Fall 2013

Study Abroad: A Parent's Guide

What Parents Need To Know To Ensure Their Students Are Prepared

Your student is about to embark on a life-changing adventure that will allow him/her to learn and grow academically, professionally, and personally while having fun, making friends and traveling all over the world. Studying abroad give students an advantage by demonstrating self-reliance, motivation, and their ability to take risks and compete in an international business environment. A semester, summer or full-year abroad is often the highlight of a college career, and impacts students long after graduation.

BBA International Programs is here to facilitate this process and provide support at all times for your student. It is important that you and your student understand that he/she is the point of contact with our office and the responsibility for completion of program requirements is the student's.

McCombs BBA student in the Blue Mountains of Katoomba, Australia.

BBA exchange programs, by their very nature, require students to be highly responsible, independent, and able to solve their own problems with the many resources available to them. If students are not able to independently prepare to go abroad and successfully attend and complete preparatory meetings and instructions, they will not be prepared to cope abroad and are not ready for a BBA exchange program.

We invite you to visit our parents' Web site for full information and helpful resources. This guide will help address the student's responsibility throughout the study abroad process, how we help to prepare students, and what families can do to help make this an unforgettable experience.

http://www.mccombs.utexas.edu/BBA/IP/Parents

McCombs BBA students on a bike tour in Paris, France.

Student Responsibility

The period of preparing to go abroad is a vital part of the experience. This allows students to become familiar with the resources provided to them, learn how to use them, and become familiar with their host country's culture.

The student needs to demonstrate independence and responsibility by following instructions, completing all pre-departure materials for UT Austin and the host institution, obtaining a visa, and attending all of the mandatory, preparatory meetings we provide.

McCombs BBA student on a Short-Term International Program in Edinburgh, Scotland.

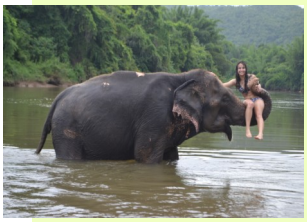
Many resources are provided to guide them through every step. Students must successfully go through this process themselves and learn to utilize these resources regardless of how demanding their regular course load and co-curricular activities are.

Student Preparedness Policy

With the health, safety and best interest of our students in mind, it is imperative that only students with the proper preparation participate in our exchange programs.

Therefore, with the support of the Dean of Undergraduate Programs, we restrict communication with parents and have the students serve as the point of contact, except for emergencies.

Parents who e-mail, phone, fax, or visit a McCombs staff member regarding their student's study abroad program (housing, courses, budget, visa, airfare, traveling, etc.) will be referred to our Web site and asked to contact their child about matters concerning their program which do not constitute an emergency.



McCombs BBA student taking an elephant bath outside Bangkok, Thailand.

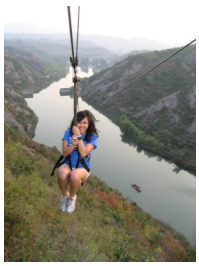
All students are provided with our afterhours contact information and home phone numbers for emergencies, which they should also provide to you. For serious health, safety, or legal issues, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Visit us! http://www.mccombs.utexas.edu/BBB/IP/Parents

How BBA International Programs Helps to Prepare Students

Prior to Departure:

- One-on-one advising appointments cover topics including personal, academic and career goals, degree progress, location selection and financial issues.
- We provide online acceptance materials with a checklist of all of the things they need to do, advice from past students, contact lists of UT and international students, host school information including Web sites and program dates, emergency contact information, health and safety materials.
- Two pre-departure meetings:
    1. *Study Abroad Connection*: Your student will meet UT students who have already studied at the same host university, exchange students from the host university who are currently attending UT, and other McCombs students who will study at the same university.
    2. *Pre-departure Workshop*: BBA IP staff lead an orientation regarding health and safety, culture shock, practical travel information, administrative questions, credit and grade information, and securing approval for their study abroad courses.
- The host university sends students information regarding their application procedure, course selection, potential housing assistance, and contact information.



McCombs BBA student zip lining in China near the Great Wall!

While Students Are Abroad:

- Orientation upon arrival is provided at the host university.
- BBA International Programs maintains email communication to help ensure the proper and timely transfer of credit, and to keep students aware of what they need to do to register for the following semester's classes. We are here to address questions or concerns.
- Regular check-ins with all students to see if there are any issues or problems with which they need assistance.
- UT Austin provides emergency support services through International SOS for all students going abroad.

McCombs BBA student snorkeling off the coast of New Zealand!

Upon a Student's Return To UT:

- Post-program evaluation.
- *Re-entry session*: We discuss the students' experiences abroad, as well as any concerns they have regarding safety/health, the onsite orientation, course registration, teaching and grading, housing, traveling, transferring credit and reverse culture shock. We also provide advice on how to maximize their study abroad experience on resumes and in job interviews. Students provide feedback on how we can improve the program for future students.
- Meet individually to discuss courses, grades and process study abroad credit.

Photo captured by a McCombs BBA student kayaking in Antarctica!

What Can Parents Do To Help?

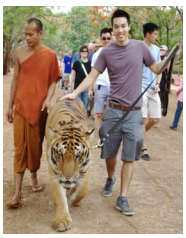
There are *very* few instances in which a student will not be able to manage planning their study abroad program by himself/herself.

However, there are several ways that parents and families can be constructively helpful without taking away their student's learning experience!

Help your student make a budget, plan travel, offer encouragement and emotional support, and educate yourself.

Ask your student for copies of important information and documents such as:

- Emergency Contact Information provided on Blackboard
- Passport/Visa
- Airline Tickets
- Credit Cards
- Health Concerns
- Prescriptions



McCombs BBA student with a tiger while abroad in Hong Kong!

The Parents section of our Web site provides more information, so please visit us at:

www.mccombs.utexas.edu/BBA/IP/Parents

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