

# Wabash College Immersion Trip Handbook

## I. Description of Immersion Trips

- A. Wabash College Immersion Trips provide opportunities for faculty and students to move beyond the campus classroom. Immersion trips expand the universe of our students, sustain and enrich their learning environment, reinforce core values, and advance the College's mission.
- B. General parameters
1. Immersion trips are faculty-initiated.
  2. Trips are conceived, developed and undertaken as an integral component of a Wabash College course or co-curricular activity.
  3. Successful execution of immersion trips entails a comprehensive proposal and planning process, as detailed in this document.
- C. Dates available for immersions trips include those times when classes are not in session.
1. These dates include:
    - a. Fall mid-semester break
    - b. Thanksgiving recess
    - c. December recess
    - d. Spring recess
    - e. Weekends
    - f. Summer break (Please Note: Seniors may not participate these trips!)
- D. Trip duration, departure & return considerations, group size, costs.
1. In general, immersion trips will last seven or eight days, including travel time. For trips that occur during the December recess or the summer break, longer durations are possible.
  2. Immersion trips should be planned to minimize disruption of the regular on-campus class schedule, as well as to insure that students are well-rested and prepared to participate in class upon their return. Accordingly, with the exception of weekend trips:
    - a. trip departures should be scheduled so that students do not miss any scheduled class meetings prior to the trip;
    - b. upon return, the group should arrive on campus at least twenty-four hours prior to the resumption of classes to allow students an appropriate recovery time.
  3. Group size.
    - a. The minimum group size is in the range of 6 to 8 students.
    - b. The optimum group size for most immersion trips is in the range of 12 to 15 students.
  4. Per person costs for week-long trips that go abroad will normally be in the range of \$1800 to \$2500. The per person cost is calculated from the total number of participants (students and faculty) and includes all costs associated with the trip.

E. Course-affiliated immersion trips and submission of grades:

1. A course-affiliated immersion trip must take place prior to the due date for submission of grades for the course. That is, the final date of the trip must be prior to the due date for grades.
2. Exception: if a proposed trip will be substantially complete by the due date for grades, and if the instructor agrees to submit course grades by the due date, such a trip may be considered for approval. Note that this procedure will need prior approval of the Registrar.

## II. Immersion Trip Proposal Process

A. Eligibility: continuing faculty members are eligible to submit immersion trip proposals.

B. Immersion trip proposals should be submitted to the Immersion Trip Committee, in care of the chair of the Off Campus Studies Committee. Proposals must be received by announced due dates.

C. The faculty proposal will include:

1. A completed Immersion Trip proposal form, submitted as a Word (.doc) document to chair of the Off Campus Studies Committee. The Immersion Trip proposal form includes the following items:
    - a. name of the trip, as well as the course name and number (if applicable)
    - b. a description of the trip
    - c. number of student and faculty participants
    - d. specific trip goals and desired outcomes
    - e. pre-trip and trip activities that will be used to attain goals and desired outcomes, e.g. readings, specific preparatory assignments, tests, papers, projects, activity journals, etc.
    - f. broader goals and longer-term value to students
    - g. prerequisites for student participation
    - h. post-trip activities that will share trip experiences with the Wabash community
    - i. means by which the educational goals, as well as the operational success of the trip will be assessed after the trip has been completed
    - j. estimated total cost. This total may include, when appropriate, an allowance of up to \$250 per faculty trip leader for miscellaneous pre-trip expenses such as books, immunizations, visa and passport fees, etc. Such costs will only be covered for faculty trip leaders as reimbursements (rather than cash advances), following submission of receipts to the Travel Coordinator, and within the budgeted limit (not to exceed \$250 per trip leader). Note that students assume responsibility for their own related pre-immersion trip expenses. (See III, E below.)
    - k. costs to be borne by individual students (and within acceptable range)
    - l. identification of potential funding sources for the proposed trip
    - m. an itemized, detailed budget estimate
  2. A statement from the department chair in support of the proposal. This statement should also address the relationship between the goals of the immersion trip and the broader goals of the department.
- D. Teresa Teague, Travel Coordinator will meet with the faculty member to assess the itinerary and budget portions of the trip proposal — and may make suggestions for modification of these sections.

- E. All proposals will be reviewed first by the Off Campus Studies Committee. Recommendations will be made to the faculty proposer, who will then have one week to submit a revised proposal. The Off Campus Studies Committee will then make recommendations to the Dean and Division Chairs.
- F. The Dean and Division Chairs will review all immersion trip proposals, and approve trips based on the merit of the proposals and available funds. The Committee will communicate the results of its deliberations to all applicants. Subsequently, all of the approved trips for the coming year will be announced to the Wabash Community.
- G. A course that includes an affiliated immersion trip must be formally approved by the Dean and Division Chairs before the course listing may be submitted to the Registrar.
- H. The Dean and Division Chairs will approve a minimum and maximum number of participants for each immersion trip.
- I. The Travel Coordinator and Off Campus Studies Committee chair will work with the faculty leader of an approved immersion trip to further develop and refine the particulars, including budgeted expenses, itineraries, housing, travel arrangements, documentation requirements, etc.
  - 1. Solicitation of trip bids from travel agencies, where appropriate, will be conducted by the Travel Coordinator. If a faculty member who is proposing a trip would like to have a particular travel agency bid on the trip, this request should be included in the original trip proposal.
  - 2. Faculty members should not request specific travel bids / proposals from travel agencies, since The Travel Coordinator has developed a working relationship with several travel agencies and airlines, and has experience and expertise in arranging educational travel.

### **III. Standards for Admission, Participation and Conduct**

- A. Faculty leadership, responsibilities, and standards of conduct.
  - 1. The course instructor, i.e., the faculty member who submitted the trip proposal, will be the primary trip leader.
  - 2. The faculty trip leader assumes primary responsibility for the well-being and safety of student participants.
  - 3. The faculty–student ratio for immersion trips will be 1:10, with a minimum of two adult leaders for any trip that includes ten or more students.
  - 4. The faculty trip leader should normally seek another faculty member to serve as the second trip leader, providing an opportunity for faculty development. In addition, faculty who serve as the second trip leader gain valuable experience in the operation of immersion trips. This experience should encourage such faculty to develop and propose immersion trips for their own courses.
  - 5. The faculty trip leader should consider making the second adult leader responsible for trip logistics, allowing the course instructor to concentrate on the academic aspects of the trip
  - 6. No student is to be permitted to leave the group and no student is to be left behind during the trip.
  - 7. All trip leaders will remain with the group for the entire duration of the trip, i.e., from the departure of the group from campus through the return of the group to campus.

8. Trip leaders will stay in the same lodging accommodations as the student participants. Requests for exception from this policy, along with supporting rationale, must be included in the trip proposal and acted upon by the Trip Committee.
9. Trip leaders are expected to abide by the standards of professional conduct set forth in the Wabash College Handbook for Faculty. Trip leaders who are not employees of Wabash College must agree to conform to the same standards.
10. Faculty trip leader expenses.
  - a. Lodging accommodations and costs should be equivalent to student accommodations.
  - b. Trip leader meal allowance: up to \$60 per day, per submitted receipts for domestic travel.
  - c. Trip leader meal allowance: up to \$80 per day, per submitted receipts for International travel.

\*B. Faculty post-trip assessment report. Within thirty days of the conclusion of the trip, the faculty trip leader (course instructor) will prepare and submit a written report of the trip to the Immersion Trip Committee, with a copy to be submitted to the instructor's department chair. This report will provide a detailed assessment of the trip, including:

1. An evaluation of the extent to which the stated goals for the immersion trip were achieved;
2. The achievement of additional academic outcomes;
3. Copies of the student's participants' trip evaluations / assessments;
4. Observations regarding the logistical aspects of the trip (including reflections on pre immersion travel);
5. A complete report of any individual and / or group problems during the trip;
6. Recommendations for future immersion trips.
7. Each trip leader will meet with the Coordinator of International Programs to discuss the assessment report.

### C. Enrollment and participation

Common enrollment procedures will be followed for each trip, although there will be some variation depending on the specific circumstances of the course.

1. Eligibility, registration, minimum enrollment requirements
  - a. A student must be enrolled at Wabash College as a degree-seeking student and be in good standing at the College.
  - b. The instructor of a course that includes an immersion trip will establish and make known specific prerequisites for participation. A student who wishes to enroll in such a course will need to obtain the instructor's permission and will register directly with the course instructor.
  - c. The course instructor will compile a class roster, up to the enrollment limit for the course and will forward this roster to the Registrar.
  - d. If, by the close of the registration period for the course, the number of participants is fewer than the minimum number established, the immersion trip component of the course will be cancelled.
  - e. The Registrar will confirm academic standing for each student on the roster and will review the roster with the Dean of Students.
2. Preference and restrictions
  - a. If the number of students who are eligible to enroll in the course is greater than the maximum enrollment for the course, the instructor should give preference to those students who have not participated in previous immersion trips.
  - b. Additional factors to be considered:

- 1) The appropriateness of a specific course and immersion trip with regard to the student's overall academic program;
  - 2) A recommendation by the Registrar, the Dean of Students, or the student's advisor;
  - 3) Limiting the number of courses with immersion trips in which an individual student may participate, to ensure opportunities for upperclassmen who have not benefited from off campus experiences;
  - 4) Restrictions regarding multiple course registrations by a student for courses with immersion trips.
3. In general, all students who enroll in the course should participate in the course-connected immersion trip.
  4. If the instructor permits students to enroll in the course, but not participate in the immersion component, the instructor will provide these students with specific additional course requirements that are comparable to the academic requirements of the immersion trip.
  - \*5. Enrollment includes a set of obligations and responsibilities specific to the travel component of the course. If a student withdraws from the course, or decides that he will not participate in the trip, he is obligated to reimburse Wabash College for all trip expenses incurred on his behalf. The requirements and the due date(s) for trip requirements will be provided to the student during the course (trip) enrollment process. Immersion Trip requirements include:
    - a. Students will be assessed a trip fee on their college bill that will be set by the Immersion Committee.
    - b. An additional trip deposit payable at the start of the semester or other appropriate time in the amount of \$200.00 domestic, \$250.00 international, payable to Wabash College. This deposit will be returned to the student on the first day of the trip, provided the student is in good standing with respect to trip participation.
    - c. A completed Trip Agreement form.
    - d. A completed Trip Waiver form.
    - e. A completed Emergency Contact form.
    - f. For trips that will travel to other countries, production of a passport that is valid for at least six months beyond the final date of the trip.
    - g. For trips that will travel to other countries, production of a visa (if required) that will permit travel to the country or countries in question.
    - h. Other requirements as specified.

#### D. Student responsibilities and standards of conduct

1. Guiding principle: students are participating in an endeavor that includes academic and educational objectives as its primary *raison d'être*.
2. Although the immersion trip portion of the course takes place beyond the limits of the traditional classroom, specific academic assignments are an essential element of immersion trips. Each student is expected to complete all coursework assigned during the trip.
3. It is the student's personal responsibility and obligation to be present for, and participate in, all scheduled activities during the course of the trip.
4. Each student is expected to conform to the following standards of behavior during the trip:
  - a. Adherence to the tenets of the Gentlemen's Rule;
  - b. Responsible use of free time during the trip;
  - c. Responsible allocation of time that provides for an adequate amount of sleep;
  - d. Awareness of, and reasonable accommodations to, local customs and norms;
  - e. Acceptance of, respect for, and adherence to the authority of the trip leaders.

#### 5. Regulated activities and behaviors

- a. Consumption of alcohol. Some Wabash students will be of legal drinking age while participating in an immersion trip. This will be especially true for groups that travel outside of the United States. Nevertheless, faculty trip leaders may establish restrictions, or an absolute prohibition, concerning alcohol consumption during the immersion trip. Such restrictions, or prohibitions, will constitute conditions for participation in the course and trip.
- b. Use of controlled and / or illegal substances. Student participants are expected to be free of the influence of drugs, controlled substances, or the misuse of any medication during the immersion trip.
- c. Students are expected to abide by the laws of the countries and jurisdictions in which they travel.

#### 6. Consequences to students who violate standards of conduct

- a. Unsatisfactory academic performance during the trip will be assessed according to the grading criteria set forth in the course syllabus.
- b. If, in the considered opinion of the trip leader(s), a student engages in serious violations of the standards of conduct, the leader(s) may decide to terminate the student's participation in the immersion trip and to make arrangements to have the student return to campus, or to his permanent residence. Any and all costs associated with a student's early return under such circumstances shall be borne by the student.
- c. The Dean of Students will investigate the circumstances surrounding the early return of a student from an immersion trip in order to determine if additional disciplinary actions are warranted. Such disciplinary action may include forfeiture of the opportunity to participate in future immersion trips.

#### E. Trip costs borne by students. In addition to the trip fee due at the start of the semester, student participants will be responsible for certain expenses, including:

1. All costs associated with securing a passport. Note that, in general, passports must be valid for at least six months beyond the final day of the trip abroad.
2. All costs associated with securing a visa, if required for entry into the country/countries where the group will be traveling.
3. Any medications and / or immunizations required or deemed advisable for the trip.
4. Meal costs during the trip.
5. Where lodging accommodations include breakfast in the cost of the room, students will not be assessed an additional charge for such breakfasts. If, however, the cost of breakfast is an additional charge, over and above the overnight lodging charge, student participants will be assessed for this cost.
6. If group meals during the trip are budgeted and pre-arranged, student participants will be assessed the per person cost for these meals. This budgeted amount will be collected from each student prior to the trip, remitted to the Business Office and deposited into the trip account.
7. Personal expenditures.
8. Telephone calls, plus charges associated with computer services and email access.
9. Any and all expenses resulting from student negligence and / or failure to abide by trip regulations.
10. Any and all expenses resulting from unlawful actions by the student.

#### F. Family member participation.

1. Where appropriate, family members of the faculty leader(s) may accompany the group and participate in the planned activities of the immersion trip. It is understood that such participation by family members should not interfere with the primary academic and leadership responsibilities of the trip leader(s).
2. Family members will pay the full per person cost of the trip.
3. Family member participants will be expected to adhere to the same standards of responsibility and conduct as the faculty leader and student participants.

#### G. Alumni assistance

1. Guiding principle: where appropriate, trip leaders are encouraged to explore the possibility of alumni assistance for trips. At best, Wabash alumni are in a position to provide expertise, knowledge, contacts and introductions. Trip outcomes are enhanced, and alumni have the opportunity to renew connections with Wabash College through current students and faculty.
2. It is important that communication between the trip leader and alumni be clear and unambiguous. The trip leader must have an accurate understanding of the nature, extent and conditions accompanying alumni assistance with trips.
3. Costs associated with alumni assistance may range from none to substantial. The trip leader should not automatically assume that offers of assistance from alumni are without cost.
4. Aspects of a trip that include alumni assistance should be treated in the same fashion as other aspects of the trip, i.e., the details regarding such assistance, along with itemized expenses, should be included in the trip itinerary and trip budget.
5. Alumni assistance with a trip should be part of the early stages of the trip planning process, so that such assistance is well-coordinated with the other aspects of the trip, rather than a last-minute “add on.”

#### H. Alumni participation

1. Under certain circumstances, trip leaders may wish to invite Wabash alumni to travel with, and participate in, the trip.
2. Rationale / justification for alumni participation.
  - a. Possession of specialized skills, expertise and knowledge that are essential to the realization of the academic objectives of the trip.
  - b. Alumni who are interested in taking advantage of the educational opportunities provided by the trip.
3. Other considerations.
  - a. If an alumnus is to play a leadership role on the trip, all issues of appropriateness, responsibility, legal / liability issues, and costs must be resolved in the proposal-approval process.
  - b. If an alumnus is approved as the second trip leader, his trip costs will be covered as part of the overall budget.
  - c. An alumnus who is approved as a trip leader will not receive any additional compensation for his services. Requests for exception from this policy, along with supporting rationale, must be included in the trip proposal and acted upon by the Trip Committee.
  - d. Alumni who wish to participate in order to take advantage of the educational opportunities provided by the trip, i.e., more or less on the same basis as the student participants, will pay the full per person cost of the trip.
  - e. Alumni participants will be expected to adhere to the same standards of responsibility and conduct as the faculty leader — or student participants, depending on the nature of participation.