managing Money	9	
• Tuition	11	
Recruitment	11	
• Marketing	12	
• Timing	12	
• Program Publicity	12	
• Information Sessions and Telephone Access	13	
• Postcards and Brochures	13	
• General Recruitment Hints	13	
Information About the Student Process	13	
• Mandatory Orientation	14	
• Student Paperwork	14	
• Student Forms and Requirements	14	
• Budget	14	
• Financial Planning/Aid	14	
Course Enrollment and Evaluation Procedures	15	
• Course Registration	15	
• Course Approval for Students	15	
• Student Enrollment	15	
Evaluation Procedures	16	
Transcripts for Non-Coker Programs		16
Insurance	16	
Non-Student Participants	17	
Concerns for Disabled and Special Needs Participants	17	
Mental Health Issues		17
Safety and Health Concerns for Trip Leaders	18	
Risks - Informed and Be Informed		19
• Helpful Resources	19	
• Safety On-site	19	
Student Conduct	20	

MISSION STATEMENT

At Coker, it is our belief that students should be active participants in their own education. Therefore, the College offers travel programs that include both study abroad and study away (within the United States) opportunities that foster their intellectual curiosity by enhancing classroom learning through providing real world experiences that will immerse them in a culture and/or environment that is different from their own and expands their U.S. and global knowledge as we prepare them to become citizens of the world.

GUIDELINES FOR FACULTY/STAFF LED STUDY AWAY PROGRAMS

These guidelines have been developed to assist faculty and staff in conducting existing study away and developing new ones. These guidelines are primarily written for short-term faculty/Staff led Fall Break, January Term, Spring Break, Interim, Summer and Term V Programs.

Faculty planning new programs should consider the following standards:

1. New programs should complement rather than compete with existing programs.
2. Educational objectives should be stated clearly in the course descriptions.
3. The program should attempt to combine academic learning with cross-cultural experience and be designed to make extensive use of the physical, human, and cultural resources of the host environment.
4. Students should receive a syllabus that accurately describes the nature and scope of the requirements.
5. Short-term courses should be front and/or end-loaded to meet the number of required contact hours for the assigned course credits.
6. Courses should be evaluated as with any other college course offering.
7. Opportunities to expand or enhance programs by including fellow faculty members are encouraged.

Faculty may also want to keep the following factors in mind when considering the location, academic focus, and general appeal to students of a new program:

1. Less traditional sites should be considered.
2. Students participating in Interim, January Term and Summer Day or Term V study away opportunities are paying additional cost and also giving up an opportunity to work. Program costs should be kept as low as possible, to ensure greater accessibility and participation.
3. Students should check with Financial Aid to determine their eligibility.

4. Study away courses fulfill general requirements, and/or major/minor requirements or count toward electives.

POLICIES

The Coker College Code of Student Conduct applies to all Study Away Programs and should be applied to student behavior while participating in a Coker sponsored travel program.

The following policy statements are to serve as guidelines for our Study Away Programs:

- Study Away Programs must be a minimum of three consecutive days (includes travel days with activities starting on day one and ending on day three) or three one-day field trips that are connected to the same learning outcome and meet the Trans4mation cultural requirement to learn about “the other.” Participation in all three trip dates is required for credit.
- Study Away courses cannot be catalog courses taught away unless there is a direct correlation between the course and the location that has been selected. The description must be rewritten and your syllabus must demonstrate how that location is essential to the course objectives.
- Faculty who are offering a study away course and plan to teach in Term V or Summer Day simultaneously must seek approval from the Provost before committing to multiple programs.
- All students and the Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations must receive a breakdown of the costs included in the program fee including the trip leader(s) expenses and how it is disbursed among the group.
- A detailed trip itinerary including sites, lodging and transportation, etc. must be shared with all students and the Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations prior to departure.
- **Short term insurance coverage is required for all participants. Coker’s coverage is for local facilities only. Students have used the Tingen Agency in Hartsville for assistance.**
- Study Away must be self-supporting. Approval must be granted by the Department Chair and the Provost to use professional development and other departmental funds.
- Proposals, syllabi, budgets, and itineraries must be submitted to the Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations for review and approval by the Provost for inclusion in the Study Abroad/Away website or publication to promote your trip.
- Participants’ lists are created in a Google Student Sign Up Spreadsheet shared with the trip leader(s) and the offices on campus that help process and track the student’s progress toward completing study away requirements. Trip leaders may add or delete student names as necessary.
- Any change in destination, itinerary, trip leader(s), and travel dates, etc. must be submitted to the Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations as soon as the revisions are anticipated for review and approval by the Provost.
- Trip leaders, accompanying faculty and spouses/significant others must provide a copy of a government issued ID, an emergency contact as well as proof of insurance if not covered by the College’s provider.
- Study Away course evaluations are available on-line. Trip leaders should check with the Provost’s Office if you have questions about course evaluations.

- Students must attend trip meetings and the mandatory study away orientation.
- Trip departure and return dates should fall within the academic schedule during the timeframe in which you are traveling.
- All trip participants with the exception of trip leader (faculty/staff) spouse/family must be a registered participant. Students must be registered for a minimum of one course and graduates and/or guests must be registered to audit at least one course.
- **The Trans4mations Program has set beginning and ending deposit dates, which include a mandatory deadline, for all trip deposits to be completed. Trip leaders may set earlier dates or use fewer or more deposit dates, but you must not go beyond the deadline set for the final payment. Any first deposit can be minimal to determine interest and/or as a place holder.**

Study Away Deposit Deadlines

Fall / Fall Break

First Deposit: April 30

Second Deposit: July 30

Third Deposit: August 30

Final Payment: September 30 (program fee paid in full)

January Term/Spring Break:

First Deposit: May 30 (minimal deposit to determine interest)

Second Deposit: August 30

Third Deposit: September 30

Fourth Deposit: October 30

Final Payment:

January Term November 30 (program fee paid in full)

Spring Break February 28 (program fee paid in full)

Interim/Summer /Term V:

First Deposit: October 30 (can be a minimal deposit to determine interest)

Second Deposit: November 30

Third Deposit: January 30

Fourth Deposit: February 28

Final Payment: March 30 (program fee paid in full)

Again, these policy revisions have been made in an effort to improve the structure and management of our programs. We are aware that the planning phase takes place far in advance of the study away program travel dates and that there will be times when it is necessary to make changes due to circumstances that cannot be anticipated.

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING A STUDY AWAY PROGRAM

Study Away programs are planned, implemented and administered through cooperation between the Faculty/Staff Trip Leader(s) and the Department Chair in consultation with the Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations and with the approval of the Assistant Dean and Provost. For credit classes are submitted to the office of Academic Records for registration.

STEPS IN PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING A PROGRAM

In the spring semester prior to the year of travel the Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations will announce a call for study abroad/away proposals. Planning your trip may require several meetings to discuss your proposal. Please note that if any courses are being team-taught, both names should appear on the syllabus. Courses that will be front-loaded or end-loaded to meet the contact hour requirements must also note the pre and/or post departure requirements. **A syllabus must be provided for all courses (including catalog courses) to be filed in the Provost's office.**

TRIP LEADER PAPERWORK:

- Trip Proposal Form
- Detailed Budget
- Detailed Itinerary
- Special Topics Form – Study Away (for non-catalog courses). Please log into WebAdvisor for this form or see the Google Site instructions from the Office of Academic Records.
- Special Topics Syllabus or Revised Syllabus for Academic Catalog Courses
- Updated Shared Google Spreadsheet with list of trip participants

Any faculty/staff member considering developing a study away program should discuss his/her proposal with the chair of the department and the Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations. A trip proposal form is required to officially submit your proposal. Your detailed budget and itinerary must be submitted with the proposal form. In addition, trip leaders offering course credit must also submit a Special Topics form for non-catalog courses with a syllabus attached. A syllabus must also be submitted for catalog courses that have been revised for the purposes

of study away. The trip leader and the department chair signature, if required, must be signed before submitting the forms to the Trans4mations Program. The planning resources and forms can be found online (see below). Trip leaders should review the shared participants list for accuracy and notify the Assistant Dean that the course is closed. Copies of handouts that are distributed to student participants should also be shared with the Trans4mations Program.

One-two semesters prior to the trip:

- The Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations will consult with and submit course information to the Office of Institutional Identity to design or update the study abroad/away website or publication, which will include program titles and dates, locations, course numbers and credit, prerequisites, faculty, program fees and tuition.
- The Trans4mations Program will relay information about study away opportunities through electronic and traditional means of communication.

ONLINE TRIP LEADER PLANNING FORMS:

[Study Abroad/Away Trip Planning Tip Sheet](#)

[Study Abroad/Away Budget Planning Worksheet](#)

[Study Abroad/Away Trip Proposal Form](#)

Special Topics for Study Away (see Office of Academic Records website for directions)

[OAR Google Site](#)

TRIP LEADER OVERVIEW

Trip Meetings:

Participants should be prepared to attend final trip meetings organized by the trip leader and a mandatory pre-departure orientation hosted by the Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations.

- Trip leaders will distribute information to interested students which will include a statement that the program fee includes the administrative fee to cover trip leader(s) costs, airfare, lodging, ground transportation, excursions, entrance fees and meals, etc.
- A schedule for payments should also be discussed with interested students. A small deposit should be required in the early stages of the trip to help set the stage for meeting payment deadlines and to solidify the list of travelers.
- A detailed itinerary must be given to participants to share with their families and must also be submitted to the Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations.

Trip Leaders should address with student participants:

- The course syllabus.
- Airport, train or bus travel instructions and accommodations.
- The trip itinerary.
- What the program fee will and will not cover.
- A program specific packing list.

- Contact information for the participant's family.
- Requirement to adhere to Coker's Code of Student Conduct, plus any specific policies or guidelines set by the trip leader and the Trans4mations Program.
- The Emergency Plan.

Trans4mations Study Away Orientation:

- A brief overview of trip preparation. Trip leaders should be prepared to share the details for their study program in their trip meetings and are welcome to attend orientation.
- Collect required study away documents and explain the importance of each.
- Review the deadlines to complete study away files.

Trip Leaders should address with the Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations:

The Trans4mations Program should be notified of withdrawals. Students should be made aware that they cannot receive a full refund once the trip leader begins making commitments and deposits or if deposits or non-refundable from the outset. Students are responsible for transferring funds from their student accounts to trip accounts. Trip leaders should submit a final disbursement for funds from their account at least one-two weeks prior to departure. Trip leaders must provide contact information on how he/she can be reached at any time for example, your cell number or an international cell if available.

During the study away trip, the trip leader should:

- Keep accurate records and receipts of all program expenses.
- Each course must be evaluated through the online assessment. Please check with the Provost's Office for questions about course evaluations.

Immediately following the trip the trip leader should:

- Submit all receipts to the business office. Refund monies to students if trip comes in under cost.
- If charges made to Coker American Express card, submit all receipts to the Provost's Office for reconciliation.
- Submit completed grades for all students to the Office of Academic Records.
- Discuss any student or budget issues with the Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations.

FINANCES

PROGRAM FEE:

The faculty trip leader creates a budget for the trip to include air and/or ground transportation, lodging, excursions, entrance fees and meals if included. The sum total of these various aspects

of the trip provides you with the program fee. Since study away programs must be self-supporting, the program fee should include the costs of the trip/leaders (faculty/staff). With approval by the Provost, other funding resources such as professional development or departmental funds may be used if available to help defray the costs of the program.

BUILDING A BUDGET:

Trip Leaders must develop a program fee to cover all projected expenses.

In general, program budgets should be divided into two parts:

1. **FIXED COSTS** are all costs which must be covered regardless of the number of participants. These may include but are not limited to:
 - Travel and lodging costs of the trip leader(s).
 - Classroom rental if applicable.

2. **VARIABLE COSTS** are costs dependent on the number of students participating in the program. These may include but are not limited to:
 - Airfare and/or ground transportation
 - Accommodations
 - Meals
 - Excursions
 - Entrance fees

3. **SALARIES**
Course salaries are not administered by the Trans4mations Program. Generally, six (6) students should be enrolled for the course to make, less than that will require approval from the Provost. A daily budget planner is included online to assist you (see below).

MANAGING MONEY:

A. Pre-Payments/Deposits

To avoid handling large sums of money or transactions while away it is recommended to pre-pay whenever possible, such as tours, on-ground transportation or accommodation costs. Most providers will require a deposit be made to reserve your arrangements.

Pre-paying would typically involve receiving and invoice from the vendor (hotel, airfare, ground transportation company, etc.) and submitting the invoice and disbursement request to the Business Office. Disbursements should be approved by the Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations.

B. Reimbursements prior to departure

If at all possible, trip leaders should request the use of a Coker American Express card

from the Provost's Office for credit card charges. If the trip leader makes deposits or purchase tickets by phone using a personal credit card, a disbursement request should be filed in the Business Office using the trip account number to reimburse your expenses. Disbursements must be approved by the Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations.

C. Credit Card/Disbursement Request/Travel Advance

American Express Cards are available in the Provost's Office. The funds to cover trip expense must be available in the trip account. Charges are reconciled and monies debited from that account upon receipt of your bill from American Express. All agreements, invoices and receipts must be attached in the online reconciliation form for American Express.

If cash will be used during travel, the trip leaders must complete a disbursement request for the Business Office to receive the funds deposited in the trip account for the program fee. These are the funds that will cover your remaining expenses for the trip and must be requested in a timely fashion so that they will be available prior to departure. Expenses in this category could include: ground transportation, hotel bills (minus deposit), tips, bus rentals for excursions; museum, theater, concert and other tickets and emergency funds (10-15%). Coker will cut a check payable to the trip leader prior to departure. A good practice is to deposit the check in a trip account at a local bank with an ATM card that will give you international access to funds through a debit/visa card. Never travel with a large amount of cash.

GETTING FUNDS WHILE AWAY:

There are several ways of making funds accessible during the study away trip. In general, trip leaders should have multiple means of accessing funds in case there is a difficulty with one particular system.

A. ATM card

Trip leaders may request a disbursement for the full amount of the program fee deposited in the Coker trip account to open a second trip account at a local branch of a bank that would provide them with ATM access nationwide.

B. Debit/Credit Cards

Visa and to some extent MasterCard are widely accepted.

Advantages: Widely accepted, easily replaced if lost or stolen.

Disadvantages: High transaction fees and interest for cash advances.

C. Coker College American Express Card

Advantages: No need to move money to another account to have access to a

debit/credit card. May offer more flexibility with card limit.

Disadvantages: Not as widely accepted as Visa and MasterCard.

It is strongly recommended that trip leaders have more than one way to access cash and that they carry an American Express, Visa or MasterCard for emergencies.

D. Keeping Track of Expenditures

Every expenditure during the course of the program should be receipted. Faculty who need to be reimbursed must turn in a receipt(s) to the Business Office along with a disbursement or Travel form.

- Gratuities should be included and noted on the detailed receipt.
- If students are reimbursed for activities that are included in the program cost, they should sign a statement acknowledging that they have been reimbursed. This statement will serve as a receipt. You may list the activities on a single sheet and have the student sign next to their name by each event that has been reimbursed.
- Ticket stubs, canceled subway tickets, bills, and receipts are all acceptable. If vendors do not have printed receipts, signed handwritten receipts are acceptable.
- Any departmental funds or advance used for trip expenditures must be receipted and any unused funds must be deposited in the appropriate departmental account.
- Receipts for meals must include the details of the food order and identify meal participants (can be listed by group name not individual participants).

TUITION:

Tuition for January Term, Interim and Summer Day is based on the per hour cost of Summer School. Term V is based on the costs for the Adult Degree Program (ADP). Fall Break and Spring Break courses generally are included in the course load for that semester and incur no additional tuition unless it is an overload.

RECRUITMENT

Each participating trip leader is responsible for recruiting students and travelers for his/her study away trip. Trip leaders should take the opportunity to promote their programs in their classes, and to colleagues who can refer interested students to the trip leader. Trip leaders are required to update the list of participants in the online shared Google Spreadsheet. Trip leaders may add or delete names from the final headcount. Knowing exactly who is participating allows the offices that are responsible to assist the students through the process by tracking their progress in completing the study away requirements.

MARKETING:

The Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations will work with the Office of Institutional Identity

to design an attractive/informative web presence, information card and/or brochure that will be available to students, faculty and staff to help promote the study away programs and set a timeline for trip readiness. Faculty/staff trip leaders may promote their programs upon approval which can occur months prior to the website release. Trip descriptions are taken from the proposal/course information submitted by faculty or staff. Trip leaders may also be asked to provide pictures from previous study away trips for the website or publication. The trip information will be available in either web and/or print resources.

TIMING:

Ideally, the study abroad/away website or publication will be ready to view prior to the start of the fall semester. Students should have ample time to discuss their interests with their parents. Early notice also allows time to determine the feasibility of their study away plans. Therefore, you should publicize your trip and hold a trip meeting prior to breaks, and holidays (Thanksgiving or Christmas) as well as before the end of the preceding school year. It is important to make student contact as soon as possible. Attending an interest meeting is not binding and allows students to share information with family members and assess their financial needs.

In addition, it is a good idea to set an early deposit deadline, even if the first amount due is a minimal amount, a \$25 deposit towards a program fee still shows an early commitment to the trip.

PROGRAM PUBLICITY:

- College Web Site.
- Facebook and Twitter.
- Announce the program in classes.
- Distribute posters and flyers.
- The program brochure and postcards if available.

If students from another college or travelers are allowed to participate you might want to consider:

- Sending the information to a colleague.
- Advertising in a professional publication or school newspaper.

Include that the non-student participant must register to audit the course in addition to paying the program fee.

COLLEGE WEBSITES AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The fastest way to disseminate information today is through the use of the Internet and social media. Referring students to the study abroad/away website will allow them to view trip details including program fee, tuition and course description. Some trip leaders also choose to use Facebook to help organize their trip.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, ADVERTISEMENTS AND FLYERS:

Announcing your study away course in your classes will allow you to personally promote this opportunity to students who will be in contact with you on a weekly basis and can follow up with their interests. If you have a colleague in your department or another department whom you believe would be open to you doing a five minute presentation at the beginning or end of his/her class please ask if you can have that time to promote your trip.

Although the course will appear on the study abroad/away website or brochure, take the time to prepare a more detailed flyer for your trip. You can include more information about your excursions adding specific details like the names of the historic sites, theater productions or concerts you will be attending. Use slogans, pictures and graphics to create excitement.

INFORMATION SESSIONS:

Information sessions should be held to help confirm your list of travelers. Attending required sessions is another means of determining how committed your travelers are. These students tend to be seriously interested in your program and may have questions that you can answer for the entire group. As time draws nearer for your trip these sessions also allow you to explain such things as what to pack, arrangements for meeting at the airport or an emergency plan. You can hold a "theme session" to draw students to your group meeting and free food always works. Trip Leaders should also use trip meetings with their students/travelers to review the itinerary, discuss course requirements and deposit deadlines in addition to answering any questions they may have. It is recommended that you begin holding trip meetings at least one semester prior to your departure to give students ample time to discuss their study away interests with their families and secure funds.

TELEPHONE ACCESS:

Cell phone provide easy access for contacting family . Other options also include Facetime, Viber, and Skype. There may also be access to Internet Cafes in certain locations.

POSTCARDS AND BROCHURES:

Trip leaders may distribute program flyers and information sheets to promote their program. On occasion a postcard or a brochure from the Trans4mations Program may be created to

distribute to students and the campus community. The postcard is used to direct students to the Study Abroad/Away website while the brochure, if published, has the same relevant course information including course credits, program fee and tuition for students to make informed decisions about program choices.

GENERAL RECRUITMENT HINTS:

Even if your program is targeted at a particular field of study to reach minimum enrollments it will likely be important to recruit students from outside this field. You should stress that your program may meet other degree requirements for electives or LASP and Trans4mations credit. Remember, it is critical to follow up with students who express interest.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDENT PROCESS

MANDATORY ORIENTATION SESSION:

The Study Away Program requires all students to attend a mandatory orientation. This session will be held prior to travel periods. Students will submit the paperwork to complete their study away files including a notarized waiver, signed copy of the study away checklist and an emergency contact form. Students should also bring copies of their driver's license or government issued ID card to keep on file. All participants (students and travelers) must sign notarized waivers stating that the college is released from liability.

The Study Away Program will hold mandatory orientations each semester for students participating in study away programs through Coker College in a large group setting or by trip affiliation. The required paperwork will be reviewed and deadlines given to students to complete their files.

STUDENT PAPERWORK:

Students will find the forms to complete on the College's website under Study Away. Forms must be completed and returned by the orientation date set by the Trans4mations Program.

STUDENT FORMS AND REQUIREMENTS:

- Online Study Away Application
- Notarized Waiver/Release
- Signed Study Away Checklist for Students
- Emergency Contact Form (shared with trip leader)
- Copy of insurance card
- Copy of driver's license or government issued ID

- Student Budget (for personal records and Financial Aid Office review)

BUDGET:

Trip leaders should assist students by preparing an estimated budget to help them determine if participation in the program is feasible. Students must be reminded that they will pay tuition in addition to a program fee and other associated costs if applicable. Although not collected by the College, Financial Aid requires students to have a trip budget worksheet in order to assess their needs. Students should also use the worksheet to add cost of meals not covered in the program fee as well as personal expenses like additional excursions, entrance fees or shopping if allowed.

FINANCIAL PLANNING/AID:

Students are required to meet with their financial aid counselor to review the budget worksheet. However students should note the following:

- January Term is a separate enrollment period and students must save money from their fall awards to apply towards January costs.
- Monies left over from the spring semester may be applied to May Interim.
- The summer program is a separate semester. Students must complete a budget worksheet and check with the Financial Aid to determine if they are eligible to apply for additional aid. A budget worksheet is available online. Also, many students save their money to apply it towards their study away trip when the time comes, this includes, wages, gifts and aid refunds. Students need to look for multiple means of covering the costs of study away and review all of the financial resources they have available.

COURSE ENROLLMENT AND EVALUATIONS

COURSES REGISTRATION:

Coker students can register for two types of courses:

1. Courses that receive Coker credit where tuition is paid to Coker and courses are led by a faculty or staff member.
2. Courses with credit transferred from another institution (American). The courses are not taught by Coker faculty and no tuition is paid to Coker.

COURSE APPROVAL FOR STUDENTS:

The courses and credit available is listed on the website and in the brochure if printed. Students must register for a study away course as they would any other course offered by the

College. Completing an application for the Trans4mations Program does not enroll students in the course. Course enrollment is by permission of the instructor only.

Students taking courses with another institution must complete the form for Courses Taken Elsewhere with his/her advisor and have it approved by the Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations and the Office of Academic Records prior to the program departure date.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT:

- For Coker courses, students must register as for a regular course. The payment for registration is handled with Student Accounts located in the Student Solution Center, 2nd Floor, Student Center. Students can request to have money moved from their student account directly to the trip account for program fees. The trip leader sets the date for the final deposit based on the study abroad guidelines.
- If the trip leader decides to allow a student to join the trip once the travel arrangements have been made for the group, the trip leader and student must work together to ensure the student books the flight that has been booked for the group or that the student's travel itinerary is as close as possible to that of the group. It is recommended that all trip participants travel together.
- Students who are seeking to do special courses such as an internships, service learning, research or independent study should work with his/her advisor to find the appropriate program that will meet the assigned requirements and get all necessary program approvals.

Again, enrollment for study away occurs through the regular registration process. The Office of Academic Records will announce the timeframe for each study period.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Courses taught away by Coker faculty/staff must be evaluated as if they were taught on campus, or as similarly as possible. Please contact the Provost's Office for questions about course evaluations.

TRANSCRIPTS FOR NON-COKER PROGRAMS

For courses offered away through another institution students must fill out a transient student form and file it with the Office of Academic Records.

If a student is accepted into a non-Coker program, the following must be included the study

away file for the Trans4mations Program:

- Online Application for Study Away
- Signed Study Away Checklist for Non-Coker Programs
- Copy of the Program Acceptance Letter
- Copy of the Courses Taken Elsewhere form with course descriptions attached. Classes that do not correspond with Coker courses can be transferred in as elective credit and must be given 099 course numbers.
- Notarized Waiver/Release Form
- Emergency Contact Form
- Copy of driver's license or state issued ID card
- Proof of insurance if required by program.

INSURANCE

HEALTH INSURANCE:

All travelers on a Coker College sponsored program are required to have health insurance. Students must submit proof of this coverage to the Trans4mations Program.

NON STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

Trip leaders who allow non-students to participate in their travel programs must take the responsibility of ensuring that these non-Coker participants have provided adequate information in case of an emergency, including proof of insurance coverage, copy of the driver's license or state issued ID, and emergency contact information. It is also important to have them sign a waiver releasing Coker of any liability. If the trip leader believes that an exception should be made in regards to the insurance coverage the trip leader should have a notarized statement from the participant that he/she assumes full responsibility and will not hold Coker liable.

CONCERNS FOR DISABLED AND SPECIAL NEEDS PARTICIPANTS

Under the American with Disabilities Act, students with disabilities who are otherwise qualified to participate in a study away program may not be turned down solely on the basis of their disability.

If a disabled student contacts you to discuss participation in your program, it is your responsibility to fully inform the student about possible risks or difficulties involved in

participation, while making sure not to discourage them from participating. The choice is then the student's to make.

Encourage the student to contact the Trans4mations Program/Study Away Office and the Office of Disability and Learning Support Services to find out about other programs that might better fit their needs.

MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

The section below, "Safety and Health Concerns for Trip Leaders," will address a number of issues relevant to mental health, but a few specific points may be helpful.

Stress is the number one cause of exacerbation of pre-existing mental illness, and adjusting to an unfamiliar setting can cause stress for any program participant. It is important for trip leaders to be familiar with the warning signs of self-reported mental illness, to identify the condition and to seek help for the student as early as possible.

Behavioral warning signs include (but are not limited to) an inability to communicate clearly, an unusual or markedly changed pattern of interaction (such as totally avoiding participation, becoming excessively anxious when called upon, or dominating discussions when this was previously not the case), extreme behavior fluctuation within a relatively short time span, a depressed or lethargic mood, being excessively active and talkative (very rapid speech), swollen or red eyes, a marked change in personal dress and hygiene, being sweaty (when the room is not hot), or falling asleep inappropriately. Even if unusual behavior is due to more transient culture shock, it is important to follow up with the student and offer support.

If a student self-discloses a mental health problem before departure, strongly encourage the student to discuss his/her program participation with a doctor. The student needs to be well-informed about the consequences of going off medication. Coker alcohol policies also apply on school sponsored study away programs.

Participants with chronic conditions, should bring medications. Identifying the availability of medical assistance prior to departure will also help put the trip leader's mind at ease. The Emergency Contact form allows the student to discuss the need for medical assistance prior to departure.

If a problem does arise, the faculty trip leader should not attempt to make a serious decision such as discontinuing the student's participation alone but should contact the Assistant Dean and Director of Trans4mations who in consultation with the Provost, Disability and Learning Support Services and/or Counseling will make suggestions as to how to handle the situation.

SAFETY AND HEALTH CONCERNS FOR TRIP LEADERS

As a trip leader you will find that your responsibilities do not end with teaching. Students will rely on you for all kinds of extra-curricular assistance as they adjust to a new and sometimes stressful environment.

Please note that under the Buckley Amendment, **it is not legal for College employees including trip leaders to contact a student's parent or guardian regarding medical conditions or emergencies if the student is over 18.** If a student on your program is involved in a medical or other emergency, you should of course urge the student to contact their parents if possible or to allow you to contact them, but you may not do so until you have the student's permission.

Students will submit a notarized trip waiver and the emergency contact form. Trip Leaders may receive confidential copies of the emergency contact form or have their own version that they take with them on the trip. The students give permission for trip leaders to notify emergency contacts on the form. If a situation seems to call for such contact, check the form to confirm permission has been granted. Even if permission has been granted we strongly suggest letting the student know that their emergency contact will be notified.

Prior to departure, the faculty trip leader should have the following information:

- Name, telephone number and address of closest clinic or urgent care facility.
- Name, address and telephone number of the nearest large hospital which provides urgent/emergency care.

RISKS - INFORM AND BE INFORMED

In the weeks prior to departure, it is important to monitor the weather for predictions of excessive or threatening conditions by monitoring the weather channel and national news organizations. Locations that are experiencing neighborhood unrest should also be monitored.

Also, remind students that it is important to guard against theft. Depending on the location guarding against purse snatching or pickpocketing could be an issue. Do not leave valuables in hotel rooms. The use of credit cards in locations where the server or clerk has to walk away with your card could also lead to debit or credit card fraud. Students should always be mindful of their surroundings.

If there are increased risks associated with your location be sure to inform students of potential risks, either in writing or in mandatory group meetings (so that you will have witnesses to

confirm that warning was given). We recommend doing so in writing because not everyone will be able to attend orientation meetings.

As a general rule, it is better (from both recruitment and liability standpoints) to inform students of any potential risks for example neighborhoods that should be avoided or the crime rate or if there has been recent civil unrest in certain areas.

If concerns have been raised about your destination, explain to students that the impacted area is miles from where the program will be held. Let them know that you personally feel this is not a serious risk, but that you wanted them to be fully informed. Simply not mentioning it could invite student or parent complaints that they were not fully informed.

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

[Weather Channel](#)

SAFETY ON-SITE:

Upon arrival, remind and encourage students to carry with them a copy of the itinerary, emergency contact number entered in cell as well as a business card from the hotel/hostel where you are lodging in case they are unable to recall the address if separated from the group. New destinations, larger cities, etc. may offer attractions that students are excited to experience. Therefore, common sense reminders are also appropriate, no drinking or leaving the lodging without permission or going out alone late at night. These actions not only violate trip policies but could place the student in harm's way.

If a crisis should occur, **keep a written record of all steps taken. Do not release information directly to the media. Follow the steps listed in the Emergency Plan.** The College's Office of Institutional Identity would coordinate any media contact in case of a major crisis.

The trip leader should hold a group meeting to inform and reassure students, and to quell rumors. Be careful not to appear to be blaming the victim of a distressing incident or panic over what steps to take. Having a well thought out plan can be reassuring in these stressful times.

In the case of political disturbances, be sure to remind students to stay away from any demonstrations or protests. Remember that the faculty trip leader's presence with students in such a situation could make the trip leader responsible for harm that may occur, even if the students went to the high risk location independently. The appropriate response would be to leave the scene and encourage the students to do the same. Luckily, serious crises are extremely rare, but it is important to be informed and prepared. If the group gets separated, it is important to have a meeting spot that everyone will be able to remember and find without too much hazard, if you are in the vicinity of your hotel, it would be a logical meeting place.

STUDENT CONDUCT

We recognize that students participating in Coker programs are legally adults and responsible for their own behavior. Students who are under 18 must have special permission from the trip leader and the waiver form signed by parents or legal guardian to participate. Students are also considered to be representing Coker. It is the trip leader's responsibility to advise students about breaking laws such as underage drinking. Part of the pre-departure AND on-site orientation for your trip should include reminders of those discussions and how they might be identified and victimized as a tourist. **Students need to be aware that they are subject both to U.S. laws and to the Coker Code of Student Conduct.**

In case of specific violations, it may be effective to address minor issues by chatting casually with a group of students (particularly friends of the offender) about the way that behavior will impact the group's experience – peer pressure can often be the most effective way to correct a student's behavior.

In the case of serious violations which jeopardize the safety or well-being of the offender, other students, or those who come in contact with the student, etc.) students should be informed that such behavior may result in dismissal from the program, failure of course, loss of program cost, and/or early return home at the student's expense.

PROGRAM CANCELLATION

In the event of a terrorist attack on the U.S. or other event which jeopardizes the health and safety of program participants, it is possible that a program may need to be cancelled. If appropriate and feasible, moving the group to a different site may be an alternative to cancellation. The decision will be made by the trip leader in consultation with the Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations and the Provost.

If the cancellation occurs before or soon after the program begins every effort will be made to refund recoverable costs to participants. If the emergency occurs toward the middle or end of the program, it may be best to evacuate the group back to Hartsville or home locations, but make arrangements to continue the coursework through Independent Study rather than cancel the program.

If a program is not cancelled, but an individual student feels uncomfortable about remaining on site, they should be allowed to withdraw. The trip leader would not be obligated by policy to offer a refund in this situation but would reimburse any recoverable costs. Students should be made aware in group meetings prior to making payments that once arrangements have been negotiated based on the group number and monies have been disbursed for the trip it may be

impossible to recoup any of the deposits for things such as airline and lodging. Also, if the group number declines, it may be possible that the trip costs per person will increase slightly (group discounts are usually based on 10 or more participants).

Substitutions may be made if the trip leader agrees to let another participant take the place of someone who decides to drop out. The former participant and the new entry must both acknowledge that they understand fully that all refunds and payments must be negotiated with regards to what is considered fair to all involved to be determined by the trip leader.

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

OVERVIEW

While Coker College cannot foresee every type of emergency, our Emergency Action Plan is designed to be an effective and logical base from which to address emergency scenarios. All Coker representatives (Administration, Study Abroad Staff, Trip Leaders, etc.) follow the approach outlined below in the event of an emergency.

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN OBJECTIVES:

- Protect the health and well-being of the Coker Students, faculty and staff.
- Reduce the emotional impact and/or stress experienced by Coker Students.
- Keep parents, family members and advisors informed.
- Reduce any adverse academic impacts upon the student.
- Assist others impacted by the Emergency.

SITUATIONS PRECIPITATING THE USE OF THE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN:

- War, terrorist acts, or social unrest.
- Student accident or health related emergency.
- Natural disaster.
- Missing or death of a student.
- Serious crime committed against a student.
- Sexual Assault.
- Criminal arrest of a student.
- Death or serious illness within a student's family.
- Any other unforeseen crisis.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

Step 1: REPORTING AN EMERGENCY

Before departure, each student is told who to contact in the event of an emergency and given contacts and procedures.

Should an emergency arise while students are away, each student is instructed to contact the on-site trip leaders (faculty, staff, etc.). Contact details, hotels and phone numbers will be shared with students prior to departure. In the extreme case that these individuals cannot be reached students are instructed to contact the Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mation at Coker at 843-383-8039; the Coker Switchboard at 843-383-8000 or Coker Campus Safety at 843-383-8140. After hours the Campus Safety Officer on duty can also be reached at 843-383-8140. He/she will contact the appropriate Coker representative. The current line of reporting is Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations (see above), Provost's Office, 843-383-8012, and then the President's Office, 843-383-8010.

Step 2: COMMUNICATION

The Coker staff member fielding the emergency call will take down ALL information critical to the situation (found in Appendix A) and will subsequently follow the steps in the Emergency Action Plan as appropriate.

1. Gather and Identify Information (details in Appendix A)

2. Relay Information

The person away who is initially informed of the emergency will contact the Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations who will in turn notify affected College Administration who will then notify parents/guardians/family members. The trip leader(s) will inform their students of the emergency and course of action to be taken.

3. Assessment

Once the details of the emergency are known and verified, the trip leaders along with the College Administration and the Assistant Dean/Director of Trans4mations will determine the level and extent of the emergency, then respond decisively and appropriately.

Step 3: ACTION PLAN

1. Formulate Action Plan

The Coker Administration and staff will rapidly formulate the course of action needed and respond decisively. Careful consideration and planning will be taken in order that student reaction, response, and attitude can be recorded and handled by the trip leaders as events transpire. Once the plan of action has been decided, it will be relayed to the students, the parents/guardians/family members, and emergency contacts. If evacuation is advisable, the trip leaders will inform all students of the arranged meeting place, the transportation to be used, and other details.

2. Execute Action Plan

In addition to, or as a part of, any Action Plan (formulated following Step One above) on-site trip leaders will:

1. Meet or be in contact by telephone to brief the students affected by the emergency.

2. Assist students in maintaining communication with their parents/guardians and the College.
3. Review the details outlined in the health and safety section of the handbook.
4. Agree upon what the best procedure will be for keeping them informed: cellular phone contact, email messages or individual meetings.

While Coker College cannot predict every type of scenario that might affect students away on one of our programs, we can ensure that communication remains open between the trip organizers, the College, the students, and the parents/guardians/family members. The Emergency Action Plan is a tool for assessing and handling all type of emergencies and may be modified as individual situations warrant.

QUESTIONS TO COLLECT VITAL INFORMATION AND DETERMINE ACTION

APPENDIX A

1. Gather Caller Information:

- a. Who is calling?
- b. What is the caller's relation to the students?
- c. What is the contact information for the caller?

2. Situation Specific Information:

- a. What is happening?
- b. Where is it happening?
- c. When did it begin (and end, if finished)?
- d. Who is involved?
- e. Did anyone witness the event?
- f. Who else knows about the event?
- g. What actions have been undertaken or suggested by authorities concerning the situation?

3. Student Specific Information:

- a. Where are the affected students?
- b. What is the physical condition of the students?
- c. What is the mental condition of the students?
- d. What communications have been established between students?
- e. What information needs to be communicated to students?
- f. Are there any other immediate student needs?

APPENDIX B

1. Cross Checking Facts:

- a. What websites/organizations will have useful information?
- b. Who will contact these for the information?
- c. How will the gathered information be disseminated?

2. Action Plan:

- a. What Actions are to be taken?
- b. What legal issues are to be considered?
- c. Who needs to be contacted?
- d. Are their financial arrangements to be made?

NOTES