

# UMKC Policy for Study Abroad and International Opportunities

UMKC's International Academic Programs Office (IAP) is committed to making available high quality international programs and ensuring that each international experience is academically robust and enriching for all participants. IAP works with each student/participant to identify the program that best meets his/her academic and personal needs. The policies stated here apply to formal institutional agreements and arrangements in which UMKC participates. These policies conform to UM-System policies, including the [Assumption of Risk and Release form](#) and [Guidelines for University of Missouri Related International Programs](#).

*"Study Abroad" for the purposes of this document is defined as any of a number of arrangements by which participants in UMKC-sponsored or affiliated programs complete part of their educational activities outside the United States. Such activities include -- but are not limited to -- traditional Study Abroad programs, classroom study, research, intern- or externships, continuing education, continuing professional education, volunteer experiences, and service learning; and they can be for credit or not-for-credit. All such Study Abroad, i.e., international educational activities, must be coordinated with the International Academic Programs Office by the relevant academic unit at UMKC.*

Study Abroad participants come from a variety of backgrounds and affiliations with UMKC; hence this document includes sections categorized by participant type.

## 1. ALL PARTICIPANTS

- a. **Documents:** All participants in UMKC Study Abroad programming must apply through IAP's Study Abroad online application software, [Terra Dotta](#). There is a \$50 subscription fee per applicant. All forms will be submitted and managed online.

All UMKC Study Abroad forms are due to IAP *at least* 8 weeks prior to program departure:

Summer:	February 15
Fall:	February 15
Spring:	October 15

If a participant does not submit all required documents by the deadline, their participation will be revoked without refund. If all required program documents are not received by the deadline, the program is subject to cancellation by the IAP Director.

- b. **Permitted Travel:** According to the U.S. Department of State: "Travel Warnings are issued when the State Department recommends that Americans avoid a certain country." The University of Missouri System and UMKC as part of the UM-System do not endorse programs to countries for which the U.S. Department of State has issued Travel Warnings. This policy supports the effort to ensure the health, safety, and security of students, participants and constituents as they participate in Study Abroad programming. Study Abroad programs are automatically suspended and participants are prohibited from traveling to those countries with U.S. Department of State Travel Warnings. No individual or faculty member may apply for a waiver of this policy for reasons other than natural disasters.

It is the participant's responsibility, per the [Assumption of Risk and Release form](#), to stay informed of conditions in the country or countries to which he/she travels.

If a student, participant or constituent chooses to travel to a country under a Travel Warning against the policies of the University, he/she will not be registered as a UMKC student and will not have access to university support, resources, or facilities during that time. No credit will be assigned for participation in an unauthorized program.

- c. **Code of Conduct:** Participants engaged in Study Abroad/international education activities are subject to the [UM-System Code of Conduct](#) (can also be found in the UMKC general catalog or online), the code of conduct of the host institution or program, and the laws of the host country or countries. For specific information about a host country, including an overview of its legal system, visit the U.S. Department of State's Web site.
- d. **Pre-Departure Orientation:** All participants, regardless of the program, must participate in a pre-departure orientation sponsored by IAP.
- e. **Financial Resources:** Each participant is responsible for securing financial resources necessary for their particular Study Abroad program.
- f. **Companions and/or minor children** are not permitted to travel with a UMKC participant on a Study Abroad program unless that person is enrolled in the program and is participating in his/her own right. Exceptions may be made with a compelling reason (such as a visually-challenged student requiring assistance).

## 2. **DEGREE-SEEKING STUDENTS**

### ***Eligibility***

#### UMKC Undergraduate Students

- Current full-time, degree-seeking UMKC students for semester programs. (Part-time UMKC students may be eligible for short-term/summer programs); and
- Completion of one full-time semester at UMKC prior to application (as shown by UMKC transcript); and
- Have and maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.75 and be in good standing from time of application until departure.

#### UMKC Graduate Students

- Students must be matriculated in a UMKC graduate program; and
- Be in good standing with academic unit from time of application until departure.

#### Non-UMKC Students

- Non-UMKC students may apply to certain programs, meeting eligibility GPA and good standing requirements listed above.

- a. Eligibility exceptions (for Faculty-Led Programs only): Faculty Directors *may* submit an [eligibility appeal](#) on behalf of a student, including a statement by the student. The appeal is due to IAP no later than 2 weeks after the application deadline and will be reviewed by the Faculty Program Director's Dean's Office. The Dean's decision is final.
- b. Graduating seniors may not receive academic credit towards their degree via UMKC Study Abroad programs because credits earned abroad will have been earned after the degree has been conferred.

### ***Credit***

- a. Individuals seeking academic credit must consult with the academic advising office of their academic unit to determine if credit will be given for any courses taken in connection with a Study Abroad program. Prior to departing on their Study Abroad program, participants must return the Study Abroad Program Budget and Foreign Course Approval Form signed by their academic advisor. Students should consider major and general education requirements to ensure that Study Abroad participation will not jeopardize normal progress towards graduation.
- b. Students are responsible for arranging for an original transcript to be sent to IAP from the partner institution in order for credit transfer to take place. IAP, in consultation with the International Student Affairs Office (ISAO) and

the academic advisor, will assist in evaluating a student's transcript from a partner school to determine the student's comparable grades, credits, etc. from the Study Abroad experience.

### ***Application Procedure***

a. Application to a Study Abroad program is managed entirely through the password protected [Terra Dotta](#) online software system, accessible on the IAP website. There is a \$50 application fee. Participants must submit both IAP's online Study Abroad application and any program-specific application which may be required. Online forms include:

- Application
- Personal Statement
- Letter(s) of Recommendation (one for short-term programs, 2 for semester)
- Assumption of Risk & Release Form
- Health Information Form
- Emergency Contact Form
- Program Budget and UMKC (or Foreign Course) Approval Form
- Copy of Passport
- Proof of Enrollment in the UM System Required Health Insurance

- b. IAP will obtain the student's academic advising transcript and disciplinary record to confirm eligibility.
- c. Participants must submit letter(s) of reference (one for summer programs and two for semester or academic year programs), preferably from a UMKC faculty member who is familiar with his/her academic performance and who can comment on the participant's suitability for a Study Abroad experience. These are submitted through the Terra Dotta online system.
- d. For semester and academic year programs, each student must submit a brief statement of purpose which explains how the intended Study Abroad program fits into his/her academic program and why he/she is interested in a particular program. For summer programs, generally shorter in length and more closely tied to UMKC curriculum, the Faculty Program Director may adjust these requirements based on the program.
- e. Study Abroad admission decisions are made by the Faculty Program Director in conjunction with IAP staff. The decisions will be based on any program-specific criteria, the need to select participants who will be the best possible match for Study Abroad, and the participant's ability to benefit from a particular program.
- f. Participants whose physical, mental, or emotional condition may require accommodations to participate in a Study Abroad program must contact the IAP staff well before the program departure. Participants will be asked to provide [UMKC's Services for Students with Disabilities](#) with the accommodations which they believe will be necessary for them to meet the Program requirements as well as a list of accommodations currently provided to the student by UMKC. UMKC's Disability Services will work with applicants and IAP to clarify accommodations which address Study Abroad program physical and mental requirements.
- f. Post deadline applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### **3. NON-DEGREE SEEKING PARTICIPANTS**

#### ***Eligibility***

a. The opportunity to apply for Study Abroad programs that does not provide course credit towards a UMKC degree is available to a variety of individuals depending upon the criteria and focus of the program, e.g., continuing education. Participation in a Study Abroad program, is not, however guaranteed, since there are a number of minimum requirements in place. International Academic Programs reserves the right to refuse admission into a Study Abroad program.

### ***Application Procedure***

- a. Participants must submit both IAP's online Study Abroad application through the Terra Dotta portal and any program-specific application which may be required. Online forms include:
  - Application (including a transcript, and a statement of permission from the home university)
  - Personal Statement
  - Letter(s) of Recommendation (one for short-term programs, 2 for semester)
  - Assumption of Risk & Release Form
  - Health Information Form
  - Emergency Contact Form
  - Copy of Passport
  - Proof of Enrollment in the UM System Required Health Insurance
- b. Study Abroad admission decisions will be made the Faculty Program Director in conjunction with IAP staff. The decisions will be based on any program-specific criteria, the need to select participants who will be the best possible match for international education activities, and the participants' ability to benefit from a particular program.
- d. Participants whose physical, mental, or emotional condition may require accommodations to participate in a Study Abroad program must contact the IAP staff well before the program departure. Participants will be asked to provide UMKC's [Disability Services](#) with the accommodations which they believe will be necessary for them to meet the program requirements as well as a list of accommodations currently provided the student by UMKC. UMKC's Disability Services will work with applicants and IAP to clarify accommodations which address Study Abroad program physical and mental requirements.

### **4. STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN NON-UMKC AFFILIATED STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS**

UMKC degree-seeking students may have an opportunity to participate in a Study Abroad program that is not affiliated with UMKC. While students are free to seek out and participate in these programs, there are policies regulating the transfer of credit back to UMKC to be used towards their degree.

- a. After appropriate review, IAP may decide not to support participation in non-UMKC affiliated programs if there are questions or concerns about a program's safety, participant support, and/or academic quality. Any student wanting to participate in a non-UMKC affiliated program must complete and submit to IAP a Petition for Non-UMKC Programs through the Terra Dotta system by February 1<sup>st</sup> for summer and Fall programs, and September 1<sup>st</sup> for Spring programs.
- b. Without the prior written approval from IAP and the student's academic unit, regularly enrolled students will not be given credit for any courses taken through a program not affiliated with UMKC or the UM-System. Without this approval, IAP will not enroll the student in Study Abroad placeholder hours, which could result in the loss of continuous enrollment status at UMKC, and jeopardize financial aid support.
- c. Students are responsible for arranging for an original transcript to be sent to IAP from the partner institution in order for credit transfer to take place. IAP, in consultation with the International Student Affairs Office (ISAO) and the academic advisor, will assist in evaluating a student's transcript from a partner school to determine the student's comparable grades, credits, etc. from the Study Abroad experience.

### **5. FACULTY DEVELOPMENT OF NEW INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS**

- a. Specific instructions and procedures to develop new programs can be found on the [Faculty Handbook for Study Abroad: A guide to developing, leading and continuing faculty-led academic programs abroad](#). Knowledgeable and

enthusiastic faculty and staff are key to successful international programs; often, faculty and staff have developed useful contacts with counterparts at international institutions and are the best sources of information about these institutions. At the same time, there is a need for a coordination of efforts when developing and signing new exchange agreements. Per the UM System's Guidelines for University of Missouri Sponsored Study Abroad Programs, IAP is responsible for vetting and obtaining all relevant approvals for new international partnerships and programs.

- b. Faculty members interested in developing a new academic collaboration with a particular university abroad must have the permission of their Dean or Director to do so and coordinate their efforts with IAP using the Proposal for a New International Memorandum of Understanding Form.
- c. Because of liability concerns and to ensure a degree of uniformity, any formal agreement with a school or university abroad must be reviewed by legal counsel and signed by the Provost and/or the Provost's designee.

## **6. FACULTY/STAFF PROGRAM DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

IAP has produced two documents to support Faculty Program Directorship of international education programs. The [On Site Field Guide](#) is intended for in-country use as a resource that provides essential information in one accessible place. The Faculty Handbook for Study Abroad is a comprehensive guide to the fiduciary responsibilities of program directors, the essential documents needed for a program, and the expectations for pre-program, in-country, and post-program activities. The Handbook addresses the following:

- a. Faculty programs must be renewed annually beginning with Post-Program Report.
- b. Faculty Program Directors must attend a Study Abroad Health and Safety Workshop at least every other year to maintain best practices in the field and to ensure compliance with UM-System regulations. First-time Directors will participate in the workshop and/or meet with IAP individually.
- c. A full list of all participants, distinguishing program participants from approved companions (including the non-enrolled companion form) must be submitted at least eight (8) weeks prior to the departure date.
- d. The Faculty Emergency Contact Form which includes program itinerary, phone numbers and accommodation information must be submitted at least eight (8) weeks prior to the departure date.
- e. Faculty Program Directors must ensure their participants submit all online documents (at least eight weeks prior to departure).
- f. Faculty Program Directors are not to be accompanied by companions and/or minor children. Exceptions may be made if the companion is also a faculty member and is directly involved with delivering the academic content of the Study Abroad course, or if the companion/minor children will maintain a schedule completely separate from the Study Abroad group (i.e. does not travel with the group on site visits, does not attend lectures/classes, etc.). When dealing with questions about accompanying companions/minor children, the paramount concern is the need to maintain academic rigor, integrity, and participant safety. In addition, any appearance of conflicting standards for faculty and participants should be avoided. To apply for an exception, please complete the Study Abroad Non-Enrolled Companion Form at least eight weeks prior to departure. All approved companions must complete the necessary companion form and all other required forms as well enroll in UM System GeoBlue Worldwide International Health Insurance Policy health insurance. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis with advance approval from International Academic Programs. The exceptions are rare and alternative insurance must meet or exceed the benefits offered in the UMKC GeoBlue Plan.
- g. All students and participants in UMKC programs are required to enroll in the [GeoBlue](#) Student Sickness and Accident

Insurance plan for the period of time they are abroad. Faculty members abroad on university business will be covered by [UM System international insurance](#). Print the AIG/WorldSource and UnitedHealthcare Global information and cards before departure. Faculty may also enroll in the GeoBlue health insurance.