Study Abroad Crisis Management at MSSU

The Institute of International Studies supports academic experiences for MSSU students and faculty members outside the borders of the United States. However, it is important for participants to consider the risks involved with studying and traveling abroad. While we hope that an event requiring emergency support from the MSSU campus never occurs, it is important to be proactive and to have an Emergency Response Plan in place.

This Emergency Response Plan is designed for the MSSU faculty member who is leading students abroad on short-term trips. Obviously, each individual situation will demand a unique response based on the faculty member’s judgment after weighing all of the factors and taking appropriate action within the guidelines provided.

Students spending a semester abroad should contact the Institute of International Studies or the exchange program coordinator at the local university for assistance with specific problems.

**MSSU Study Abroad Crisis Management/Response Team**

Chad Stebbins (Director, Institute of International Studies)  

Cindy Jordan (Secretary, Institute of International Studies)  

Kelly Wilson (Director, Advising, Counseling, Testing Services)  

Cassie Mathes (Director, University Relations & Marketing)  

Ken Kennedy (University Police Chief)  

Bob Harrington (Director, Physical Plant)  

Ron Mitchell (Dean of Students)  
Office: 417-625-9531, Cell: 417-621-5166

**Additional Support**

MSSU University Police Department  
24-hour number: 417-626-2222, Cell: 417-437-6430

I. Political Emergency or Natural Disaster

**Typical Problem:**
- Coups d’état, violence toward Americans, severe rioting and civil unrest, earthquake, typhoons, floods.

**Response:**
A. Contact all students to make sure that they are accounted for and are safe.
B. Caution students about speculative communication and advise them to wait until clear information is available before contacting home.
C. Establish contact with the U.S. Embassy and keep a copy of the Embassy phone numbers handy. Make sure that Embassy officials know how to reach you day and night.

D. Contact the U.S. Department of State’s Citizen Emergency Center at (202) 647-5225 for suggestions and assistance.

E. In the case of a political emergency, make sure that there are no signs posted that identify your program as having an affiliation with the United States. Discourage students from congregating in groups of Americans or foreigners and from spending time in restaurants and bars that are known to be frequented primarily by foreigners.

F. Make sure that students know how to reach you 24 hours a day in case of an emergency.

G. Notify the MSSU Crisis Management Team, who will consult with the U.S. State Department and other universities with students in the same geographic area to develop an evacuation plan, if deemed necessary. They will continue to be in contact with these offices as the situation develops.

H. The team will coordinate with the appropriate MSSU offices about any possible media contact.

II. Victim of a Crime

Typical Problem:
• A student is the victim of a robbery, an assault, or a fight.

Response:
A. Ensure that the physical and emotional needs of the student are being attended to.
B. Report the crime to the local police as well as to MSSU’s Department of Public Safety.
C. Keep a log of all facts obtained.
D. Notify the MSSU Crisis Management Team.
E. The designated MSSU official will initiate communication with the student’s specified emergency contact person in the U.S.
F. The designated MSSU official will contact the affected student and gather as much information as possible in order to understand the student’s interpretation of the events.
G. The designated MSSU official will stay in contact with all parties involved.
   If it is decided that it is best for the student to return home (especially if health care is necessary and considered better in the United States), MSSU will assist with plans for the return.
H. The team will coordinate with the appropriate MSSU offices about any possible media contact.

If necessary, the U.S. Embassy abroad will be contacted for a list of lawyers in the area. Please note that the laws of the host country take prevalence over U.S. law. In certain cases, the MSSU Department of Public Safety may coordinate with the campus police/security at the overseas school.

III. Victims of Sexual Assault

Typical Problem:
• A student is a victim of rape, attempted rape, or other violent sexual assault.

Response:
A. Contact Assist America Scholastic Emergency Service (required insurance that all MSSU students carry) at 1-877-488-9833.
B. Clarify with the student the degree to which he/she wishes to involve local authorities.
C. Discern any obvious physical and emotional disturbance.
D. If there is obvious physical injury, make sure the student is taken to a hospital/clinic that you trust for urgent care.
E. Inform the student of the laws and procedures for dealing with sexual assault in the host country, as these may vary from those in the U.S. For example, in the U.S. it is important to preserve the evidence of a sexual assault as this may be used as evidence in a court of law.
F. Keep a log of all facts obtained.
G. Contact a member of the MSSU Crisis Management Team. With permission of the victim, the designated MSSU official will initiate communication with the student’s specified emergency contact person in the U.S.
H. It is critical for the student to visit with a mental health professional regardless of any physical harm. If service cannot be provided by the Assist America Scholastic Emergency Service (required insurance that all MSSU students carry) at 1-877-488-9833, contact the MSSU Advising, Counseling, Testing Services and the Department of Public Safety, which will help assess if the student needs to return home.
I. The team will coordinate with the appropriate MSSU offices about any possible media contact.

IV. Accused of a Crime

Typical Problem:
- A student is arrested for theft, assault, or drug possession.

Response:
A. Quickly assess the situation by obtaining as many details as possible (i.e., determine who, what, when, where, why, and how). Begin writing a log of the crisis situation.
B. Note that the laws of the host country are always in place.
C. Contact the U.S. Embassy Consular Officer for the names of lawyers who can give the student the legal help he/she requires and provide this information to the student.
D. Contact a member of the MSSU Crisis Management Team, preferably the Dean of Students. The designated MSSU official will initiate communication with the student’s specified emergency contact person in the U.S.
E. The team will coordinate with the appropriate MSSU offices about any possible media contact.

V. Missing Student

Typical Problem:
- A student is reported missing by a roommate, other program participants, or faculty member.

Response:
A. If student has not been located within 12 hours of first report of disappearance, file a report with authorities.
B. Working with authorities in the host country and to the extent possible, coordinate search efforts.

C. As necessary, contact a member of the MSSU Crisis Management Team. The designated MSSU official will initiate communication with the student’s specified emergency contact person in the U.S.

D. Once student has been located, contact the Crisis Management Team and the student’s emergency contacts.

E. The team will coordinate with the appropriate MSSU offices about any possible media contact.

VI. Illness or Injury

Typical Problem:
- Auto accidents, recreational injury, serious illness, drug overdose, loss of consciousness.

Response:
A. Assist the student in finding appropriate medical care. Contact Assist America’s Scholastic Emergency Services at 1-877-488-9833 (required insurance that all MSSU students carry) for a list of medical personnel available in the particular area.

B. Assess the extent or severity of the illness/accident, usually with the physician treating the student.

C. Keep a log that will include notes regarding the circumstances leading up to the illness/accident, the outcome of any discussions with the attending physician, and the course of medical treatment as it progresses.

D. Depending on the severity of the illness/accident, contact a member of the MSSU Crisis Management Team. That person will determine if the Crisis Management Team should be called together.

E. The designated MSSU official will initiate communication with the student’s specified emergency contact person in the U.S.

F. In some cases, the student may need to be evacuated in order to receive appropriate medical treatment. Assist America will be contacted and further instructions will be given.

G. The team will coordinate with the appropriate MSSU offices about any possible media contact.

VI. Psychiatric Emergencies

Typical Problem:
- A student is exhibiting severe disruptive behavior that appears to have a psychiatric basis.
- A student is believed to be severely emotionally disturbed and is creating disturbances or is a danger to self or others.
- A student has made a suicide attempt or threat or has spoken with someone about the plan to do so.
- A student is severely disruptive due to alcohol or drug use.

Response:
A. Talk to the student and gather information. Keep a written log.
B. Contact a member of the MSSU Crisis Management Team — preferably the Director of the Advising, Counseling, Testing Services — and brief her on the details of the situation to discuss how to assist the student.

C. Arrange to have the student seen by a counseling professional immediately. Contact the Assist America’s Scholastic Emergency Services (required insurance that all MSSU students carry) at 1-877-488-9833 for information on local assistance. Have the student escorted to the designated location of the appointment, preferably with one or two supportive people.

D. If necessary, arrange and carry out hospitalization.

E. If the student will not voluntarily seek help and appears to be dangerous to self and/or others, contact local authorities for procedures for involuntarily commitment or contact ISIC for local procedures.

F. In some circumstances, arrangements may be made by the MSSU Crisis Management Team to have the student sent back to the United States for hospitalization.

G. If hospitalization is not necessary, encourage the student to seek help. Follow up with regular visits with the student.

H. With the student’s consent, arrange to notify his/her specified emergency contact person and other involved parties on a need-to-know basis.

VII. Death

Typical Problem:
- Fatal accident or illness, suicide, or homicide.

Response:

A. Verify the identity of the student. Gather as much information as possible about the circumstances surrounding the student’s death as possible. Begin writing a log.

B. Notify the U.S. Embassy or Consulate and the MSSU Crisis Management Team.

C. MSSU’s Student Services will initiate appropriate procedures in accordance with our campus student death protocol, notifying appropriate MSSU offices.

D. The designated MSSU official will initiate communication with the student’s specified emergency contact person in the U.S.

E. A telephone call of condolence will me be made by the designated MSSU official.

F. Repatriation efforts will begin.

G. The team will coordinate with the appropriate MSSU offices about any possible media contact.

VIII. Guidelines for Media Inquiries

If an MSSU student is involved in an incident, all official MSSU responses, statements, or comments on any issue or situation are either made by or coordinated though the MSSU Office of University Relations & Marketing.

As necessary, University Relations & Marketing — in coordination with the Crisis Management Team — will develop formal, written communications, likely in the form of a situation fact sheet that can be handed to staff at all levels, faxed in response to media inquiries, and even posted on a web site. A fact sheet might include:

- The confirmed facts of the situation
• Official MSSU statements
• Contact information and phone numbers for on-campus personnel
• A timeline for action

Such fact sheets are considered works in progress, and should be updated appropriately as a situation develops.

This document was adapted and created with the help of resources from the University of Missouri-Columbia and the University of Missouri-Kansas City.
Appendix A:

**U.S. Embassies Abroad** ([www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov))

**Japan – Tokyo** American Embassy
The Embassy helps U.S. citizens in Tokyo, Chiba, Fukushima, Gunma, Ibaraki, Kanagawa, Nagano, Niigata, Saitama, Shizuoka, Tochigi, Yamagata, and Yamanashi.

1-10-5 Akasaka
Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-8420
Tel: 03-3224-5000
Fax: 03-3505-1862
Email: tokyoccu@state.gov (passport/citizenship related inquiries)
    tokyoaacs@state.gov (other American Citizens Services inquiries)

**Japan – Osaka-Kobe** United States Consulate General
The Consulate in Osaka helps Americans in Osaka, Aichi, Ehime, Fukui, Gifu, Hiroshima, Hyogo, Ishikawa, Kagawa, Kochi, Kyoto, Mie, Nara, Okayama, Shimane, Shiga, Tokushima, Tottori, Toyama, Wakayama.

2-11-5 Nishitenma, Kita-ku, Osaka 530-8543
Tel. (06) 6315-5900
Fax: (06) 6315-5914
Email: AOK@state.gov

**Japan – Nagoya**
United States Consulate
The Consulate in Nagoya helps Americans in Aichi, Gifu and Mie.

American Consulate Nagoya
Nagoya International Center Bldg. 6th floor
1-47-1 Nagono, Nakamura-ku, Nagoya 450-0001
Tel. (052) 581-4501
Fax (052) 581-3190

**Spain – Barcelona**
United States Consulate
Paseo Reina Elisenda de Montcada, 23
08034 Barcelona Espana
Tel. (+34) 93 280 22 27
Fax (+34) 93 280 61 75
Email: consularbarcel@state.gov

**Spain – Madrid**
American Embassy
Calle Serrano 75
28006 Madrid
Tel: 91-587-2200
Fax: 91-587-2303
Email: amemb@embusa.es