

## Developing a Faculty-led Study Tour

### Getting started: What's Involved?

Faculty-led programs are a tradition at Bridgewater State University and one that the Office of Study Abroad (OSA) enthusiastically supports. Over time, several academic departments on campus have offered faculty-led programs, and in a given year, as many as 1/2 of all study abroad participants are enrolled in faculty-led programs. These programs provide a variety of benefits for students: an overseas program directly linked to their coursework at BSU, the security of traveling with someone whom they know and respect, and a shorter program that opens up this opportunity to many students who otherwise would not go abroad.

Many students who participate in faculty-led programs have never left the U.S. and probably wouldn't during their time at BSU if not for these programs. We often find that students who first experience international travel with a BSU faculty member return to our office to pursue other opportunities.

Faculty-led programs are as rewarding as they are involved. The Faculty Leader is instructor, logistical coordinator, and at times, counselor (both academic and personal). Before going further, you should consider the following:

### **Is the position of Faculty Leader one you will be comfortable filling?**

Faculty Leaders need:

- First-hand, specifically relevant experience in the country/ies involved OR plan to work with a customized program provider and have appropriate knowledge of the country/ies involved to achieve the goals of the program and ensure the health and safety of participants.
- Academic expertise in the content areas covered by courses for which credit will be awarded.
- Organizing and planning skills, and the ability to keep track of a number of details simultaneously.
- Recruitment techniques and enthusiasm - you must be willing to spend time speaking with students to promote the program.
- Good health, to handle the physical and emotional demands of the program overseas. While some program sites overseas present no more challenge than living in Massachusetts, some locations and multi-site programs may be much more rigorous.
- Leadership qualities and willingness to take charge in any situation where students need to be directed, rather than consulted.
- Appreciation for the increased contact with students that is inevitable in an overseas setting.

Running a faculty-led program is a full-time commitment for the duration of the program. It is very different from, and much more demanding than, teaching on campus. Faculty Leaders are relatively isolated from BSU and often without many permanent facilities on-site. Consequently, in selecting faculty, we look for applicants with the variety of talents and skills necessary to cope with the diverse responsibilities the program demands. Faculty Leaders are also expected to set a good example for participants and are required to follow the policies, procedures and code of conduct of Bridgewater State University, host institution policy, U.S. law and host country law.

The first step toward coordinating a program is to familiarize yourself with the information provided here and make an appointment to meet with the Director of OSA to discuss the proposed program. When this is done early, it allows OSA staff to provide valuable feedback in the planning stages. Keep in mind that proposals should be submitted a minimum of one year prior to the departure date in order to successfully plan the program and recruit the required 10 student minimum.

### **Principles and Characteristics of a Strong Program**

OSA and BSU Faculty Leaders share four main areas of concern for the development of new programs overseas:

***Safety and Security:*** We consider the safety and security of our students and Faculty Leaders while overseas to be of primary importance in developing and administering programs overseas. **Therefore, OSA does not support programs in areas of the world listed on the State Department Travel Warning list.** However, emergencies may arise while BSU students and the Faculty Leader are overseas. For this reason, Faculty Leaders provide a list of emergency contacts in the host country to OSA prior to departure while OSA provides emergency numbers for staff in the U.S.

***Academic Integrity:*** BSU courses delivered overseas must adhere to the same high standards of development, content, departmental approval, and delivery as courses taught on campus. Syllabi for courses offered as part of the program are submitted as part of the program proposal along with the Faculty Leader's CV, and these materials are updated each time the course is taught abroad. The academic experience of student participants is the primary purpose of these programs; therefore faculty research occurs only in programs where students participate in and contribute to the research project.

***Fiscal and Budgetary Responsibility:*** Most BSU students face considerable financial pressures in carrying out their studies at the university and OSA recognizes that study abroad may create additional financial burdens. OSA works to control costs for all overseas programs and maintains good relationships with the Office of Financial Aid and other offices on campus that assist students in meeting their study abroad goals. All new programs need to provide the highest quality program at the most conservative cost. Program budgets are developed in cooperation with OSA staff and funds expended for programs are carefully monitored and accounted for at all stages of program development and implementation.

***Clientele:*** OSA seeks to increase the diversity of students studying overseas to the point that it reflects the diversity of the student body on campus. This includes under-represented groups of students and under-represented departments or colleges. Faculty-led programs provide a needed option for students in certain majors, with limited time or finances for study abroad, or who feel most comfortable traveling with a BSU faculty member.

Our primary recruitment pool is BSU students. Additional students from other institutions in Massachusetts or from other states are also welcome to join our programs when space permits. Often, BSU current and retired Faculty members are interested in joining the study tours as participants. OSA welcomes their participation.

In the development and operation of faculty-led programs, the above principles serve to guide OSA staff and Faculty Leaders alike. In addition, the following specific characteristics are

expected of high-quality faculty-led programs. The more characteristics that are present in any new program proposed, the greater the likelihood that it will be approved and will be successful.

**Preferred characteristics for all programs:**

1. The Faculty Leader has identified a topic of relevance, an adequate pool of students on which to draw, and an appropriate location for the program.
2. The program has been planned with a balance of fiscal responsibility, logistics, and academic content, to maximize both the opportunity for student learning and the opportunity for participation by BSU students who rely on financial aid to fund their studies
3. The program seeks to offer a new opportunity to BSU students, rather than duplicating previously developed overseas offerings. It is geared towards a previously underserved population or academic major.
4. The course syllabus clearly incorporates academic content relating to the host country, culture, economy, and/or history in order to justify offering the program overseas.
5. The program provides substantive orientation programs, including pre-departure and in-country components, to prepare the students adequately for living and studying abroad.
6. Field trips, site visits, and other cultural activities are integrated into the course material to provide an in-depth view of the host country in order to enhance the classroom experience.
7. Additional opportunities for students to interact with residents of the host country are organized within the framework of the program.
8. Assessment of student performance compares favorably with the assessment of the same course offered on the BSU campus.

**For programs involving multiple sites, additional characteristics include:**

1. The program uses an itinerary that neither exhausts the participants or the Faculty Leader, nor inflates the cost of the program unnecessarily, and provides an in-depth experience in each location.
2. Since accommodations for multiple-site programs are generally in hotels or bed and breakfast settings, the program strives to maximize additional opportunities for contact with residents of the countries visited.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

Many people are involved in the successful development and operation of faculty-led programs. Below are the key responsibilities of the Faculty Leader, Office of Study Abroad, Chairs and Deans, and student participants. The roles of Faculty Leaders and OSA are explained in greater detail throughout these materials.

**Faculty Leader**

As a Faculty Leader, you will wear many different hats as you plan, run, and then return from your program. Preparation involves a combination of paperwork, legwork, and teamwork. While abroad, though your primary role will be that of instructor, you may also be responsible at times for administrative and counseling duties (academic and personal). Upon your return, you will be submitting a program summary report.

In selecting faculty to lead these programs, BSU looks for applicants with the variety of talents and skills necessary to cope with the diverse responsibilities the program demands. Following are key responsibilities of the Faculty Leader.

- Program development:
  - Develop program proposal, including academics and logistics. Locate providers to offer services (housing, transportation, instruction, guide/interpreter, etc.) necessary to the operation of a safe, successful program. (OSA staff can recommend travel agents, study abroad providers, and overseas institutions to assist in program planning.)
  - Plan and implement excursions and other program activities.
  - Serve as the primary contact between BSU and any vendors while abroad (hotels, tour guide operators, academic institutions, etc.) whose services will be utilized for the program.
  - Work collaboratively with OSA and vendors to develop a fiscally responsible program budget.
  
- Academics:
  - Create academic content for the program consistent with the standards for courses at BSU and including the same components that they would if taught on campus, with the equivalent workload and assessment.
  - Develop and submit syllabi for program courses.
  - Choose textbooks and resource materials appropriate for the courses.
  - Commit to instruction abroad for a specified period of time.
  
- Recruitment:
  - Upon approval, actively promote the program and recruit students by holding information sessions and following up on student inquiries.
  - Share information with other faculty, at BSU or other institutions, who may assist in recruitment.
  - Provide OSA with any recruitment materials for further distribution.
  
- Pre-departure preparation:
  - Develop and attend the group-specific orientation and any on-site orientation sessions.
  - Provide OSA and participants with a detailed itinerary which includes emergency contact addresses and telephone numbers.
  - Advise OSA and participants of any changes in previously agreed upon travel, accommodation or other course-related arrangements.
  - Comply with all government regulations regarding travel, study and research in the host country.
  - Assist OSA in securing invoices from service providers if necessary.

- On-site:
  - While abroad, be available to students on a regular and emergency basis for consultation on individual and group problems, including those that are non-academic in nature.
  - Advise OSA immediately of any emergency related to, or injury of, a course participant or third party. For liability reasons, all such reports must be followed by a detailed written account from the Faculty Leader.
  
- Post-program:
  - Submit final grades to the Registrar's Office using grading practices that conform to BSU policies. Attendance policy, as a factor in grading, must be clearly announced at the beginning of the course.
  - Within one month of the program's completion, submit a comprehensive program report to OSA.

### **International Programs**

OSA staff support Faculty Leaders in all aspects of program development. Below are specific responsibilities of OSA in relation to faculty-led programs.

- Program development:
  - Provide general support in the development and administration of faculty-led programs.
  - Assist faculty in developing a strong, thoroughly prepared proposal for review by the International Programs Committee.
  - Provide guidance on program budget development to ensure that budgets are both fiscally responsible and in compliance with BSU policy and state law.
  - Provide advice on BSU policy and state law and resources so that Faculty Leaders may learn more about these issues.
  
- Program promotion:
  - Develop marketing materials for use by faculty, including a program webpage and flyer.
  - Help promote information sessions led by the Faculty Leader.
  - Promote the program to eligible students who seek general study abroad information from OSA.
  - Host a campus-wide Study Abroad Fair each semester, which faculty are welcome to attend.
  
- Program administration:
  - Set timeline for program application and acceptance process to facilitate successful recruitment and program administration.

- Create a program application and determine eligibility for study abroad participation in conjunction with Faculty Leader.
  - Collect all application and post-acceptance materials. Provide applicable post-acceptance materials to Faculty Leader in a timely manner.
  - Enroll students as study abroad participants.
  - Prepare all travel paperwork, and work with the Faculty Leader to ensure that BSU policies and state laws are followed.
  - Liaise with Registrar's Office, Financial Aid, and other divisions of the university to assist students and Faculty Leaders.
  - Lead a general pre-departure orientation for all program participants.
  - Provide program packet to faculty prior to departure. Packet contains financial forms, student medical information, copies of passports, and emergency procedures.
  - Provide support in case of an emergency abroad.
- Financial matters:
    - Set the final program price prior to marketing the program and determine a payment schedule compatible with required payments for services abroad.
    - Work with Student Accounts Office to place charges on student accounts and monitor payment of fees.
    - Create and send budgets for financial aid recipients to the Financial Aid Office. Work with aid recipients and Financial Aid to resolve questions on aid eligibility and disbursements.
    - Negotiate payment schedules and make payments for services provided as part of the program in compliance with BSU policy and state law.
    - Reconcile program expenses against the budget.

### **Department Chairs & Deans**

Chairs and Deans are responsible for reviewing the program proposal to ensure that it meets the academic standards of the department and college. Approval of the program proposal indicates support from the department and college for the program, and ideally departmental colleagues will assist the Faculty Leader with recruitment efforts. The financial obligation to the department is normally a portion of benefits based on remuneration for the program unless other arrangements have been made.

### **Students**

Students also have responsibilities, which are detailed in the *BSU OSA Study Abroad Handbook*. Students are responsible for entering into an overseas program with an open mind and a willingness to experience a new culture; for participating fully in the program and all organized activities; and for completing and submitting work as they would if they were on the BSU campus. They are expected to handle program costs responsibly, and ensure that all bills are settled prior to the program's departure. Students represent BSU while abroad and are responsible for abiding by the BSU Code of Conduct and for representing themselves, their university, and their country in the best possible light.

### **Evaluating the Program Concept**

If you are comfortable with the responsibilities of the Faculty Leader and the general principles and characteristics expected of BSU faculty-led programs, then the next topic to consider is the viability of the proposed program. There are many potential faculty-led programs, but forethought and planning will greatly improve the likelihood of a successful proposal and program.

Below are some key questions to ask yourself as you start to plan; they are provided as a way to encourage you to think about creating a successful program, *not* to discourage you from your idea. Most programs evolve and change through the planning process and become stronger as a result.

Program rationale:

- Does it offer something that cannot be accomplished on campus?
- Will the program fill a curricular need for the department's majors, minors, and faculty?
- Will it enhance the department's major or minor offerings?
- Will the coursework apply towards major or minor requirements?
- Is there a program already available which will meet the need?

Clientele:

- How many majors and minors are in the appropriate department(s)?
- What are the enrollment figures in related courses?
- Will it attract interest outside the major or minor? (Programs that focus on a very specific topic can sometimes have difficulty achieving and maintaining sufficient enrollment.)
- What is the potential for participants from other BSU campuses to attend? How will these potential participants be reached?

Safety and security:

- Is this location on the State Department Travel Warning list? (if so, it cannot be approved)
- Is this location considered safe by measures other than the U.S. State Department for travel/temporary residence by Americans or other foreigners?
- Do you feel comfortable that you can adequately ensure the safety and security of 10+ students in this location?

Fiscal responsibility:

- Will this program be within the financial means of BSU students?
- Does it provide the highest quality program at the most conservative cost?
- Does the program fee include essential items (e.g. housing, ground transportation, excursion costs, etc.) or will students be expected to pay numerous out-of-pocket costs?

OSA staff have worked with many new and continuing faculty-led programs; if you are not certain of the viability of your program, staff will be happy to discuss this and potential strategies that might assist you in strengthening the program concept.

## **Initial Planning: Academics and Logistics**

Programs that are sponsored by BSU operate overseas in the name of BSU, which is legally liable for the outcomes. For this reason, all new programs are subject to approval by the Office of Study Abroad, and continuing programs are subject to annual review and re-approval. These programs are promoted on the main campus and are an extension of courses offered on campus. All overseas study programs offered through International Programs are credit-bearing, and, as such, must adhere to established and accepted standards for credit courses.

OSA staff and prospective Faculty Leaders work together closely on the initial planning of the program. Below are guidelines you will need to be aware of as you develop the program. Because budgeting is such a large topic, you will find the information you need in the section of this website on financial matters.

### **Academics**

Faculty applicants should propose courses in their academic fields that are specialized and make special use of locale. Courses should be site-specific. A course may be modeled closely after a course the faculty member normally teaches on campus, as long as the course has a regional, national, or comparative focus that makes it appropriate to be taught at the site.

Credit requirements can include guest lectures and documented, organized experiential activities that support the class work (e.g. excursions, field trips, museum visits, as well as organized language lab or computer lab activities), but these should not exceed 1/3 of the total contact hours required for each credit hour earned. Time traveling to and from experiential activities is not included in this calculation. The concept of learning by osmosis (living in the overseas location for a period of time) is not a sufficient basis for awarding credit.

When completing a new program proposal which includes an experiential learning component, you must indicate how these contact hours are utilized. You should be aware that the credit proposed versus the length/content hours of program courses will be carefully evaluated. An unrealistic number of credits granted for a short-term class could result in rejection of the proposal and/or course. Most short-term faculty-led programs grant 3 credit hours. In cases where a Faculty Leader wishes to offer credit above the recommended limit listed above, arranging formal pre- and/or post-program work on the BSU campus can accomplish this.

When language courses are taken overseas, students must be placed at an appropriate level. For programs requiring a specific level of proficiency for entry, BSU professors should evaluate students' language ability prior to student selection for participation. Programs focusing on language acquisition typically require some previous language study.

### **Accommodation**

Accommodation varies widely among faculty-led programs, and certain types of accommodation lend themselves more to certain program models. If you are developing a spring break or multi-site program, accommodation will likely be in hostels or hotels. For lengthier programs, homestays, dormitories, or apartment-style housing will be more economical. Double-occupancy rooms are normal for faculty-led programs. The type of housing provided for the program depends in large part on cost and availability. Students are fairly tolerant of hostels for shorter programs and these keep costs down significantly, but this is not a good approach for a program of several weeks. Many institutions with which we work are able to arrange housing or recommend a housing provider, which often proves to be simpler and more economical.

Faculty members are expected to stay in the same housing provided for participants. A single room will be provided for the faculty member whenever possible. Other arrangements must be approved in advance by OSA.

### **Meals**

Past faculty-led programs have ranged from all meals included to virtually no meals provided to participants. Programs are not required to provide meals, but you will probably want to at least share a few group meals, such as a welcome and farewell dinner, to help build cohesiveness in your program. If you opt not to include a majority of meals, or are unable to arrange this, be sure you know how/where students will get their meals and describe this in the proposal. Accurate cost estimates for student expenses in this area will also be essential to help students plan.

### **Excursions**

Excursions and field trips are an integral part of a faculty-led program and a description of those you wish to organize should be detailed in the program proposal. Costs for excursions will be budgeted into the program, so it will be important to do some research on transportation, lodging, and admissions costs related to excursions while you are working on the overall proposal. The excursions should be relevant to the purpose of the program, take advantage of the locale, and be realistic in terms of time, distance, and cost.

### **Working with program providers and institutions abroad**

Many faculty-led programs are housed at an institution abroad or in some other way receive support for program activities on-site. Typically this has been through an arrangement with a university to provide services ranging from language instruction to housing to tour coordination. If you plan to work with an institution abroad, start discussing your program needs with them early. At the point when you have written confirmation that an agreement for services/price has been reached, OSA will need a Letter of Agreement detailing the services, dates, group size, and service fees.

Several organizations exist which specialize in developing faculty-led programs from the ground up. Such organizations allow you, the Faculty Leader, to focus on the academic components of the program while they organize housing, classroom space, and any excursions or activities you may request. Working with such providers simplifies the program development process immensely. This does come at a slightly higher cost, and may require larger group sizes (12-15 instead of 10), so be aware of the specifics of working with such organizations if you choose to pursue this option. OSA staff can put you in touch with several program providers, if needed.

### **Permits and visas**

Many countries now require visas for short-term stays, and some require special permits for field research or group activities. Any requirements of this nature should be investigated during the initial planning for the program and necessary costs for the Faculty Leader can be built into the program budget.

## **The Application and Approval Process**

### **The application**

Once you have fleshed out your program concept and how to accomplish it, the next step is developing the program proposal. In the Faculty-Led Program Application, you will present your program concept, previous international experiences, and special academic interests to the Office of Study Abroad. The International Programs Committee will then review these proposals.

A complete proposal consists of four parts:

1. Faculty-Led Program Application (program overview, academic information, endorsement of the Department Chair and Dean, program budget);
2. Detailed program itinerary;
3. Syllabus for each proposed course to be taught abroad; and
4. CV for each instructor who will be teaching a course abroad

We recommend that you complete the basic framework of the proposal, including a draft budget, more than one year before the intended start of the program so that you have time to meet with OSA staff and review the draft together. This meeting is an opportunity for you to ask any questions about the application process and allows OSA staff to provide feedback that may help to clarify or strengthen your proposal.

### **Departmental support**

A faculty-led program is a collaborative effort not only between the Faculty Leader and OSA, but also between the Faculty Leader and his or her academic department. Like all curricula at BSU, faculty-led programs should be viewed as offerings of both academic departments and individual professors. Early in the process, the Faculty Leader should find out if the faculty in his or her department are supportive of the program and willing to promote it as part of departmental offerings.

Your department chair and academic dean will be asked to show their support officially during the application process by signing the Faculty-Led Program Application. Ideally they will be informed well in advance and this stage is merely the formalization of a prior understanding.

### **Program review**

All faculty-led programs are reviewed by the International Programs Development Committee. The Committee is comprised of BSU faculty and staff members who have taken an interest in international education and/or teach in an area studies program. The Committee makes program recommendations to the Director, Office of Study Abroad, who approves programs to be supported by the Office of Study Abroad.

### **Program approval**

Approval and operation of faculty-led programs falls under the purview of the Office of Study Abroad. Programs are evaluated based on the information presented in the application, input from the International Programs Committee and OSA, safety/liability concerns, possible competition with other OSA programs, and criteria presented elsewhere in these materials. The Director of the Office of Study Abroad makes the final determination on approval of new or continuing programs

### **Continuing programs**

Faculty who have proposed and coordinated successful programs in previous years may propose their program for another term. As with new program applications, The International Programs Committee reviews continuing proposals.

### **Sample Timeline**

### **Sample timeline**

*Adapted from the American Institute for Foreign Study's "Suggested timeline for planning a study abroad program"*

<p><b>Over one year before departure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine intended destination, timeframe, and curriculum of program.</li> <li>• Decide if you will directly arrange program logistics or use a customized program provider.</li> <li>• Read faculty-led programs information to become familiar with BSU requirements and expectations.</li> <li>• Meet with OSA Director/staff to discuss the program, logistics, and timeline.</li> <li>• Begin the application process.</li> <li>• Develop program budget with OSA staff.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ten months to one year before departure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit completed program application to OSA. All signatures and supporting documentation must be included.</li> <li>• Application is distributed to members of the development committee for a blind review.</li> <li>• Notification of status from OSA.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Five to ten months before departure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OSA develops with faculty member: application timeline, marketing materials if desired (brochure, flyer, webpage).</li> <li>• Provide information/brochures to colleagues in your department. Contact faculty in other departments whose students may be interested in your program.</li> <li>• Visit classes.</li> <li>• Hold first recruitment meeting.</li> <li>• Establish a list of interested students.</li> <li>• Follow up with interested students.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Three to six months before departure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold additional information meeting(s)</li> <li>• Continue to talk to enrolled and interested students to keep enthusiasm high.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Two to three months before departure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application deadline.</li> <li>• OSA prepares acceptance packets, produces financial aid documentation, charges student accounts, and registers students for program.</li> <li>• Ensure that participants have, or have applied for, passports, visas.</li> <li>• Begin orientation meetings if more than one.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>OSA prepares travel and financial paperwork.</li> </ul>
<b>End of term prior to program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead program orientation with assistance from OSA staff.</li> <li>Program travel and finances finalized.</li> </ul>

## Financial Matters

*Faculty Leaders have an equal responsibility for ensuring that programs operate in compliance with BSU policy and state law and are encouraged to seek clarification should procedural questions arise.*

### Initial Finances and Budgeting

The program budget is an indicator of the feasibility and affordability of the program. All overseas programs must be affordable for students, in compliance with State law and BSU policy, and financially self-supporting. When developing the program budget, there are two points to keep in mind:

1. identify all costs to participants and the university (even those outside the budget)
2. develop the highest quality program at the lowest reasonable expense to students

The program fee represents only part of the total program cost to students. International airfare, passport and visa costs, meals which aren't included in the program fee and spending money are additional items that may make up the total cost of a program. Most BSU students receive some form of financial aid, so the more economical the program fee, the more likely we are to recruit and retain applicants.

OSA develops conservative program budgets with Faculty Leaders, which protects the program in case of unexpected currency fluctuations in the months between initial planning and the actual departure of the group. However, this does not provide for changes to the original budget once the group is on-site. Items cannot be added at that point, because there is no funding available to pay for them. OSA will assist new Faculty Leaders with budget development to ensure that typical program expenses are included. OSA provides continuing Faculty Leaders with budget information based on their last program to ensure that all costs are accounted for up front.

The final budget for the program is set by OSA. You should not inform students about possible program cost until OSA has established this final figure. If you have selected a program provider or vendor, OSA will obtain the final costs from the vendor. If you do not have a provider, OSA can recommend providers to you. This protects both you and OSA from possible misunderstandings.

### **Minimum enrollment**

Most programs are budgeted based on a minimum enrollment of 10 students unless you are working with a program provider that requires higher enrollment. Faculty Leader expenses as well as those of the participants are covered in the program fee; a minimum enrollment ensures that the program is not a financial burden on participants.

Programs can run with more than the minimum, and are occasionally able to run with less if faculty are willing to cut their salary lines to make this possible. Once published, the program fee will not be adjusted to compensate for low enrollments. With a ten-participant minimum, the costs for the participants and the faculty member are covered in the participants' payments. Please note that tuition and fees are not included in the program price. As mentioned earlier, it is quite common for retired faculty and members of the community to take part in a Study Tour. As can be expected, they are not normally interested in receiving academic credit, so they do not register for the course. They are still expected to participate fully in the tour, without turning in assignments. These community participants often add unique perspectives to the group and can help the study tour reach its maximum number for budgetary purposes.

By adding community participants, some Study Tours operate with less than ten registered students. This will have an impact on the financial compensation for the faculty leader and should be considered in the planning process. If less than ten students are registered for the academic course, the faculty leader will receive compensation based on the Directed Study rate per registered student. For ten or more registered students, the faculty leader will receive compensation based on the Continuing Education course rate. Faculty leaders will be asked in the planning process if they are willing to have non-registered participants on the Study Tour.

### **Developing the budget**

OSA will work with you to develop a viable budget for your program. The sample budget will help you to include all items which should be part of the program cost, including pre-departure expenses such as books & supplies. Not all items are included for all programs; the sample budget is merely intended to help you examine all options. We recommend that you include as many expenses as are necessary to the program in the budget so that students do not have to carry large amounts of cash with them.

Budget development is critical to the success of your program, and requires some time to finalize with OSA. Failure to include all items in the final budget could result in those items being excluded from reimbursement. Substantial unexpected costs could result in the cancellation of the program if alternative arrangements cannot be made (for example, if a domestic flight in the program country became necessary but was not anticipated). Flexibility in an itinerary can be key to having a successful Study Tour.

### **Multiple Faculty Leaders**

It is fairly common for faculty-led programs to have more than one Coordinator, particularly for interdisciplinary programs or programs geared toward larger enrollments. In these cases, expenses for two Coordinators will be built into the program budget (e.g. airfare, housing, meals, etc.). Compensation for the faculty leaders will still be based on the required number of registered students listed above.

### **Budget adjustments**

It's inevitable that your budget will change as you determine the actual number of participants in the program, work more closely with your partners abroad, and monitor exchange rates. Though

the budget submitted with your proposal should be thorough and accurate to the best of your knowledge, there will be room for modifications once the program is approved and before a price has been advertised to students. Once a price has been advertised, it will not be increased to cover enrollment shortfalls or other unanticipated costs.

## **Marketing and Recruitment**

### **Marketing materials**

Once the proposal has been approved, OSA will produce materials to advertise the program. If you wish to create your own marketing materials, please submit a draft to OSA for review and approval before it is distributed. All publicity for programs must be carefully checked to be sure it conforms to the parameters of the program -- a brochure represents a written contract with the students, and the addition of new items by a Faculty Leader, or failure to include certain items may create problems. Similarly, please submit all web-related or e-mailed announcements to OSA in advance of posting them, or simply direct students to the OSA web site.

### **Recruitment**

Once OSA has notified you that your program proposal has been approved, your next step is to follow your recruitment plan. Recruiting on a sustained basis is what will make the difference between a successful program and one that may not manage to meet its minimum enrollment target. Some tips for recruitment:

- Set a date/time for an information session well ahead of the application deadline. You can then refer students/colleagues to this session as you do the remaining tips below. It is common to have a second session 2-3 weeks before the deadline.
- Announce the program in all classes that you teach in which students are eligible to participate.
- Discuss the program with students whom you advise if they are eligible to enroll.
- Describe the program to your colleagues and ask them to help you recruit. If your program may appeal to students in other disciplines, you'll want to make contact with those faculty members as well.
- Keep a running list of interested students and stay in touch to keep them aware of this opportunity.
- For previously run programs, ask past participants from your program to visit classes with you and attend information sessions.

Truth in advertising! When you speak with students or colleagues about your program, remember that they may have no idea about what the program site, the study facilities, the additional activities, and the living arrangements will be like. You need to describe these in positive, but accurate terms. OSA tries to be very clear in all written materials to present the program as it actually is, in order to minimize any issues later on. It should also be noted that study abroad is voluntary and ethical standards for recruiting require that there should be no implied obligation for students to participate.

### **Common student questions**

During this process, you'll become an expert on all aspects of your program, as will the OSA staff

members working with you! As you begin to recruit students, you'll want to be prepared for the more common issues of concern to prospective participants. These usually focus on housing, cost, credit, and activities. Here are some of the most common questions, along with some topics students want to know about but may not think to ask:

- What is the housing like?
- Do we share a room?
- Are the same amenities provided in (hotels, apartments, dorms) as I'm used to here?
- What happens if I don't like my housing/roommate/host family?
- Host families/dorms: Do they have a curfew? Do I have to follow rules?
- I don't speak the language. Is that a problem?
- What does the program fee include?
- What does the whole trip cost?
- What isn't included in the program fee?
- Will financial aid pay for this?
- What is the total budget to attend this program?
- Do you book my plane ticket?
- How many credits will I earn?
- Can I use this toward my major/minor/GER or Core requirements? How do I do this?
- What will we do in (country)?
- Do we have time to travel on our own?

If you're not sure of the answer to these questions, talk to OSA staff and/or the host abroad for clarification.

### **Keeping the interest alive**

The initial marketing materials posted and distributed on campus will pique the curiosity of some students. As students contact you for information, it's important to keep track of who they are and how you can reach them. This will allow you to contact them directly and keep talking with them about the program as the application deadline approaches. Successfully running a faculty-led program often comes back to keeping student interest alive through the months preceding the program.

### **Recruiting non-BSU students**

Non-BSU students are welcome to apply to BSU programs, although the primary intent of these programs is serving our own student population. In some cases, non-BSU students may make programs viable, particularly on specialized topics or programs in academic areas with few majors at BSU. Feel free to contact peers at other institutions to promote this opportunity or place free ads on listservs or in other locations. Keep in mind that some students from other institutions do not enroll in the BSU course, but merely attend as a participant – this can have an impact on the faculty leader's compensation. Please note that BSU students, and others registering for course credit will take priority if there is a limited space for a study tour.

### **Applicants & Participants**

#### **Eligibility for study abroad**

All BSU study abroad programs have a minimum eligibility level. Faculty-led programs may use this standard, or establish higher or more specific requirements as needed.

Basic requirements are:

- Minimum 2.5 GPA
- Good standing at BSU (both academic & disciplinary)
- Appropriate language background for programs taught in a foreign language

### **Applications and acceptance**

Applications for faculty-led programs generally consist of the following items:

- BSU study tour application (available on-line)
- Application fee

OSA staff will check that applicants meet basic eligibility requirements for the program before forwarding applicant's names to the Faculty Leader. OSA staff then sends acceptance materials to those students who are qualified for the program.

Interested faculty or community members may apply for BSU study tours. The primary intent of these programs is to serve BSU students, but there are no prohibitions against enrolling faculty, staff, or community members. These participants may still receive credit for participation if they choose.

### **Late applicants**

If a program is at minimum enrollment or less, it is always tempting to add students after the application deadline has passed. Please do not encourage students to apply after this date, and especially do not do this without first discussing the matter with the staff in OSA. Some programs have more flexibility than others, but in general late applications cause problems. Students may not have planned sufficiently ahead to meet their financial obligations and/or to properly apply for financial aid. There may be insufficient time to process the student application and enroll him or her in the program. A late application may reflect a lack of serious interest in the program; traditionally, far more late applicants than early applicants withdraw from programs. In addition, OSA generally sets program deadlines just ahead of the deadline to finalize arrangements abroad and late applicants can interfere with the smooth completion of contracting and payment for these services.

### **Wait-listing students**

OSA accepts students on a first-come/ first-served basis. If your program fills before the application deadline, OSA can create a wait-list for you. At that point, we will notify students of their status and keep in touch with you and wait-listed students should spaces become available. At the application deadline, students on the wait-list will be notified that the program is closed.

### **Withdrawal**

If a student informs you that he or she needs to withdraw from the program, please remind the student that he/she needs to inform OSA in writing of the decision. Any refunds due the student are based on the day that written notice of withdrawal is received by OSA.

### **Program payments**

From the application through participation, students will be asked to make at least three separate payments for the program:

1. Application fee (\$25): due when the student applies. Non-refundable.
2. Program fee : generally due before the first payment to hosts or program providers is due.
3. Tuition/fees: paid directly to Bridgewater State University.

### **Financial aid**

Most forms of student financial aid can be used toward study abroad costs. OSA works closely with the Office of Financial Aid and produces budgets documenting program expenses for financial aid recipients. If the student has remaining eligibility, their aid will be re-awarded to include the program costs. This is usually accomplished through increased loans to the student and/or parents.

When working with students, please be careful that you do not guarantee that financial aid will "cover" program expenses. This is not always possible, and students who are concerned about this should be referred to the Office of Study Abroad or Financial Aid for more information.

Scholarships through the Bridgewater State University Foundation are available for BSU students enrolled for academic credit on BSU study tours. Applicants are given scholarship applications when initially applying for a program. Please encourage your students to apply. Scholarships will be awarded once all eligible study tour participants have submitted their applications. Awards are paid directly to Student Accounts and any additional funds will be sent directly to the student via Bridgewater State University redemption check.

### **Orientation**

A general orientation session will be held each semester for all students going abroad. OSA will cover information regarding travel, safety, health, and BSU policies. Faculty Leaders are encouraged to have their students attend the general orientation and hold a program specific meeting of their own where other students may meet with past participants. OSA staff is willing to attend the student orientation for the program to assist with administrative, financial, and other topics.

### **Behavioral expectations of participants**

All participants in a BSU overseas program are must sign the Program Participant Agreement Form, in which they agree to abide by laws of the host country/ies in which they travel and the BSU Handbook, which governs student conduct. Program participants are ambassadors of BSU, and should be reminded of behavioral expectations this places on them, as well as the specific legal/social issues which they may encounter abroad and of which they may not be aware. The *International Programs Study Abroad Handbook* goes into detail on their responsibilities as Americans abroad; Faculty Leaders are encouraged to review this information as well as the Program Participation Agreement.

### **Registration/credit**

OSA registers students for all programs. While abroad, students are registered as study abroad students and may not see an actual "class" on their registration. Following the conclusion of the program, the Faculty Leader submits final grades to the Registrar's Office.

### **On-site Responsibilities**

#### **Travel to the overseas site**

If the Faculty Leader travels with the group on the same flight, the group will then travel together to the program site by local transportation. If the Faculty Leader has preceded the group, he/she should be at the airport to meet the group. Faculty Leaders may not arrive later than the group. The Faculty Leader must notify OSA immediately if any students scheduled for the group flight are not on that flight, or if any students scheduled to travel independently have not arrived by the first day of class for the program.

### **Supervision of the group**

Coordinators are required to remain with the group for the duration of the program. This does not mean that a Faculty Leader cannot go to dinner with local friends or colleagues, or go out for the evening alone. It does mean that the Faculty Leader is not free to depart for a weekend to another city without the students, unless they are all away on a program-sponsored field trip or unless another professional supervisor is in charge.

If the students are also enrolled in classes taught by local faculty, then the Faculty Leader will serve as liaison between the students and the host university to solve problems that may arise and to interpret local regulations and customs. Regardless of which program model is utilized, the Faculty Leader will be particularly busy the first week or so in making sure that housing assignments are satisfactory, that students are settling into their daily routine in the new country, and that things are running smoothly.

### **Increased responsibility**

Due to the nature of the study abroad experience, Faculty Leaders find that they have more day-to-day contact with their students while overseas than they do here at BSU. One of the roles of a Faculty Leader in an overseas program is serving *in loco parentis*. Issues such as homesickness, disputes with roommates, lost passports/money, physical sickness, and questions about coursework will all be laid at the Coordinator's door. In some programs, of course, there may be no problems to deal with. Others may encounter more. But this role is one that the Faculty Leader needs to feel comfortable with and accept. If a student wakes up in the middle of the night with what appears to be appendicitis, it is the Faculty Leader who will bundle the student into a taxi and accompany him/her to the nearest emergency room. If a student loses his/her passport, it is the Faculty Leader who will help the student get a new one through the nearest U.S. Embassy. The Faculty Leader will need to handle these problems quickly, at the time they arise, and then he/she needs to inform OSA about them immediately. Faculty Leaders are given a list of staff members' telephone numbers for this purpose. It can never be the case that the office is the last to know about problems, with the student having phoned home first and then the family phoning the campus.

To prepare for spending “out of class” time with students, the Faculty Leader may want to explore opportunities to view student behavior on or around campus at various times of day. It would be a good idea to visit a local college pub in the evening. Also, if you have not seen one in a while, it is wise to visit a residence hall to see how students live on campus. These observations could help the Faculty Leader prepare for some of the student behaviors they may encounter when on a study tour.

### **Health & Travel Preparation**

Safety is a serious concern for everyone involved in study abroad -- the students, their families, Faculty Leaders and associated faculty, our partners abroad, and OSA. Anecdotal evidence suggests that in general, students abroad are as safe as, or safer than, they are on U.S. campuses. However, there are particular risks that may occur overseas, and when any safety issue arises overseas, the fact that students are far from home and in an unfamiliar culture may make the experience more traumatic than it would be in the U.S.

Pre-departure and on-site preparation can make all the difference when dealing with health and travel-related emergencies. Below are some basic guidelines to assist you in your preparation and operation of a safe program.

## **Travelers' health considerations and resources**

When planning a program at a particular site, the Faculty Leader should consider questions such as the following:

- What kind of local health care is available and how can the Faculty Leader and participants access it should it become necessary?
- If a participant becomes ill at the beginning of a three or four week program and is unable to attend class for a week or two, how will credit be earned when so much time has been lost?
- If a participant has an accident while on a program which travels extensively, who stays behind to attend to the participant's medical needs while the group moves to the next site?
- Has the Faculty Leader warned participants of any aspects of the program which may carry a higher risk of injury or danger?

The Center for Disease Control is an excellent resource for learning about country-specific health issues of concern to travelers. Their travel health website <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/> gives information on common illnesses, recommended vaccinations, and more. If you believe that there is a health risk to your students, contact OSA to decide upon the appropriate action.

The Office of Study Abroad is unable to provide any recommendations or advice regarding vaccinations or medications for going abroad, but please feel free to refer students to the CDC website. You can also check with the health officer or nurse at the U.S. Embassy or consulate in the host country to learn about any health concerns in your destination country. This may also be a way to identify local health care resources should they become necessary.

Prior to departure, all participants are required to fill out a Participant Medical Report, provided by OSA in the acceptance packets. These are considered confidential documents, but are carried on the trip by the Faculty Leader in case of emergency.

Accessibility is an important consideration for some participants, and extra planning by the Faculty Leader may be required to serve students who self-disclose and request special accommodations. BSU's Student Affairs and Disability Resources offices can be an excellent resource and can assist the Faculty Leader in providing for the specific needs of individual participants.

### **Calling cards/emergency communications**

You and your students need to be familiar with use of calling cards for the public phones abroad and how to place international calls. As Faculty Leader, you should always have a means to contact OSA or an emergency services provider, either through change for payphones or a telephone card that can be used with payphones. Whichever option you choose, be sure you have enough funds available to call the U.S.

If you have a U.S. calling card, we recommend that you bring it with you overseas. While U.S. calling cards are generally more expensive than the local equivalents, there may be times when certain circuits are busy and you will be able to get through on the lines owned by a major U.S. carrier. In other words, be prepared by having as many options as possible for communication with OSA.

### **Pre-departure preparation**

OSA cannot approve a study abroad program of any sort in a country that has a current travel

warning. Travel warnings are issued when the State Department decides to recommend that Americans avoid travel to a certain country. OSA monitors the U.S. State Department web site on a regular basis and will inform you of updates before your group departs. You should also check the web site: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis\\_pa\\_tw\\_1168.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis_pa_tw_1168.html).

At this URL you'll also find Consular Information Sheets. Consular Information Sheets are available on every country in the world and include information such as the location of the U.S. embassy or consulate, unusual immigration practices, health concerns, minor political disturbances, currency information, entry regulations, crime and security information, and drug penalties. If an unstable condition exists in a country that is not severe enough to warrant a warning, a description of the condition(s) may be included under an optional section entitled "Areas of Instability."

### **Discuss safety at orientation**

During your pre-departure orientation, you should provide health and safety information so that students can make informed decisions concerning preparation, participation, and behavior while they are in the program. Both at this orientation and your in-country orientation, you will need to include information on safety, health, legal, environmental, political, cultural, and religious conditions in the host country. You should deal with health and safety issues and potential risks, and emergency response measures. FYI, the major causes of death abroad include injuries, primarily auto-related, and drowning. If you are directing a program where students will have the opportunity to swim other than at swimming pools, be sure to include information about safe and unsafe areas for swimming.

Programs which include physically strenuous or potentially high-risk activities require extra consideration in protecting students and the university. The risks for the group activity should be weighed against the necessity to the program, and special attention should be paid to safety issues in the pre-departure orientation.

Discuss with your students the concept of preventable accidents such as not driving abroad (automobiles, motorcycles, mopeds), pub and drinking culture, drug laws, and returning in the wee hours of the morning from a club. Also, note particularly dangerous environments, such as busy airports, train stations, subways and other areas known for pickpockets or muggings. Caution your students about the wise use of ATM machines and about keeping money and other valuable belongings out of sight.

### **On-site safety**

Major safety issues have been rare in study abroad, but minor issues, such as ill students or muggings, happen more frequently. Part of successfully managing the on-site safety of your program is in preparing students, as mentioned above, and acting quickly and calmly to address the situation. While U.S. students abroad are no more likely to be harmed while abroad than they are at home, dealing with an injury, illness, or traumatic incident while out of their cultural "element" significantly compounds the stress they experience.

If the program involves research in the field or physically rigorous activities, the Faculty Leader will want to check on local conditions and take necessary precautions before the program is undertaken. If the program has an unusual or high risk involved, the Faculty Leader should inform participants of the potential risk. This may include such things as sports or physical activities, political instability, high altitude, and health and environmental concerns. Environmental concerns may be anything from poisonous snakes and insects, to air or water

pollution, to nuclear hazard. Many life-threatening diseases are transmitted through the bites of infected insects or animals, and can pose a major health threat to the unaware or unprotected.

If U.S. State Department public announcements, worldwide cautions, or travel warnings are issued, OSA will contact faculty abroad. In the event of a local or regional crisis, you should maintain contact with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate for updated security information. If a crisis should occur, review precautions with students so they can better assure their own safety.

Communicate the applicable codes of conduct and the consequences of failing to comply with them clearly to students. If you need clarification concerning BSU's general policies, including the drug and alcohol policies and the policies on sexual harassment, consult the BSU Student Affairs website at <http://www.bridgew.edu/StudentAffairs/>. These basic policies transfer well to overseas programs.

### **Lost or stolen documents**

Because of the travel element of many short-term programs, time is essential in the replacement of lost or stolen documents. Participants and the Faculty Leader should carry a copy of their passport and airline tickets, and keep these separate from the originals. If a ticket or passport is stolen, the whole group may be required to wait with the victim until the consulate or embassy can provide the necessary replacement document. To further ensure swift action, the Faculty Leader will be provided with a copy of each participant's passport from the Office of Study Abroad.

### **Early departure from a program by a participant**

If a student needs to leave a program early because of serious illness or an accident or due to a family emergency at home, the Coordinator must notify OSA immediately. Students may not leave the group to pursue other interests, meet friends or family, or for reasons other than true emergencies; such an action will result in dismissal from the program and the forfeiture of monies paid and a loss of credits.

### **Early departure from a program by the Faculty Leader**

If an emergency occurs in the life of a Faculty Leader (serious illness or accident while abroad, grave family emergency at home), it is possible that he/she will need to leave the program early. The first step is to contact OSA. If the program is affiliated with a host university, the university may be able to assign a faculty member or administrator to the remainder of the program. If this is not possible, OSA will work with the Faculty Leader to try and find a solution so that the program may continue.

Under no circumstances can a Faculty Leader abandon the students. The final option would be to cancel the program and bring the students home.

### **Contact with families**

Each program participant lists a person for emergency contact at the time he/she fills out the basic program application. In the event of an emergency, OSA will contact the individual named on this form. Faculty Leaders are asked to contact OSA first in an emergency; OSA may request that the Coordinator speak directly with a student's family after OSA or External Affairs staff have made the initial contact.

### **Is this an emergency?**

An emergency in an overseas program is any event that poses a genuine risk to, or has already

endangered, the safety and well being of program participants and/or the Coordinator. This includes (but is not limited to) the following types of incidents:

- Serious accident or injury
- Serious illness, whether physical or emotional
- Hospitalization for any reason
- Physical assault
- Sexual assault or rape
- Robbery or mugging
- Disappearance of a student
- Local or national political crisis that could threaten the students' safety/well-being
- Terrorist threat or attack
- Arrest or questioning by police or other local security force
- Any legal action (lawsuit, trial, etc.) involving a student
- Potential epidemic (e.g. SARS, Avian flu)

#### Preparing for an emergency

1. Be prepared yourself. Read this section carefully, and consider in your mind how you will handle any of the emergencies listed above if they occur in the country where you direct a program.
2. Whether students are housed in a college residential facility, with host families, or in hotels, inform the housing management personnel that they are required to notify you immediately if there is an emergency involving a student.
3. Explain to the students during your orientation program on site that they are required to inform you about any medical emergency. If for any reason you cannot be contacted, the students are to call OSA. Provide students with the local telephone number for emergencies (the equivalent of our "911") and be certain that they know how to operate local payphones.
4. Inform your students where the U.S. embassy is located in the capital, and if there is a U.S. Consulate in the city where your program is located, be sure that students know the address and the telephone number. If required locally, you as Faculty Leader need to register your group of students with the Embassy.

#### How to deal with an emergency

1. In the event of a crisis, it is important that you and the students not panic or over-react. Students will count on you to take charge and get them through the crisis, and they will take their behavioral cues from you. Remain calm, keep in contact with OSA, and handle the emergency using the guidelines below. OSA has experience dealing with crises in the past and is ready to help you during and after any event.
2. If an emergency occurs, your first responsibility is to safeguard the program participants. You must do whatever is necessary to assure this, whether it involves obtaining prompt medical attention, police protection, or seeking the intervention of the U.S. Embassy. You will be reimbursed by OSA for all expenses related to managing an emergency.
3. Once you have done all you can do to insure the students' well being, immediately contact OSA staff, using the phone numbers given to you by OSA.
4. In a non-medical emergency, notify the local police and then follow the procedures that may be required by local law.

5. Notify the U.S. Embassy or Consulate about any emergency and follow any procedures that they may require. If there is an on-going risk to students and yourself (for example, during a terrorist threat), ask to have an authorized Consular or Embassy officer advise you on a regular basis about the development of the crisis and how you and the students should respond.
6. During an on-going crisis, keep in steady and continued contact with OSA via phone, fax, and/or e-mail, until the crisis has passed.
7. As a general rule, it is wise to advise students to maintain a low profile. During a political crisis where foreigners or Americans may be targeted, this is especially important. Students should:
  - avoid demonstrations or situations where they could put themselves at risk;
  - avoid behavior that calls attention to themselves;
  - avoid areas or sites where foreigners are known to congregate; and
  - avoid wearing clothes and hats that identify them immediately as Americans.
8. It is highly unlikely that we would need to evacuate program participants from a site abroad. However, if a deteriorating situation were to make this necessary, OSA would bring students and faculty home. The Director of OSA would consult with you as Faculty Leader, with the U.S. Embassy, with the Vice President of External Affairs and with other appropriate members of the administration at BSU, and would develop a detailed evacuation plan.
9. In the event of a significant crisis, individual students have the option of returning to the U.S. Every reasonable effort will be made to allow them to finish their academic program on campus, and to be housed on campus as well if needed.

### **Liability & Study Abroad**

Liability is, of course, a major consideration for any university-sponsored activity. The point of the guidelines below is not to restrict, but to protect the interests of everyone involved. Sharing liability-related matters before the program begins is our way of helping you run the most successful program possible.

#### **Contract and disclaimers**

OSA maintains all program documents which are contractual in nature. Release and waiver forms are reviewed and updated as appropriate.

Promotional materials are reviewed carefully to ensure that the program is accurately represented. Disclaimers to publicity and promotion materials are added to protect the Faculty Leader, the program sponsor, and BSU against unforeseen changes in program arrangements, including such things as currency fluctuations or increasing airfares.

#### **Acknowledgement of Risk and Release**

OSA informs all participants about the risks associated with study abroad programs, and the standard program application designed by OSA contains a waiver entitled "Program Participant Agreement" that must be signed by all participants. Participants also complete an "Emergency Form" and a medical report in case of emergency. The medical report is carried by the Faculty Leader during the trip.

#### **Rewards**

Faculty-led, short-term study tours have proven in the past to be rewarding experiences for students and faculty alike. The guidelines set forth in this manual are intended to ensure academic excellence in international study. For many students, participation in a study tour will be their first experience traveling outside of the United States or even the region. Study abroad opportunities led by faculty offer participants the high standard of academic integrity that BSU students have come to expect.

**Adapted from Central Washington University and the University of South Florida**