

PROGRAM EXPENSES PAYMENT PROCESS FOR STUDY ABROAD FACULTY-LED PROGRAMS

To make/request payments for services related to study abroad programs an invoice or itemized description of those services is required. The process of making payments to vendors involves the approval of different university offices. Also, in some cases when a payment is made in foreign currency, a bank may be directly involved. This process adds time to the payment process, so APDs need to observe the following:

1. A Travel Application will be submitted by the Study Abroad Office to the Travel Office. The Travel Application will be created based on your program proposal and budget.
2. All vendors must be approved by Texas State. If they are first-time vendors for Texas State, vendors must complete the Vendors Maintenance Form/ W9, and the Foreign Source Income Exclusion Statement Form. Both forms need to be approved a minimum of two weeks before payment can be processed.
3. All payment requests must be submitted by the APD a minimum of 10 business days before the payment is due, provided the vendors forms have been completed and processed.
4. International wire transfers can take additional time to show in a vendor's account. Some transactions may involve more than two banks, so it can take several days to track the requested payment down.
5. Invoices in foreign currency may be affected by exchange rate fluctuations. It is recommended to add 10% to your budget to cover this type of risk.
6. APDs are required to complete the "Payment/Reimbursement Approval" form. The Study Abroad Office will not initiate payment of any invoice until this form is submitted.
7. All information submitted on the payment request form should be clear and complete. The Study Abroad Office will hold payment until all questions are clarified.
8. At least a month prior to departure, the APD should meet with the Study Abroad Office staff to finalize the program budget and to determine the amount of travel advance to be requested.
9. The APD must submit program's receipts within 5 days of his/her return date. Receipts that are not received within that time may be reported to the Department Chair, College Dean and Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and General Accounting/Travel Office.
10. All study abroad faculty participating in a particular program must receive equal benefits i.e. airfare, per diem, etc. regardless of their role in the program (APD or study abroad faculty).
11. Travel arrangements for faculty should be booked through the university's direct bill travel providers rather than paid personally. If a faculty member decides to purchase his/her airfare personally, the reimbursement will occur after the trip has been completed.
12. Travel advances and reimbursements of any type to faculty will be paid according to the method used for payroll (check or direct deposit). There is no tax advantage or disadvantage to either method.

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13. Texas State carries the responsibility and liability for the programs administered by the Study Abroad Office and is the named client, contracting authority and payer to providers. To this end, the Study Abroad Office has been issued a p-card with significant spending limits in order to process group payments, expedite large payments, and handle immediate financial needs. The p-card eliminates the need for faculty to use personal credit cards on program-related group expenses (housing, excursions, in-country travel, classroom rental, etc.) All group program expenses will be paid directly by the Study Abroad Office. APDs are responsible for ensuring that contracts, invoices and related materials are communicated to the Study Abroad Office, allowing four to six weeks for processing and approvals.

14. Pass-through fund for students spending money (such as meals, laundry, entrance fees, etc.) are not allowed. An alternative is for the program to explicitly pay for meals, laundry, excursions, local transportation, or other activities that the additional funds were intended to cover, rather than leaving it up to individual students.

15. As of September 2014, the maximum faculty/assistant per diem allowed in a faculty-led program is 50 percent of the amount allowed by the Department of State. However, if an APD considers this maximum to be insufficient, the APD may submit a written request to the Associate VP for Academic Affairs regarding an exception. The APD will be required to present a detailed explanation of the reasons and justifications for a per diem exceeding the 50 percent level.