

**MBU Faculty-led May Term and Summer Courses Abroad:**

**Policies and Procedures**

Approved December 2018

May Term and Summer Abroad courses are a critical contribution to advancing Mary Baldwin University’s strategic mission of providing a personalized, transforming liberal arts education. MBU study abroad provides students the opportunity to deepen their understanding of course content through experience living in an international setting, learning in the company of peers under the guidance of trusted faculty members.

These Mary Baldwin University May Term and Summer Abroad policies articulate the expectations and standards which preserve a high level of academic rigor and maximize students’ personal and intellectual development, while minimizing risk to which faculty/staff instructors and the University are exposed. The Spencer Center staff, in consultation with the Deans of the Colleges, Office of Business and Finance, Student Life, Faculty Fellows, and others will review and revise the policies periodically, based on feedback from faculty instructors and participants and on evolving standards in the field of international education.

**Purpose**

May Term and Summer Abroad courses are organized in agreement with the mission statement of Mary Baldwin University and in compliance with standards of instruction and academic quality offered in on-campus courses. The topics of May Term and Summer Abroad courses are appropriate to the sites chosen by the instructor. Given the limited time period of May Term and summer, courses focus on a discrete topic, period, or place, rather than providing a broad overview, survey, or tour.

This document draws on best practice standards for short-term study abroad collected from numerous U.S. colleges and universities and compiled by the Forum on Education Abroad. It will be helpful for faculty members to consult these policies while developing a proposal for a new MBU May Term or Summer Abroad course.

Professionals in the field of international education make a deliberate effort to use “program” instead of “trip” when referring to study abroad. This practice helps participants remember that the program is for educational value and is more than travel abroad.

**Ethics**

* May Term and Summer Abroad programs are organized in accordance with ethical principles and in compliance with U.S. and international laws.
* Faculty instructors are aware of FERPA guidelines regarding the student information they may or may not share with family members and others. Instructors respect the confidentiality of students’ mental and physical health issues and/or treatment.
* May Term and Summer Abroad programs are marketed precisely and truthfully.
* May Term and Summer Abroad instructors and participants conscientiously work to create a relationship with the host community that is mutually beneficial and minimizes negative effects on the host country. Program leaders are attentive and responsible to local environmental, economic, and cultural consequences of their presence in the host country.
* Course content and pre-departure orientation is structured to teach students how to be ethical learners and guests in the host country.

**Faculty Leaders**

* All full- or part-time members of the Mary Baldwin University faculty, including full, associate, assistant, and adjunct professors, are eligible to submit a study abroad course proposal.
* Each May Term and Summer Abroad course will be taught by two faculty/staff leaders in order to ensure the program’s continuance in case of emergency.
* Faculty members may serve as co-instructors, two faculty may offer two separate courses, or a faculty member serve as the primary instructor, accompanied by a second faculty member or MBU staff member.
* Faculty members who wish to request to lead a May Term or Summer Abroad course alone may be required to provide additional information, including:
	+ - What is the justification for having a single faculty leader?
		- In the event that the single faculty leader becomes incapacitated, who will be responsible for the care of the students? How will be program’s continuance be ensured?
	+ If a faculty member is granted permission to lead a May Term or summer program alone, another faculty member or full-time university employee will be designated as the “back up” instructor in case of emergency. The “back up” instructor will be familiar with the course material, itinerary, and host country; have a valid passport; and will be available to lead the course in the primary instructor’s absence, if necessary.
* Faculty leading May Term and Summer Abroad programs must be qualified to teach in the subject area offered in the course.
* The Spencer Center will regularly offer a workshop to prepare faculty leaders in the areas of health, safety, security, student affairs, group dynamics, guided reflection, disciplinary action, and emergency procedures.
* May term and summer experiences overseas that do not carry academic credit may be led by non-faculty employees of Mary Baldwin University. These experiences are bound by the same ethics and policies as May Term and summer study abroad programs.

**Course Structure, Content and Location**

* May Term and Summer Abroad courses:
	+ Include course content with articulated learning outcomes and methods of assessing student progress toward those outcomes;
	+ Intentionally integrate the experiential components with the academic content through facilitated reflection, discussion, and learning activities;
	+ Are as highly immersed in the local culture as possible.
* The number of instructional hours awarded during May Term and Summer Abroad programs corresponds to equivalent hours offered during on-campus May Term and summer instruction. Most students earn three credit hours during May Term or summer. If the course requires a substantial amount of additional academic work or contact hours, students may earn up to six credit hours.
* Faculty members have the option to require prerequisite courses if they feel the course material will only benefit students with prior academic experience.
* Travel Advisories: Programs should not take place in countries with an active Level 4 US Department of State Travel Advisory; careful review will need to occur for countries with a Level 3 Travel Advisory.

Information about current travel warnings can be found here: <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings.html>.

If a faculty member wants to request an exception to this policy, additional explanation may be required, including but not limited to:

* + What is the justification for holding the course in this particular location?
	+ What additional safety measures will be undertaken to ensure that the concerns mentioned in the Travel Warning are addressed?

If approved, additional terms and conditions may be required depending on the specifics of the program and the situation in country.

* Travel Health Notices: Programs should not be held in locations with active CDC Level 3 Travel Health Notices or higher. A list of current travel health notices can be found here:
	+ <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/>.
	+ In the case of Level 2 Health Notices, faculty leaders should carefully read precautions and remain vigilant throughout the time in country.
* When selecting country destinations, faculty leaders should consider appeal to students as well as affordability. Parent/family perceptions are important to consider as well.

**Student Selection**

* Student selection for participation in May Term and Summer Abroad programs is based on fair and appropriate information collected in the Application for May Term and Summer Abroad, and in additional documents or interviews that faculty leaders may require.
* All students applying for May Term and Summer Abroad programs must be in good academic and behavioral standing at the University and must have a minimum 2.3 GPA.
	+ The Spencer Center Assistant Director will submit the list of applicants to the Registrar and to the appropriate university office to ensure each is in good behavioral and academic standing in the university:

Residential students: Office of Student Engagement

Online students (undergraduate and graduate): Director, MBU Online

Graduate students (on campus): Director, Shakespeare and Performance

* + Mary Baldwin University reserves the right to deny a student’s study abroad application due to student life or academic concerns.
	+ Final selection is decided by the faculty leaders.
	+ In cases of study abroad destinations with health or safety concerns, or on the State Department’s Travel Advisory List, the faculty leaders in consultation with the Spencer Center staff may choose to only admit students who are over the age of eighteen.
* Mary Baldwin welcomes all students to apply for May Term and summer study abroad programs, without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, or national and ethnic origin.
* May Term and summer study abroad course enrollment is typically limited to 15 students.
* In most cases, a minimum of 8 students is required for the program to run.
* No extensionwill be granted for the May Term Study Abroad course application, since the online forms are readily accessible and take under 30 minutes to complete. Students must complete the application form before requesting a deposit extension, to verify the seriousness of their intent.
* It is recommended that individuals under the age of 18 and not traveling with a parent or guardian carry a note from parent/guardian stating, "I acknowledge that my child is traveling out of the country with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. He/She/They has/have my/our permission to do so".
	+ The US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) takes this a step further by suggesting that the note be notarized.
* More information is available at:

<https://help.cbp.gov/app/answers/detail/a_id/449/~/traveling-with-children---minors-under-18-years-of-age-traveling-to-another>

**Non-student Participants**

* Admission of alumnae/i, family members, or others to the study abroad course occurs at the discretion of the May Term and summer faculty leaders. **MBU students must be given priority over other participants.**
* Non-student participants must submit all documents required of student participants.
* The role of spouses and other non-student adults on the program must be clearly delineated prior to departure. Since they are not employed by MBU, and therefore not covered by the university’s liability policy, they are not qualified to fill the role of chaperone or supervisor of the students during the program abroad. They are present as program participants only.
* May Term and Summer Abroad instructors assume responsibility for the May Term and Summer Abroad program participants, including the additional non-student members they choose to accept. For this reason, it is advised to collect an additional personal or professional reference from non-student adults (e.g. community members or alumni).

**Costs and Payment**

* In order to keep study abroad program costs as low as is possible, faculty leaders using the services of a third party provider are required to secure at least two bids from different providers in order to ensure that the program cost is reasonable. These bids will be submitted to the Academic Leadership Council at the time of course proposal submission.
* Each study abroad program budget will be charged a fee of $75 per student to offset health insurance costs for group participants.
* Although not required, we recommend that students in May Term and summer Study Abroad purchase travel insurance in case of program cancellation or delay.
* Graduate student tuition for May Term and Summer Abroad programs will be calculated at the rate of the graduate program in which they are enrolled.
* Deposit ExtensionsThe deadline for student applications and the $1,000 deposit is **November 1**. This deadline must be adhered to as much as possible, since pushing the process back further impacts a range of decisions and other processes both for the students and the faculty.

Extensions on the $1,000 non-refundable Nov. 1 deposit are available through the Spencer Center for **special circumstances only**.

* + In the case of a student who has a demonstrated financial source which is incoming after the deadline (a loan applied for and verified by the Office of Financial Aid, an army stipend, etc.) a Deposit Extension Form may be used (available in the Spencer Center)
	+ The form asks the student to specify the amount to be paid on November 1 (to indicate commitment to the program), and the date by which the remainder will be paid (Dec. 1 at the latest). It requires signatures from one of the faculty leaders and the Spencer Center Assistant Director.
* Extensions will only be given for the Feb. 1 final payment deadline in the case of financial aid disbursement delays.
* Program Cancellation**:** In the event of a program cancellation, students will be notified by the program faculty, and they will be given the option to refund their $1,000 deposit or transfer their deposit to another May Term and Summer Abroad program.

**Liability and Insurance**

* May Term and summer instructors should be aware that they are assuming a degree of legal responsibility for May Term and Summer Abroad participants known as a “special relationship” which imposes a duty of care (distinct from on campus teaching). Please refer to the “Legal Liability relevant to Study Abroad” article (available from the Spencer Center or on the Spencer Center website).
* The MBU code of conduct is general and meant to encompass a range of destinations. However, if your destination carries higher safety or health risks, you can add an additional code of conduct clauses for your program. This is especially advised if your destination is under any US State Department [travel warnings](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html).
* Faculty leaders must take care to check the student participant birthdates (located on the Study Abroad Application or passport). Underage students must obtain parental signatures on two liability forms.
* The MBU Code of Conduct, which is signed by all students, contains this clause: “I am familiar with the laws governing alcohol and drugs in the host country; I understand that I am subject to these laws while I am in the host country and agree to abide by them.”
* Mary Baldwin University purchases travel health insurance for all MBU May Term and summer courses abroad. All participants on the program roster are covered, including faculty, students, spouses/family, community members, and/or alumnae/i.
* In order to be enrolled in the MBU foreign health insurance plan, participants must read and sign the “Assumption of Risk, Release, and Indemnification for Participation in International Activity” and the “Conditions of Participation in International Activity” forms.
* Each May Term and summer program participant is charged $75 to compensate for the overall insurance premium that the College pays. This includes guests, family members and community members.
* This insurance does not include travel insurance to cover the costs of a cancelled or delayed trip. All participants are encouraged to inquire if their personal insurance policy includes travel insurance benefits.