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EAST TENNESSEE STATE  
UNIVERSITY

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## **ETSU Faculty-Led Education Abroad Programs and Operations**

**Policy Name:** ETSU Faculty-Led Education Abroad Programs and Operations

## Policy Purpose

This policy specifies the participation and operational requirements related to East Tennessee State University (ETSU or University) faculty-led education abroad programs.

## Applicability

This policy applies to faculty, staff, and students.

## Responsible Official, Office, and Interpretation

The ETSU Senior International Officer is responsible for the review and revision of this policy. For questions about this policy, please contact the ETSU Center for Global Engagement. The Provost in consultation with the Office of University Counsel, has the final authority to interpret this policy.

## Defined Terms

*A defined term has a specific meaning within the context of this policy.*

### ETSU Endorsed Education Abroad Program

Education Abroad Program programs which the University takes specific and deliberate action to support or offer travel through. This includes instances where the travel is funded, in full or in part, by the University, regardless of purpose, and where the travel is actively arranged and/or documented by the Office of International Programs and Services. ETSU Explicitly Endorsed Education Abroad Programs do not include instances where a University Employee has informally discussed the travel with an interested Student, or a University Employee has forwarded information that might be of interest to a Student or group.

### International Travel Risk Assessment and Advisory Council (ITRAAC)

ITRAAC is the committee responsible for reviewing proposals for ETSU faculty-led education abroad programs, ETSU-endorsed student travel abroad, and ETSU-endorsed faculty/staff travel abroad to ensure proper health, safety, and security risks have been mitigated. The Committee has university-wide jurisdiction. Composed of the Senior International Officer (Chair), the General Counsel or designee, the Director of Education

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Abroad, a representative from the College of Public Health, and a representative from ETSU Public Safety. ITRAAC may consult with other administrators, faculty, and experts as they choose to make assessment and recommendations. The committee submits its reviews and recommendations to the Provost for final travel approval.

(Student) Program Participants

Current ETSU students enrolled in a faculty-led education abroad program. Program Participants are eligible to receive academic credit for their course participation.

(Student) Program Associates

Current ETSU students not enrolled for academic course credit in a faculty-led education abroad program may be permitted to participate as Program Associates upon approval of the faculty instructor and the ETSU Senior International Officer. Program Associates must serve the program in a defined and documented capacity (e.g., as a documentarian, research assistant, or student support role) and are subject to the same health, safety, conduct, and liability requirements as enrolled Program Participants. Program Associates are not eligible to receive academic credit for their participation, and their inclusion must be justified as a demonstrable benefit in support of the program's academic or operational objectives.

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## Policy

### 1. General

- 1.1. ETSU's education abroad programs will follow policies and procedures consistent with the best practice standards established through the Forum on Education Abroad as recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission as the standards development organization for education abroad. ETSU's International Travel Advisory and Assessment Committee (ITRAAC) must approve ETSU faculty-led programs abroad.
- 1.2. Faculty-led education abroad opportunities for Program Participants must be comparable in contact hours to those expected of students taking courses on ETSU campuses.
- 1.3. Programs abroad should comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act when possible. Issues related to reasonable accommodation should be resolved after a student with a documented disability is accepted into an international educational experience but before the student departs on the program. ETSU may, however, restrict participation in an education abroad program for students or faculty determined to be at excessive medical risk or with serious physical constraints.
- 1.4. All Program Participants, faculty, and Program Associates participating in ETSU faculty-led education abroad programs must show proof of coverage of required medical, evacuation, and repatriation insurance purchased from ETSU's recommended insurance provider.
- 1.5. Participation in ETSU study abroad programs (credit or non-credit) is limited to students eighteen years of age or older who are enrolled in the ETSU program abroad, and to ETSU faculty or academic staff.

### 2. Student Eligibility, Roles and Requirements.

- 2.1. All students must be in good academic standing in order to participate in a study abroad program. During the application process, students give permission to the University to review their disciplinary records and transcript. Students must complete at least one semester at ETSU before studying abroad on a short-term program, and they must complete at least two semesters at ETSU before studying abroad on a long-term program (semester or longer). Exceptions may be made to semester requirements for non-degree seeking students who sometimes join ETSU faculty-led programs.

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2.2. Faculty leading ETSU study abroad courses may post other requirements for student eligibility and limit the number of Program Participants in the class. Education abroad opportunities that are not ETSU Faculty-Led programs may have different requirements.

### 2.3. Student Program Associates.

Current ETSU students not enrolled for credit in an education abroad course may participate in the program as Program Associates upon permission of the faculty instructor and Senior International Officer if they serve the program in a defined way (e.g., documentarian, research assistant, or student support). In this instance, any funds provided by ETSU to support Program Associate travel will be treated as income and subject to applicable taxes.

2.4. Out-of-state ETSU students pay in-state tuition as Program Participants while on study abroad.

## 3. Minor Students

This section establishes a narrowly defined set of circumstances under which an individual under the age of 18 (“minor”) may be considered for participation in a faculty-led education abroad program offered by East Tennessee State University

3.1. Because ETSU’s standing policy limits participation in education abroad programs to enrolled students at least 18 years of age, this provision is intended for exceptional cases only and requires elevated oversight, documentation, and institutional approval.

### 3.2. Exceptions: Eligibility and Conditions

A minor may be considered for Program Participation in an ETSU faculty-led education abroad program if all of the following conditions are satisfied:

#### 3.2.1. Enrollment Requirement

The minor must be an enrolled ETSU student for the term in which the program occurs.

#### 3.2.2. Age Requirement

The minor must reach the age of 18 on or before the program departure date, unless an exception is expressly approved in writing by the Provost (or designee) upon recommendation of the ETSU Senior International Officer.

3.2.3. Parental or Guardian Authorization Written, notarized consent from all legal guardians or parents with custody rights must be obtained.

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**3.2.4. Required documentation includes:**

- 3.2.4.1. Parental/Guardian Consent and Assumption of Risk form
  - 3.2.4.2. Medical Treatment Authorization
  - 3.2.4.3. Travel Consent Form (for international border requirements)
  - 3.2.4.4. Custody or guardianship verification, if applicable
  - 3.2.4.5. Supervision and Chaperoning
- 3.2.5. The minor must be accompanied by an approved adult chaperone who is not a course instructor or primary program leader.
- 3.2.6. Chaperones must pass ETSU background screening pursuant to the [Criminal Background Checks Policy](#).
- 3.2.7. The chaperone-to-minor ratio must be 1:1 unless otherwise approved by the ETSU Senior International Officer.

**3.2.8. Risk and Safety Review**

- 3.2.8.1. The program must undergo additional risk assessment through ETSU Environmental Health & Safety and the Office of University Counsel.
  - 3.2.8.2. Program leaders must document supervision, emergency response, and communication plans consistent with ETSU's Risk Assessment and Management for Education Abroad policy.
- 3.2.9. Insurance Coverage
- 3.2.9.1. The minor must be enrolled in the same mandatory travel, health, and evacuation insurance as other participants.
  - 3.2.9.2. Chaperones must be enrolled in the same mandatory travel, health, and evacuation insurance as other participants.
  - 3.2.9.3. Parents/guardians must acknowledge responsibility for costs not covered by university insurance.

**3.2.10. Exclusion from Certain Activities**

The University reserves the right to restrict the minor from higher-risk excursions or independent travel segments at the discretion of the faculty program leader and the ETSU Senior International Officer.

- 3.2.11. Conflict-of-Interest Limitation If the minor student is a dependent of the program leader or other participating ETSU employee, participation must be reviewed for conflict of interest and approved by the Provost.

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### **3.2.12. Final Approval**

- 3.2.12.1.** The ETSU Senior International Officer, The Office of University Counsel (for legal review), and the Provost (or designee) must jointly approve participation before program registration is finalized.
- 3.2.12.2.** A record of all approvals must be retained by the Center for Global Engagement.

## **4. Faculty Roles and Responsibilities**

- 4.1.** Faculty teaching an ETSU education abroad course must review student applicant records prior to approving Program Participants for the class roster.
- 4.2.** ETSU faculty teaching abroad have the right to take disciplinary action, including expulsion of students, using the same [General Policy on Student Conduct and Disciplinary Sanctions](#) and processes of action and appeal as those in place on the ETSU campus. Complaints of disruptive behavior, harassment, or discrimination must be reported to the ETSU Education Abroad Office.
- 4.3.** If an ETSU course is taught abroad by an instructor not employed by ETSU, or hired as part of a consortia arrangement with an institution outside the U.S., the ETSU faculty member proposing the course and his/her department chair must ensure that the instructor meets the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) credential requirements.
- 4.4.** Faculty must complete the Center for Global Engagement's required faculty trainings and processes overseen by the Education Abroad Office.
- 4.5.** Faculty are governed by the same policies that define faculty and academic staff rights and responsibilities on the home campus.
- 4.6.** Faculty must act in accordance with the laws of the host country and should make themselves aware of the local customs.
- 4.7.** Faculty shall adhere to all applicable contracting requirements, including appropriate contract approval and legal review.
- 4.8. Accompanying Family Members**

ITRAAC does not recommend allowing family members to accompany a faculty/staff member on faculty-led education abroad programs except in limited, special circumstances.

  - 4.8.1.** Minor children of faculty are permitted to accompany the faculty member if:

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- 4.8.1.1. There is a second faculty/academic staff member participating in the program; and
- 4.8.1.2. There is a secondary 24-hour caregiver for the minor. This may be a spouse unless both parents are ETSU employees in service to the study abroad program;
- 4.8.1.3. The 24-hour caregiver is maintained throughout the duration of the program; and
- 4.8.1.4. The faculty member submits an “Assumption of Risk” form to ITRAAC along with the course proposal.
- 4.8.2. Accompanying family members should not advise or counsel students during the program.
- 4.8.3. Travel arrangements for any accompanying family member will not be made by ETSU.
- 4.8.4. ETSU employees must comply with the General Travel policy regarding family member expenses. Travel expenses, including but not limited to, insurance, transportation, lodging, meals, or registration fees, etc., for spouses, minor children, or secondary 24-hour caregivers will not be reimbursed.
- 4.8.5. Spouses, domestic partners, and children may not accompany students to classes.
- 4.8.6. Faculty who wish to bring guests or children along on an education abroad program abroad must submit a memo request to ITRAAC that outlines how the above conditions will be met. ITRAAC will review and either approve or deny the request.



## **Procedures**

### **1. ETSU Faculty-led Programs Design and Approval**

- 1.1. Faculty-led programs are designed and approved for location in a country outside the U.S.
- 1.2. The program proposal includes course logistics, budget, risk assessment, student costs, and course sustainability.
- 1.3. The faculty member's dean approves the budget.
- 1.4. Course proposals are due to ITRAAC at dates specified by the Office of Education Abroad.
- 1.5. ITRAAC approves course logistics, student costs, risk assessment and crisis mitigation documents, and course sustainability.
- 1.6. ITRAAC recommends that faculty teaching an ETSU course abroad receive compensation; however, it also realizes that the ability to cover salary is based on enrollment revenue and travel expenses.
- 1.7. Faculty compensation and payment of faculty expenses are based on course enrollment and tuition-generated revenue.
- 1.8. Faculty members and their department chairs and deans should discuss compensation before the course takes place, including course release if the course revenue is insufficient to cover faculty compensation.
- 1.9. Faculty provide predeparture orientation according to the guidelines laid out by the Education Abroad Office.
- 1.10. ETSU charges tuition and fees, receives student payments, administers financial aid, and registers and reports grades for ETSU faculty-led programs abroad in the same manner as for ETSU on-campus programs.

### **2. Student Application Process**

- 2.1. Students interested in study abroad should consult with the ETSU Office of Education Abroad for advice on international education opportunities and on eligibility requirements.
- 2.2. Students apply for study abroad through ETSU's education abroad online application system; there is a commitment fee.
- 2.3. Students may apply through the Education Abroad Office for scholarships. Students should also check with the Office of Financial Aid to see if they are eligible for other means of support for study abroad.

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- 2.4. Student Program Participants and international program leaders complete program evaluation forms so that the ETSU Education Abroad Office can gather data on the effectiveness of recruitment, admissions, pre-departure orientation, the educational and personal value of the program and recommendations for continuation of the course in the future. Results are distributed to course instructors to support continuous improvement.

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## Applicable Forms and Websites

[ETSU Education Abroad Office](#)

[General Travel Policy](#)

[Risk Assessment and Management of Education Abroad Programs Policy](#)

## Authority and Revisions

**Authority:** TCA § 49-8-203, et seq,

**Previous Policy:** Study Abroad

The ETSU Board of Trustees is charged with policy making pursuant to TCA § 49-8-203, et seq. On March 24, 2017, the Board delegated its authority to ETSU's President to establish certain policies and procedures for educational program and other operations of the University, including this policy. The delegation of authority and required process for revision to this policy can be found on the [Policy Development and Rule Making Policy webpage](#).

To suggest a revision to this policy, please contact the responsible official indicated in this policy. Before a substantive change to the policy section may take effect, the requested changes must be: (1) approved by the responsible office; (2) reviewed by the Office of University Counsel for legal sufficiency; (3) posted for public comment; (4) approved by either Academic Council or University Council; and (5) approved by ETSU's President.