

STATEMENT ON SAFETY
GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS OFF-CAMPUS PROGRAMS:

DOMESTIC

Gustavus Adolphus College has gained experience in all aspects of operating off-campus programs. Students study in various parts of the United States and the world for one month to one semester. In planning these programs, the concern for safety of our students and faculty is given careful attention. We know there are risks involved in travel. It is therefore important to prepare for both the known and unknown circumstances. The goal is to “manage risk” to the greatest extent possible.

The following are policies and procedures followed by The Office of Off-Campus Study in assessing risks and assuring safety of our students and faculty on off-campus programs. We have also included common sense tips to help you avoid safety-related problems and promote a positive off-campus study experience.

1. An Orientation program is offered for students and faculty to assist in preparation for the off-campus experience. This provides practical health and safety information about the area where the student will study. Personal safety is increased when a student is sensitive to the differences between acceptable and unacceptable behavior, including the areas of traffic and public transportation (subways, trains, buses, cars). Danger most often lies in the area of accidents or personal confrontations.
2. Students on programs without an accompanying Gustavus faculty member are under the supervision of an on-site coordinator, who will assess students’ safety and notify the Of-Campus Study Office of crises or concerns.
3. In case of a crisis, re-arrangements of travel plans may be necessary and steps would be taken to act accordingly. Informed on-campus personnel and on-site advisers would be included in the decision-making.
4. Information is provided below for participants and their parent/guardians/families regarding when and where Gustavus Adolphus responsibility ends and the range of aspects of participants’ off-campus experiences that are the Off-Campus Study Office’s control. In particular, The Gustavus Off-Campus Study Office:
 - a) *Cannot* guarantee or assure the safety/and security of participants or eliminate all risks from off-campus environments.
 - b) *Cannot* monitor or control all the daily personal decisions, choices and activities of individual participants.
 - c) *Cannot* prevent participants from engaging in illegal, dangerous or unwise activities.
 - d) *Cannot* assume responsibility for actions or events that are not part of the program or for those that are beyond the control of the sponsor and its subcontractors, or for situations that may arise due to the failure of a participant to disclose pertinent information.
 - e) *Cannot* assure that cultural values and norms will apply in the host environment.

- f) *Cannot* assure that participants will be free of illness or injury during the off-campus experience.
- g) *Cannot* assume responsibility for acts and events that are beyond our control.
- h) *Cannot* ensure local adherence to political correctness and sensitivity, relationships between the sexes, or relations among racial, cultural and ethnic groups.

A realistic assessment by both students and parents of safety risks associated with the off-campus study program is strongly advised. Safety is everyone's responsibility. Parents, students and International Education office all have a role to play in minimizing potential dangers.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR SAFETY

We believe that participants have a major impact on their own health and safety through the decisions they make before and during the off-campus program by their choices and behaviors. Participants on Gustavus sponsored programs must:

1. Assume responsibility for all the elements necessary for their personal preparation for the program and participate fully in orientations.
2. Read all and carefully consider materials issued or recommended by Gustavus which relate to safety, health, legal, environmental, political, cultural and religious conditions at your program site, *prior to departure*.
3. Consider personal emotional, physical and mental health, safety and security needs when accepting a place in a program.
4. Make available to Gustavus accurate and complete physical and mental health information and any other personal data which is necessary in planning for a safe and healthy off-campus experience.
5. Obtain and maintain appropriate insurance policies and abide by any conditions imposed by the carriers.
6. Inform parents, guardians and any others who may need to know, about participation in the off-campus program. Provide them with emergency contact information and keep them informed on an ongoing basis.
7. Be aware of local conditions that may present health or safety risks when making daily choices and decisions. Promptly express any health or safety concerns to the program staff or other appropriate individuals, before, during and after the program.
8. Behave in a manner which is respectful of the rights and well-being of others and encourage others to behave in a similar manner.
9. Keep on-site coordinator and friends informed of where you will be if you leave the program site for any length of time.
10. Understand and comply with the terms of participation, codes of conduct and emergency procedures of the program.
11. Avoid illegal drugs and excessive or irresponsible consumption of alcohol.
12. Accept the consequences of your own decisions and actions.

PARENT GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITY FOR SAFETY

Parents/guardians/families play an important role in the health and safety of participants by helping them make decisions and influencing their behavior overseas. It is important for parents/guardians to:

1. Be informed about and involved in the decision of the participant to enroll in a particular program.
2. Obtain and carefully evaluate health, safety and security information related to the program.
3. Engage your daughter/son in a discussion of safety and behavior issues, insurance needs and emergency procedures related to the program and the specific site location.
4. Be responsive to requests from Gustavus for information needed regarding your daughter/son.
5. Keep in touch with your son/daughter while they are off-campus.
6. Be aware that the participant rather than the program may most appropriately provide some information.

GENERAL SAFETY

The excitement of travel and the newness of a different environment can make it easy to become careless or distracted. The following suggestions offer no guarantee of safety and are mostly common sense. The idea is to be aware of where you are and what is going on around you at all times.

1. Safety begins with packing. Dress conservatively to blend in.
2. Always travel light. You can move more quickly and will be more likely to have a free hand. You will also be less tired and less likely to set your luggage down, leaving it unattended.
3. Never leave your baggage unattended; it contains everything you own for your program. A thief knows this and will take advantage of even a few seconds of your inattention. This is true no matter where you are-in a hotel, at a train or bus station, in the train or bus, at a restaurant or resting in a park.
4. In preparing for your time off-campus, talk with students who previously participated in your program or are from your program site. Their insights will prove very helpful.
5. Carry the minimum amount of valuables necessary. Protect your valuable documents by putting them in several places rather than a wallet. Carry these in a safe manner to prevent theft.
6. Do not use illegal drugs.
7. Think and act confidently and self assured. Be purposeful when you move about and do not look like a victim. Avoid flashy dress, jewelry, luggage, or conspicuous behavior which would draw attention to you.
8. Avoid demonstrations, especially in politically volatile areas. What appears peaceful can suddenly become a dangerous situation, and you could be caught in the middle. Read the local newspaper and learn about the issues of the area.

9. Travel with a companion at night and stay in populated, well-trafficked areas. Do not travel to areas which the program host has labeled as “unsafe”. Use common sense if confronted with a dangerous situation. At times it may be best to attract attention by screaming or running. Yet, if confronted by superior or armed force, it may be best to not fight attackers, but give up valuables. Your personal safety is far more important than any property. In some areas it may be important to have a male companion in the group.
10. Try to avoid arriving in unknown areas at night. If you must arrive at night make sure you have already made sleeping arrangements.
11. Plan where you are going in advance and be aware of your surroundings. This is not paranoia—it’s good common sense. You know what feels comfortable and what doesn’t. If your instincts tell you a situation is uncomfortable, trust them and move along. If you become lost, ask directions from individuals in authority (police, store owners, etc.)
12. Taking photos of police or military installations is usually prohibited - your camera can be confiscated.
13. Do not swim at an unfamiliar beach unless you are positive it is safe. Watch the waves and the other swimmers. There can be some dangerous undertows. Beaches can also be contaminated, which only the locals might know. If no one is in the water, think twice.
14. Stay healthy by eating well and getting sufficient rest. If you become ill, take care of yourself by getting the proper care. Don’t be afraid to visit a doctor or hospital.
15. Watch for anyone following you or loitering and observing your comings and goings. Keep a mental note of safe places, such as hotels, hospitals, police stations, etc.

RESIDENCE SAFETY

1. Keep your hotel/residence doors locked when you are there and when you leave.
2. Do not open your door to people you don’t know and don’t give your room number to persons you don’t know well. Meet visitors in the lobby. Let someone know when you expect to return, especially if you will be out late at night.
3. Know your exit options (stairways and exit doors).
4. If you are alone, do not get on an elevator if there is a suspicious-looking person inside.
5. Keep valuables in a safe place. When in doubt, carry money and valuables with you.
6. Close curtains after dark and lock ground floor windows.

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

1. Learn the traffic signals and patterns when you arrive in a new area, even if you are not driving.
2. If you are riding with a driver you feel is putting you at risk, ask to get out at the nearest safe place.
3. Lock taxi doors if possible, especially at night in unfamiliar cities.

AIRPORT SAFETY

1. Arrive early, check in with your airline as soon as possible and proceed immediately through security clearance. Usually, all shops and services available in the non-secure area will also be available once you have passed through the security check.
2. Consult the airlines for specific rules regarding what is allowed in luggage due to new safety regulations.
3. Put your name and address inside and outside each piece of luggage. Bright or fluorescent string or tape around your luggage will make it easier to find. Make sure you receive a claim check for EACH piece of luggage you check.
4. Do not make jokes about terrorism or hijacking. You may find that you are the object of unwanted attention. Respond to all questions asked by security personnel seriously and honestly.
5. NEVER carry packages or letters for strangers or agree to watch a stranger's luggage.
6. Do not carry on your person, or in your hand-luggage, anything that could be regarded as a weapon.
7. On the plane, check under your seat and in overhead baggage compartments. Report anything suspicious to flight personnel.
8. Machines that sell flight insurance can be a waste of time and money. They sell policies that pay family or friends in the event of a plane crash. Check with your family's insurance agent; you and your belongings are probably already covered.

WATCH OUT FOR THIEVES

1. Pickpockets usually do not work alone. Be aware of distractions by strangers, as the "lift" often follows.
2. If any of your possessions are lost or stolen, report the loss immediately to the police and other appropriate authorities. Keep a copy of the police report for insurance claims. Traveler's Checks must be reported within 24 hours.
3. It is important to be aware that some people make a living of preying upon honest people. Follow your instincts with casual friendships—they are not always what they seem to be.
4. If someone tries to take your purse, backpack, or other property by force, let them have it.
Your personal safety is far more important than any property.
5. A camera is the most often lost or stolen item on an off-campus program. Be especially careful not to leave the camera in a taxi, hotel room, or on a bus. Carry your camera inconspicuously.

Again, following these safety precautions will not GUARANTEE your safety, but they reduce your chances of problems.