



## TRAVEL-STUDY ABROAD EMERGENCY PROTOCOLS UVM OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Study abroad emergencies involving UVM students, faculty or staff members are, fortunately, rare. Nevertheless it is important to be well-prepared. This document outlines UVM’s recommended practices and protocols. Guidelines cannot address every nuance; ultimately, use your best judgment in the spirit of these guidelines when necessary.

The Director and Assistant Director of Study Abroad in the Office of International Education (OIE) are typically the first point of contact, with staff in the Division of Continuing and Distance Education (CDE) as back-ups for issues that have financial and travel implications. Their **contact information may be found on the green & white laminated ‘Emergency Wallet Card’** provided to you in advance of your program’s departure.

### Contents

<b>EMERGENCY RESPONSE - GENERAL GUIDELINES</b> .....	2
<b>COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES</b> .....	2
<b>EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROTOCOL</b> .....	2
<b>INDIVIDUAL EMERGENCIES</b> .....	3
Other types of assaults, stranger groping .....	4
Medical and mental health emergencies .....	5
Accidents (sport, traffic, bicycle, etc.) .....	5
Theft .....	5
Arrest .....	5
Missing participant .....	6
Death .....	6
Death or serious illness of a family member .....	6
<b>GROUP EMERGENCIES</b> .....	6
Natural disasters – No warning .....	7
Natural disasters – Threatened (such as volcano eruption) .....	7
Civil disasters/acts of terrorism .....	7
Epidemics.....	7
<b>USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS</b> .....	8
S.O.S International.....	8
Office of International Education (OIE) .....	8
Continuing and Distance Education.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Other UVM numbers .....	8
U.S. Government .....	8
Sexual assault .....	9

## **EMERGENCY RESPONSE - GENERAL GUIDELINES**

- **Ensure you can be reached by UVM officials by keeping your cell or satellite phones charged, turned on and on your person at all times.**
- Remain calm and empathetic.
- Prioritize and make decisions.
- Follow UVM policies and procedures, except when otherwise directed by circumstances or agencies outside of UVM's control, such as an outside law enforcement agency or an American Embassy or Consulate.
- Keep UVM emergency contacts (OIE staff) well-informed, frequently.
- Ensure the information you convey is 100% accurate, or if you do not yet have 100% accurate information, that you say that.
- Exercise judgment and discretion in deciding when and with whom sensitive information will be shared (student health status, mental health matters, etc.)
- Consider implications for support and follow-up of individuals directly involved – and indirectly involved – beyond the immediate emergency.
- **Do not contact parents or other family members;** parent and other emergency contact is coordinated by on-campus UVM officials.

## **COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES**

When you contact UVM officials, be prepared to respond to the following questions:

- Who is involved (including students, UVM employees and other affiliates, community members)?
- What is the current condition of the student(s) and/or employee(s)?
- Where were they at the time of the incident?
- Where are they now?
- Does everyone have adequate food, water, housing, medical attention?
- Who is in charge on site?
- Phone number at which you can be reached

## **EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROTOCOL**

1. Attend to all immediate health and safety needs of affected individuals, using International SOS guidance on appropriate local hospitals/clinics
2. Notify UVM officials on the Emergency Wallet Card. **UVM notification is not complete unless you reach an official listed on the wallet card live.**
3. Follow incident-specific steps as outlined below
4. Begin an incident log, either by sending emails to UVM officials as the situation unfolds with updates, or recording notes (date/time, actions taken and by whom) which you may later use to complete an Incident Report.
5. Frequently update UVM officials as new information becomes available.

## INDIVIDUAL EMERGENCIES

### Sexual Misconduct Process (Sexual Assault, Relationship Violence, Stalking, Sexual Harassment)

1. *Assess the need for medical attention:* Does the student wish or need to be seen by a physician? If so, the program director should arrange for medical attention as quickly as possible (contact International SOS if referral is needed) and, if the student wishes, accompany the student to the appointment (or, if the student prefers, arrange for the student to be accompanied by someone else). Will the student need a translator? (See also under “Medical emergencies,” below.)
2. *Before the student shares further details of the assault or incident,* you may tell the student that you are not a confidential service provider, and that you are obligated to report the information shared with you. If the student does not wish to proceed, the student may be referred to confidential services outlined below, including the Campus Victims’ Advocate, HOPE Works, and Counseling and Psychiatry Services. You *do not* need to elicit more information than the victim offers, *unless* you believe that the situation may present ongoing danger to the UVM affiliates involved in your program.
3. *Refer the student to support services:* The student may wish to contact UVM Campus Victims’ Advocate at 1-802-656-7892, HOPE Works (24 hours, 1-802-863-1236) or UVM Counseling and Psychiatry Services at 1-802-656-3340. These are confidential services. If services are available in English locally, the student may elect to seek services through that provider. International SOS should be able to assist in the location of a mental health provider, if one is available.
4. *Notify the OIE Director as soon as possible:* You must work collaboratively with the OIE Director to make a report to the Title IX Coordinator, as required by federal law and UVM Policy [Policy 7.11.2 – Sexual Misconduct and Harassment](#).
5. *Work with the OIE Director to Comply with Reporting Requirements:* All details about the disclosure must be reported, including the names of the parties, the location of the incident and any other known details. You *do not* need to elicit more information than the victim offers. The reporting steps must be followed even if a student requests confidentiality. After a report is filed to [TitleIX@uvm.edu](mailto:TitleIX@uvm.edu), the UVM Intake and Outreach Coordinator will provide information to the student regarding support services upon her/his return to campus and reporting options.
6. *Work with the OIE Director to determine if local police will be notified:* Does the student want the police notified? If the local police are the first to report the assault, the program director should obtain all available information about the incident and the official response and convey this to the OIE Director.
7. *Maintain privacy:* The student has the right to privacy to the extent possible regarding the incident and may not wish to have other program participants, faculty, or staff be made aware of what has occurred, outside of the required reporting to the Director of OIE/the Title IX coordinator. Who does the participant want/not want informed?
8. *Ask the student if he/she wants to notify parents:* The student may want to contact her/his parents and, if so, should notify parents him/herself. The faculty/staff director should not contact a parent unless requested by the student and then only after clearance from OIE or the UVM Dean of Students Office.
9. *Discuss academic ramifications, if appropriate:* The student may want to consider his/her current academic situation (upcoming deadlines, etc.) and whether or not he/she feels that he/she will be able to continue academic work. It should be made clear to the student that if he/she does not feel he/she can continue with the current academic schedule, the faculty member will assist the student in making

arrangements to withdraw and/or receive an incomplete. The UVM Intake and Outreach Coordinator at AAEO also can assist with this process. If the student decides to return home, the faculty course director should, when possible, arrange for deadlines to be extended, work to be finished at home, or other appropriate measures. These arrangements should be clearly outlined, both verbally and in writing, for the student. Any changes in financial arrangements should be similarly clarified by working with the appropriate campus officials.

10. *Assess future safety concerns:* Together with the OIE Director, evaluate what, if any, additional safety measures should be taken for all students. This should be done in such a way as to respect confidentiality.
11. *Act on allegation of assault by another participant:* If the student alleges that the sexual assault was committed by a fellow student or faculty/staff member in the program, the OIE Director, Title IX staff, and the Dean of Students Office will collaborate to determine what steps need to be taken by the program director to insure safety, confidentiality, and fair treatment of all parties. Faculty and/or staff on site may be required to implement plans to provide for the safety and security of any affected student and/or determine if an accused student or faculty/staff member must depart from the program or if other accommodations must be made.

#### Other types of assaults, stranger groping

1. *Medical attention:* Arrange for appropriate medical attention if applicable. If so, the program director should arrange for medical attention as quickly as possible and, if the student wishes, accompany the student to the appointment (or, if the student prefers, arrange for the student to be accompanied by someone else). Will the student need a translator? (See also under "Medical emergencies," below.)
2. *Seek International SOS guidance* on appropriate local hospitals/clinics
3. *Notify OIE Director*
4. *Psychological counseling:* Does the student wish or need to receive psychological counseling? Arrange for consultation with a counselor through UVM Counseling and Psychiatry Services. If services are available in English locally, the student may elect to seek services through that provider. (International SOS should be able to assist in the location of a provider if the group is not being hosted by a local university or program with deep knowledge of the community.)
5. *Confidentiality:* The student has the right to confidentiality to the extent possible regarding the incident and may not wish to have other program participants, faculty, or staff be made aware of what has occurred. Who does the participant want/not want informed?
6. *Notification of local police:* Talk with the student about whether he/she wants to notify the local police.
7. *Notification of parents:* Ask the student to consider contacting their parents/family. Do not do so yourself.
8. *Academic ramifications:* The student may want to consider his/her current academic situation (upcoming deadlines, etc.) and whether or not he/she feels that he/she will be able to continue academic work. It should be made clear to the student that if he/she does not feel he/she can continue with the current academic schedule, the faculty member will assist the student in making arrangements to withdraw and/or receive an incomplete. If the student decides to return home, the faculty course director should when possible arrange for deadlines to be extended, work to be finished at home, or other appropriate measures. These arrangements should be clearly outlined, both verbally and in writing, for the student. (Any changes in financial arrangements should be similarly clarified by working with the appropriate campus officials via the OIE.)
9. *Future safety concerns:* Together with the OIE Director, evaluate what, if any, additional safety measures should be taken for all students. This should be done in such a way as to respect confidentiality if it has been requested by the student.
10. *Allegation of assault by another participant:* If the student alleges that the assault was committed by a fellow student or faculty/staff member in the program, the OIE Director and the Dean of Students Office will collaborate to determine what steps need to be taken by the program director to insure safety,

confidentiality, and fair treatment of all parties. Faculty and/or staff on site may be required to implement plans to provide for the safety and security of any affected student and/or to determine if an accused student or faculty/staff member must depart from the program.

#### Medical and mental health emergencies

(including serious physical illness or injury, attempted suicide and other psychological crises)

1. Arrange for immediate and appropriate local medical attention.
2. Seek International SOS guidance on appropriate local hospitals/clinics
3. Contact OIE Director
4. Encourage student to inform family; if not possible in these circumstances, wait for guidance from OIE
5. Keep OIE Director abreast of updates (i.e. family notified by student, changes in condition, etc.)
6. Assist student in securing copies of medical reports
7. Provide ongoing support/assistance to student as needed

UVM's International SOS contract provides emergency medical evacuation and repatriation of remains. Each medical emergency will be assigned an International SOS case specialist who will be the primary point person for handling and resolving medical emergencies. If necessary, campus officials will work with International SOS to assist parents or other relatives in arranging ground transportation to the site and offer any appropriate on-site assistance.

International SOS, in consultation with on-site medical professionals, will evaluate whether emergency medical evacuation is necessary. If this is likely, SOS International will handle the case, and make all the contacts with the emergency medical evacuation provider.

#### Accidents (sport, traffic, bicycle, etc.)

1. Arrange for prompt medical attention (even if only to have condition evaluated)
2. Contact International SOS if any assistance needed with above
3. Notify OIE Director
4. File accident report with local police if appropriate
5. Encourage student to inform family once situation has been evaluated
6. Keep OIE Director abreast of updates (i.e. student notified family, changes in condition, etc.)
7. Assist student in securing copies of medical and police reports
8. Provide ongoing support/assistance to student as needed

#### Theft

1. Report to local police if local contacts concur it is appropriate practice
2. Get copy of report (American insurance companies typically require report to process claims)
3. If a passport was stolen, report to the American Embassy or Consulate as soon as possible and assist the student in obtaining a replacement.
4. If travelers' checks or ATM cards stolen, have student report to issuing agency as soon as possible
5. Contact International SOS if any assistance is needed.
6. Notify the OIE Director
7. Provide ongoing support, including offers of counseling, to student as needed
8. Discuss with the group any concerns the theft raises

#### Arrest

1. Notify the OIE Director who will contact International SOS and/or notify the nearest American consulate.
2. Encourage student to contact family directly as soon as possible, if that is an option.

International SOS staff or the American consulate staff will provide guidance/assistance for the next steps, including legal representation, for the program participant under arrest. The program director should share with the OIE Director any known pertinent host-country laws and possible penalties which may have been shared by in-country contacts. If a student was arrested and released and you learn about it after the fact, inform the OIE Director of the situation.

### Missing participant

1. Notify the OIE Director
2. Try to learn when and where he or she was last seen and whether anyone knows where the individual may have gone and when he/she is expected to return.
3. Ask fellow students if they heard that the student planned to be away or if they are aware of any circumstances which might cause a student to go missing.
4. If the program director judges that it is important to begin a search or to notify police before consulting with the OIE Director, she/he should do so immediately.
5. Contact International SOS for any assistance related to searching for missing students and to ascertain if local counseling resources are available for other participants.
6. Notify American consulate
7. Provide feedback to OIE Director on what support may be required in the form of phone counseling with UVM Counseling staff, alteration of course itinerary, etc.

### Death

1. Verify the identity of the individual.
2. Contact OIE Director immediately. Provide as much information as possible about the circumstances.
3. Do not call the individual's emergency contact. (The OIE Director will work with appropriate campus personnel to notify the family, and will contact the nearest American consulate.)
4. Notify local police immediately. They will need to confirm the death.
5. Provide feedback to OIE Director on what support may be required in the form of phone counseling with UVM Counseling staff, alteration of course itinerary, etc.

### Death or serious illness of a family member

1. Contact OIE Director
2. Provide support to affected student, including arranging for consultation with a counselor through the UVM Counseling Center. If services are available in English locally, the student may elect to seek services through that provider. (International SOS should be able to assist in the location of a provider.)
3. Provide assistance to student if it is necessary for the student to leave the program to return home

## **GROUP EMERGENCIES**

(Civil unrest, terrorist attacks, infectious disease outbreak, natural disaster, etc.)

In forming a plan of action, the following should be considered:

- What is the most recent information/response plan recommended by International SOS?
- What is the current physical and mental condition of affected participants?
- Is the on-site contact currently in close communications with all affected participants?
- Are all program participants, whether directly involved or not, aware of the emergency? If not, should they be informed? How are they responding to the situation?
- If a significant event is not immediately affecting participants, what is the proximity of the event to all program participants?
- What is the imminent risk to participants if they remain where they are?
- What on-site emergency procedures are already in place?
- What steps have already been taken?
- What is the state of communications?
- Are local authorities and/or U.S. Embassy or consular officials involved or should they be involved?
- Are adequate food, water and medical attention available?
- Is adequate and secure housing available? How long will this housing be available? What backup is available if needed?
- Should students be evacuated?

1. Contact International SOS
2. Contact the nearest American Embassy or Consulate to learn what plans are in place for the protection of American citizens. If the emergency affects only the program, contact the Embassy or Consulate and request support.
3. Meet with program participants as soon as possible to share steps being taken and what students should do to be prepared. Remain calm. Do not engender a sense of panic. Require students to stay in immediate vicinity and to remain accessible.
4. Contact OIE Director, who in turn will be in contact with the U.S. Department of State desk officers in Washington for the most current information and recommended plans of action. (Phone numbers on final page.) The OIE Director with other campus officials, including the University Emergency Operations Group, will guide you on whether to evacuate the group and how to do so, including potentially to an alternate site.

Natural disasters – No warning

1. Contact International SOS
2. Contact the American Embassy or Consulate immediately to see what plans are in place for the protection of American citizens and what steps should be taken.
3. If time permits, transmit this information to the OIE Director
4. Adhere to the plan recommended by the American Embassy or Consulate unless there is a compelling reason to not do so. \*Note that it will be important to verify if any students in the group are non-US citizens, and work with the US Embassy or Consulate towards their inclusion in group protection.
5. Update the OIE Director frequently

Natural disasters – Threatened (such as volcano eruption)

1. Contact International SOS
2. Review potential evacuation plans with local officials, such as the American Embassy or Consulate, and outline in writing. Evacuation may range from travel to a safer site in-country to departure from the country altogether.
3. Share evacuation plans with students, including under what circumstances they would be activated.
4. Require that students stay together if disaster appears imminent and/or require that students remain accessible by cell phone and that students not leave immediate vicinity.
5. Contact OIE Director; update frequently

Civil disasters/acts of terrorism

1. Contact International SOS
2. Contact the American Embassy or Consulate immediately to see what plans are in place for the protection of American citizens and what steps should be taken.
3. Contact OIE Director who will work in conjunction with University's Emergency Operations Group and the U.S. Department of State desk officer to determine a plan of action
4. Update OIE Director frequently

Epidemics

1. Contact International SOS
2. Contact OIE Director

UVM follows the recommendations of the CDC (Center for Disease Control), at: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/> and WHO (World Health Organization) <http://www.who.int/en/>. In case of an epidemic or pandemic, the University may decide that repatriation is necessary even if the CDC or WHO have not posted any travel advisory or restriction. If repatriation is not possible due to the guidelines of the local or national departments of health or other government oversight body, or because international travel is disrupted or has been halted altogether, alternative arrangements will be made to provide for faculty and students while abroad.

## USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

### S.O.S International

Membership # 11BSGC000020

(Call Collect Where Available)

1-215-942-8226/ 1-800-523-6586  
+44 20 8762 8008  
+65 6338 7800

Philadelphia (US, Canada, Mexico, Central/S. America)  
London (Europe, Africa, Middle East)  
Singapore (Asia, Australia, Pacific Rim)

### Office of International Education (OIE)

Typically first points of contact for health and safety matters, who liaise with other campus officials in response.

#### **Kim Howard**

Director

(Cell number here)

1-802-656-0262 work

(Home number here)

[Kim.Howard@uvm.edu](mailto:Kim.Howard@uvm.edu)

#### **Linda Damon**

Assistant Director of Study Abroad

1-802-656-4729 work

(Cell number here)

[Linda.Damon@uvm.edu](mailto:Linda.Damon@uvm.edu)

If you are unable to reach either Kim Howard or Linda Damon, please call **Police Services** at

**1-802-656-3473**

### Other UVM numbers

#### **UVM Counseling & Psychiatry Services**

During non-office hours, call Police Services

1-802-656-3340

#### **UVM Campus Victims' Advocate**

Judy Rickstad

1-802-656-7892

[Judy.Rickstad@uvm.edu](mailto:Judy.Rickstad@uvm.edu)

#### **Police Services** (24 hours/7 days a week)

1-802-656-3473

#### **Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity**

Taryn Moran

Title IX Intake and Outreach Coordinator

1-802-656-3368

[taryn.moran@uvm.edu](mailto:taryn.moran@uvm.edu)

Nick Stanton

Title IX Coordinator

1-802-656-3368

[nstanton@uvm.edu](mailto:nstanton@uvm.edu)

### U.S. Government

[U.S. Embassy/Consulate](#) (phone number depends upon location)

#### U.S. Department of State's Overseas Citizens Services Office

(888) 407-4747 (toll-free in U.S.)

1-202-501-4444 (from overseas)

- Death of an American citizen abroad
- Arrest/detention of an American citizen abroad

- Robbery of an American citizen abroad
- American citizens missing abroad
- Crisis abroad involving American citizens

Sexual assault

Women's Rape Crisis Center (now HOPE Works)  
(available 24/7)

1-802- 863-1236

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