

**St. Norbert College**  
**Policy on Study Abroad Program Cancellation or Suspension in the**  
**Case of Emergency Situations**

**Date of Promulgation: October 16, 2002**

**Issuing Agency: Center for International Education (CIE)**

1. **PURPOSE.** To outline St. Norbert College criteria and policies regarding program status of Study Abroad in cases of emergencies created by sudden changes in political, military, and physical situations on site. These policies apply only to semester abroad programs of the Study Abroad Office, Center for International Education, St. Norbert College. The Emergency Action Policy, promulgated in 2001, covers short-term faculty/staff led study excursions abroad.
  
2. **DEFINITION.** Emergency situations covered by this policy are defined as follows:
  - Protracted closure of host University or College
  - Disruption of civil order or public services/utilities.
  - Widespread civil unrest, violence or rioting.
  - Catastrophic physical events, such as major earthquake, typhoon, etc. affecting the site itself.
  - Development of a civil war or of active armed insurgency within the country in which the site is located.
  - Significant terrorist activity aimed at US Citizens, in the city in which the site is located.
  - Declaration of war by a third country against the country in which the site is located.
  - Declaration of war by the United States against the country in which the site is located or against a country adjacent to it.
  - Specific country travel “warning” by US State Department and/or the appropriate US Embassy.
  - Recommendation for suspension or cancellation of the program by the host institution for any of the above reasons.
  
3. **GENERAL.**
  - a. It should be first noted that academic sites are carefully selected, using a fixed set of criteria, to ensure the best possible experience, both academically and culturally/socially for our students. Part of this process is to place students into highly reputable institutions of higher learning, located in safe, welcoming communities. As part of our basic commitment to the students, we will never place them in an overtly dangerous situation.
  
  - b. Cancellation or suspension of Study Abroad Programs is, therefore, not something that is entered into lightly by the Center for International Education (CIE) at St. Norbert College. Decisions of this magnitude can adversely affect the academic

progress our students and traumatize the extension of their worldview. The Director of CIE, in coordination with the Director of the Study Abroad Office, will base such a decision on recommendations of: the program staff in-country, host University/College officials, the appropriate US State Department country desk officer(s), knowledgeable colleagues both on and off campus, as well as discussions with the senior administration of St. Norbert College.

#### **4. PROCEDURES.**

- a. The primary concern of the Center and College, in a situation as defined above, is always the safety and security of our students. Both we and the host institutions with which we work are committed to this arrangement. Therefore, if a decision is made to close a program site, students will be assembled and flown out of the area on the first available flights back to the United States. The following specific steps will be taken, in these cases:
  - (1) Upon receipt of either telephonic or e-mail notification by the Study Abroad Office (or its on-site representative), students are expected to assemble at the local site International Center. The on-site coordinator will have been advised to expect the students and have been given specific instructions on evacuation procedures.
  - (2) Because of criticality to get an immediate head count, students are advised to bring only the most essential items (one small suitcase of clothing, a pillow, blanket and necessary toiletries) with them to the site assembly point. As noted below, arrangements for forwarding other personal belongings will be made with the host institution, time permitting.
  - (3) SNC Study Abroad Office will work with host institution to arrange for student flights out of the country. First choice in this situation is, of course, transport directly to the United States, but if this is not available, then transportation to a country out of harm's way will be undertaken. As in the case of every program, cost of return flight is borne by the student.
- b. The College will do its best to make arrangements for storage of personal belongings of our students. It should be noted, however, that student personal property does not fit into the same category as student safety and St. Norbert College, therefore, does not accept responsibility for lost or destroyed personal property, as a result of the considered event.
- c. Returning students will be re-enrolled into St. Norbert at no additional cost. If it is too late in the academic term to allow students to enter classes, other arrangements will be made for completion of study abroad courses (for example mailed exams from the host institution or mentored individual study to complete courses).

- d. Housing accommodations on campus for returnees from cancelled or suspended study abroad programs will necessarily be based on availability, and if available will be pro-rated based on the time left in the current academic term. Food service will also be pro-rated based on the time left in the current academic term.
- e. The College will attempt to work out any individual program refunds (for tuition, housing and fees paid to the host institutions) with each host institution, but does not guarantee the return of such funds. Similarly travel expenses are borne by the student participant.
- f. By definition, cost of emergency arrangements to ensure student safety is not cheap and ultimately is borne by the student. Families are, therefore, encouraged to consider special travelers insurance that allows for emergency evacuation as part of the policy. The Study Abroad Office has available information on some such supplemental policies.
- g. While sympathetic to personal family or student decisions to withdraw from a Study Abroad program site, unless the above conditions are met, St. Norbert College is not responsible for costs or problems incurred by said decisions.

## **5. CAVEATS.**

- a. This policy applies only to St. Norbert College exchange and direct enrollment programs. Other programs through affiliate Colleges/Universities or Study Abroad Agencies have their own distinct emergency procedures that must be followed by students enrolled in such programs.
- b. Students returning from programs noted in 5a, above, will, however, be treated in the same way upon their return as those returning from St. Norbert College exchanges or direct enrollments. Once back on campus, all SNC students whether on exchange, direct enrollment, or affiliate program will follow the same procedure. Every effort will be made to minimize the effect on the academic progress and general well-being of SNC students (See 4b through 4e).