Study Abroad: A Parent’s Guide

What Parents Need To Know To Ensure Their Students Are Prepared

Your student is about to embark on a life-changing adventure that will allow him/her to learn and grow academically, professionally, and personally while having fun, making friends and traveling all over the world. Studying abroad gives students an advantage by demonstrating self-reliance, motivation, and their ability to take risks and compete in an international business environment. A semester, summer or full-year abroad is often the highlight of a college career, and impacts students long after graduation.

BBA International Programs is here to facilitate this process and provide support at all times for your student. It is important that you and your student understand that he/she is the point of contact with our office and the responsibility for completion of program requirements is the student’s.

BBA exchange programs, by their very nature, require students to be highly responsible, independent, and able to solve their own problems with the many resources available to them. If students are not able to independently prepare to go abroad and successfully attend and complete preparatory meetings and instructions, they will not be prepared to cope abroad and are not ready for a BBA exchange program.

We invite you to visit our parents’ Web site for full information and helpful resources.

https://my.mccombs.utexas.edu/My/BBA/IP/Parents

Student Responsibility

The period of preparing to go abroad is a vital part of the experience. This allows students to become familiar with the resources provided to them, learn how to use them, and become familiar with their host country’s culture.

The student needs to demonstrate independence and responsibility by following instructions, completing all pre-departure materials for UT Austin and the host institution, obtaining a visa, and attending all of the mandatory, preparatory meetings we provide.

Many resources are provided to guide them through every step. Students must successfully go through this process themselves and learn to utilize these resources regardless of how demanding their regular course load and co-curricular activities are.

Student Preparedness Policy

With the health, safety and best interest of our students in mind, it is imperative that only students with the proper preparation participate in our exchange programs.

Therefore, with the support of the Dean of Undergraduate Programs, we restrict communication with parents and have the students serve as the point of contact, except for emergencies.

Parents who e-mail, phone, or visit a McCombs staff member regarding their student’s study abroad program (housing, courses, budget, visa, airfare, traveling, etc.) will be referred to our Web site and asked to contact their child about matters concerning their program which do not constitute an emergency.

All students are provided with our afterhours contact information and home phone numbers for emergencies, which they should also provide to you. For serious health, safety, or legal issues, please do not hesitate to contact our office.
How BBA International Programs Helps to Prepare Students

Prior to Departure:
- One-on-one advising appointments cover topics including personal, academic and career goals, degree progress, location selection and financial issues.
- We provide online acceptance materials with a checklist of all of the things they need to do, advice from past students, contact lists of UT and international students, host school information including Web sites and program dates, emergency contact information, and securing approval for their study abroad courses.
- Pre-departure meetings:
  1. **Pre-departure Workshop**: BBA IP staff lead a mandatory orientation regarding health and safety, culture shock, practical travel information, administrative questions, credit and grade information, and securing approval for their study abroad courses.
  2. **Country specific Health & Safety Workshops**
- The host university sends students information regarding their application procedure, course selection, potential housing assistance, and contact information.

While Students Are Abroad:
- Orientation upon arrival is provided at the host university.
- BBA International Programs maintains email communication to help ensure the proper and timely transfer of credit, and to keep students aware of what they need to do to register for the following semester’s classes. We are here to address questions or concerns.
- Regular check-ins with all students to see if there are any issues or problems with which they need assistance.
- UT Austin provides emergency support services through International SOS for all students going abroad.

Upon a Student’s Return To UT:
- Post-program evaluation, to aid in improving program for future students.
- **Re-entry appointments and communications**: We provide information and share resources with how students can successfully return to McCombs after their time away, giving them a change to share their experiences abroad, as well as any concerns they have regarding safety/health, course registration, teaching and grading, housing, traveling, and reverse culture shock. We also provide advice on how to maximize their study abroad experience on resumes and in job interviews. We meet individually to discuss courses, grades and process study abroad credit.
- We encourage students to participate in our McCombs Buddy Program and speak at info sessions, which connects them to our international community and aids them in processing their time abroad.

What Can Parents Do To Help?
There are very few instances in which a student will not be able to manage planning their study abroad program by himself/herself.

However, there are several ways that parents and families can be constructively helpful without taking away their student’s learning experience!

Help your student make a budget, plan travel, offer encouragement and emotional support, and educate yourself.

Ask your student for copies of important information and documents such as:
- Emergency Contact Information provided on Canvas
- Passport/Visa
- Airline Tickets
- Credit Cards
- Health Concerns
- Prescriptions

The Parents section of our Web site provides more information, so please visit us at: https://my.mccombs.utexas.edu/My/BBA/IP/Parents