Section V.H. Academic Student Travel
Section V.H.1. Chancellor’s Procedures for Academic Student Foreign Travel

These Chancellor’s Procedures supplement and clarify Section V.H.1 of the Lone Star College District Policy Manual (the “Board Policy”) last revised by the Board of Trustees on February 2, 2017—setting out the College’s policies regarding student welfare and rights—specifically, those regarding academic student foreign travel.

The Lone Star College District Policy Manual (the “Board Policy”) controls when a conflict arises between it and the procedures below. These procedures were last updated on ____________________. The notice and comment period was open online to the public from November 5, 2019, to December 5, 2019. The College, thereafter, suspended student travel due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and as a result, the procedures were postponed.

Academic student foreign travel, international academic travel, and study abroad are used interchangeably throughout these procedures and mean academic student travel that includes a destination, layover, or location outside the continental United States.

1. Partnering Departments. The Honors and International Education (“HIE”) Office is responsible for reviewing and approving all study abroad programs including, but not limited to, locations, transportation, layovers, itineraries, hotels, excursions, and college-approved curriculum. The HIE Office—through the Associate Vice Chancellor for Honors and International Education (“Associate Vice Chancellor”) or the Director of International Programs (“Director”)—must provide written approval for any travel-related item prior to booking or purchase. The colleges are responsible for ensuring that any curriculum presented for study abroad meets the required criteria. The Purchasing Department has authority over College expenditures after the HIE Office provides written approval for the study abroad program. The Office of Risk Management is responsible for procuring travel insurance once the proper documentation is submitted.

2. Study Abroad Trip Leader Responsibilities. Faculty and staff entrusted to travel internationally with students (“Trip Leader(s)”) should appreciate the responsibility this creates for themselves and for the College. Planning student international travel is a serious endeavor requiring Trip Leaders, along with partnering departments, to plan carefully that a trip runs smoothly, follows the College’s policies and procedures, and minimizes the risks inherent in international group travel for students, faculty, staff, and the College. Trip Leaders are required to communicate with the partnering departments during each stage of a proposed study abroad trip and timely complete any required forms, training, and or steps issued by those departments and these procedures.

a. Trainings. A College faculty or staff member desiring to be considered as a Trip Leader for study abroad program(s) must attend and timely complete all HIE Office-required training. Trip Leaders must attend all trainings prior to departure unless otherwise specified by the Associate Vice Chancellor. Any faculty or staff member who does not attend the required trainings will be ineligible to serve as
a Trip Leader. Trip Leaders must also lead a mandatory, pre-departure orientation for students that covers the HIE Office-required topics.

b. **Documentation and Reservations.** Trip Leaders are responsible for timely submitting all required study abroad documents and forms to the appropriate departments. Trip Leaders are also responsible for making the study abroad reservations using proper purchasing methods only after all approvals are received.

c. **Trip Participation.** Trip Leaders are expected to be present during all study abroad activities, in and out of class time, unless an exception is granted by the HIE Office. Trip Leaders must ensure the following:
   i. A minimum of two Trip Leaders are identified for any given study abroad unless an exception is granted by the Associate Vice Chancellor.
   ii. At least one Trip Leader is present for every 10 students during each scheduled study abroad event, except in emergency situations.
   iii. At least one Trip Leader is within the reasonable vicinity standard throughout the study abroad trip’s duration; and
   iv. Trip Leaders are willing and prepared to assist with emergencies. For example, accompanying a student at a hospital bedside and remaining in the country up to a week following the study abroad group’s departure, if necessary.

d. **Reasonable Vicinity Standard.** Trip Leaders must remain within a reasonable vicinity to allow for quick emergency response. Reasonable vicinity standard will be agreed on prior to travel and the Associate Vice Chancellor or Director must approve of the standard in writing. This standard will be included in the approved itinerary for all proposed locations prior to travel for the study abroad program. Trip Leaders may adjust the reasonable vicinity standard as needed per safety conditions while traveling but must inform the HIE Office contemporaneously.

e. **Trip Leader Prohibitions.** In addition to Board Policy and Chancellor’s Procedure restrictions, Trip Leaders are also prohibited from the conduct listed below. Trip Leaders found to have violated Board Policy, Chancellor’s Procedures, or any of the following may be subject to discipline up to and including termination. The Associate Vice Chancellor shall answer any prohibition questions.
   i. Driving while abroad, even if the Trip Leader is a College-approved driver;
   ii. Providing or procuring alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances for students;
   iii. Consuming alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances with students;
   iv. Relationships (romantic or sexual) with a student; and
   v. Possessing or using a controlled substance without a proper doctor’s prescription.
3. **Permitted Participants.** Trip Leaders and students are the only individuals permitted to attend academic student foreign travel trips except as otherwise required by law or a written exception is granted by the Associate Vice Chancellor.

4. **Student Responsibilities Regarding International Travel.** Students desiring to participate in study abroad trips do so voluntarily. Students agree to abide by the College, the HIE Office, and Trip Leader’s requirements prior, during, and following any College study abroad travel. The following subsection lists general student requirements for all study abroad trips, but may not include all additional, program-specific requirements.

   a. **Traveling In and Out of the United States.** Participating students are personally responsible for ensuring their ability to depart and return to the United States. Participating students are also personally responsible for ensuring their ability to arrive and depart from the country of destination and any layovers. Students are encouraged to contact an immigration attorney if they have any immigration law questions related to academic student foreign travel. The College’s employees cannot give legal advice to students regarding immigration questions. Students traveling internationally are also required to sign a waiver and acknowledgment to the matters stated in this paragraph regarding admission and departure from the United States. Trip Leaders will, however, work with the HIE Office to try to confirm that all travelers meet the passport, visa, or entry and exit requirements for all travel destination(s) and layover(s) including the United States. The responsibility, however, ultimately remains with the students.

   b. **Students Must Follow Board Policy and Chancellor’s Procedures.** Students must follow all College requirements, not just those listed in these procedures to be eligible to participate in a study abroad program. Students, for example, may not consume alcohol during any study abroad trip unlike Trip Leaders. Students who do not follow the College requirements or violate Board Policy or Chancellor’s Procedures may become ineligible for study abroad travel, sent home from a study abroad trip, and or be subject to discipline under the College’s policies and procedures.

   c. **Prerequisites.** Students must satisfactorily complete any required course prerequisites before the study abroad travel date.

   d. **Trainings.** Students must attend the required study abroad trainings as designated by the HIE Office and Trip Leaders.

   e. **Documentation.** Students must provide satisfactory and timely documentation as required and specified by the HIE Office and Trip Leaders.

   f. **Participation & Additional Travel Restrictions.** Students are required to participate in all aspects of the approved study abroad program and itinerary unless an exception is granted by the HIE Office. Students may not travel
independently of the Trip Leaders without the HIE Office's written permission for safety reasons.

5. **No Expenditures Until Proper Approvals Are Provided.** Trip Leaders, or any other individual, cannot make financial commitments before receiving written approval from the HIE Office, the Chancellor, and the Purchasing Department. The Trip Leaders requesting approval for their proposed study abroad shall ensure that the budget for international travel follows the College's purchasing requirements and maintains pre-approved expenditures. All expense reports must be reconciled according to College policy and procedures.

6. **Requesting Academic Student Foreign Travel Approvals.** Most international travel will require more than one approval from the HIE Office and partnering departments. Trip Leaders must ensure they receive the requisite approval at each stage of planning study abroad programs and associated travel. Only the Associate Vice Chancellor may extend deadlines under this section by providing written consent. The listed application forms (Initial Interest Application Form, Initial International Travel Approval Request Form, and the Full International Travel Application Form) are located on the following SharePoint site https://intranet.lonestar.edu/academicandstudent/ips/SitePages/StudyAbroad.aspx. The completed forms must all be submitted to the HIE Office at LSC-HIE@lonestar.edu.

   a. **Individual College Approval.** The Trip Leader should research the proposed study abroad program’s feasibility at least 18 months prior to the proposed travel dates. Trip Leaders, from the outset, should ensure that all program activities have educational value and structure activities for students outside of class time that promote their safety. The Trip Leader’s college must provide written approval to submit the Initial Interest Application Form, including the proposed travel and curriculum, to the HIE Office per the applicable college’s protocol.

   b. **Submitting the Initial Interest Application Form.** The Trip Leader requesting approval for a study abroad program and travel should submit an Initial Interest Application Form at least 18 months in advance of the proposed international travel.

   c. **Submitting the Initial International Travel Approval Request Form.** The Trip Leader must submit the Initial International Travel Approval Request Form following written approval for the Initial Interest Application Form. The Initial International Travel Approval Request Form should be submitted by March 1st of the year prior to the proposed travel. The Initial International Travel Approval Request Form will be routed through the college approval chain before reaching the HIE Office for a decision. The HIE Office will notify the Trip Leader in writing if the HIE Office and the Chancellor approve the Initial International Travel Approval Request Form.

   d. **Submitting the Full International Travel Application.** The Trip Leader must submit the Full International Travel Application after receiving written approval
for the Initial International Travel Approval Request Form. The Full International Travel Application should be submitted no later than April 15th of the year before the proposed travel. The HIE Office, following an internal review, then submits the document(s) to the Office of Risk Management, the Office of Emergency Planning, and the THECB. Trip Leaders greatly facilitate and expedite this lengthy and complicated process when they submit complete and accurate Full International Travel Applications. The HIE Office will notify the Trip Leader in writing if the HIE Office and the Chancellor approve the Full International Travel Application.

7. **Recruiting and Reservations.** Once the Initial International Travel Approval Request Form is approved, Trip Leaders may begin recruiting students. Trip Leaders may not begin placing reservations and making financial commitments until the Full International Travel Application is approved. All bookings or expenditures for the study abroad trip must comply with Board Policy and Chancellor’s Procedures and the Purchasing Department’s requirements.

   a. **Student Recruiting.** Trip Leaders must screen prospective program students to ensure they meet course prerequisites and any other program requirements.

   b. **Reservations.** Trip Leaders are responsible for making the necessary reservations. Reservations must be done using proper purchasing methods and with approved vendors. Trip Leaders are reminded that any destinations, including layovers, must have written approval from the HIE Office prior to making the travel arrangements.

8. **Submitting Pre- and Post-Travel Authorizations.** Trip Leaders may only submit travel authorizations after the Initial International Travel Approval Request Form is approved.

9. **Travel or Itinerary Changes.** The Associate Vice Chancellor or Director must provide written approval before any major itinerary changes are made. This includes destinations, layovers, and certain activity changes.

10. **Safety Cancellations.** The College reserves the right to rescind travel approval to any destination due to safety concerns.

   **Effective Date:** Mar 10, 2022

   [Signature]

   Stephen C. Head, Ph.D.
   Chancellor