USF Education Abroad Independent Research Terms & Conditions

Personal Responsibility for Program Development

I understand that I am participating in an independent research/field experience/service program and that it is my responsibility to make all arrangements concerning my travel, accommodation and academic activities and research agenda. Further, I understand that I will need to develop in-country emergency plans in the event of an illness, natural or man-made disaster or in the event of civil disturbances. The Education Abroad Office (EAO) and USF sponsoring department may provide guidance and assistance in this process, but I am ultimately responsible for my own safety and well-being while conducting independent research, field experiences or service abroad.

Insurance

Independent Programs: I understand that students conducting independent research, field experiences or service learning related to their academic program are required to purchase the USF Education Abroad's International Health and Accident Coverage.
Travel Insurance: I understand that Education Abroad strongly recommends the purchase of travel insurance to cover transportation cancellation/rescheduling fees, travel disruptions, lost luggage and the like.

Conduct

Cultural Sensitivity: I understand that I must conduct myself in a manner that shows respect and consideration for the host foreign country. This is particularly important as an independent research student. Further, I understand that certain locations may require significant modifications of my behavior: particularly related to alcohol use, clothing, personal expression, demeanor, and public behavior. I understand that I must familiarize myself with cultural requirements and must adhere to these norms while abroad.
USF Student Code: I understand that for the full duration of the program, I am responsible for compliance with all conduct regulations of the University of South Florida as indicated in the USF Student Code of Conduct. Infractions of the Student Code of Conduct may subject me to referral to the Office of Rights and Responsibilities.
Alcohol Misuse: In other countries, the sale of wine, liquor, and other alcoholic beverages may not be restricted. I understand that I am expected to exercise personal responsibility and limit my use of such beverages. Further, I understand that misuse of alcohol is one of the leading causes of injury to, and arrests of, US students studying abroad. As outlined in The EAO's Guidelines regarding Alcohol Misuse, I understand that I may be subject to disciplinary action at USF for alcohol misuse.
Illegal Drug Use: The use of, possession, or commerce in illegal drugs of any form is a violation of the USF Student Conduct Code and in most cases, a violation of the laws of the host country. If I am found with any illegal substances, I will be immediately dismissed from the program.
Violation of Local Laws: I understand that I do not enjoy the protections of the US Constitution and legal system while abroad. Rather, I am subject to the laws of the host country, and infractions of the host country's laws could result in my dismissal from the program and incarceration in a foreign prison. This may include punishment for activities, which in the United States, are considered a fundamental right: expression of speech, freedom of religious beliefs and practices, etc. By signing below, I understand that I am required to familiarize myself with, and adhere to, the host country's laws and customs for my own safety and wellbeing.
Parental/Guardian Notification: I understand that the University of South Florida reserves the right to contact my parents or guardian in the event of disciplinary and conduct infractions, particularly those which might endanger myself, fellow participants or may in any way impugn the reputation of the University of South Florida.

Academics

Standards and Academic Integrity: I understand that I must maintain the same standard of academic research standards as would be required on the home campus. I understand that I am required to check with the office of Research Integrity and Compliance, follow any IRB or other procedures related to conducting research as would be required for on-campus research. Further, I understand that it is my responsibility to familiarize myself with international research requirements, export controls, and country-specific regulations regarding the scope and methods of my intended research.
Academic Standing and Notification Procedures: Students are expected to be in good academic standing while participating in an Education Abroad program. Students on academic or disciplinary probation are not accepted into Education Abroad (EA) programs for the duration of any probationary period. Students applying for an EA program should be aware that the EA office routinely notifies key USF offices and officials before the leave the United States. These offices may include, but are not necessarily limited to, Dean of Students, Registrar's Office, Academic Department, Student Affairs, Student Rights and Responsibilities, Students of Concern, Student Health Services and the Student Counseling Center.

Financial Matters

Study Abroad Program Cost: I authorize the Education Abroad Office to place a charges on my account related to USF's international Health and Accident Coverage.

Withdrawal by Student: I understand that I must notify the Education Abroad Office in the event that I cancel my program of research/field experience/service learning program.

Financial Aid and Study Abroad: If I am receiving financial aid and/or a scholarship awarded for my international educational experience abroad, I agree to abide by all University of South Florida financial aid deadlines and policies. I understand that it is my responsibility to speak with the office of University Scholarships and Financial Aid, and to complete all necessary documentation in a timely manner. I understand that failure to comply may result in a financial penalty, delay of aid disbursement and could result in my ineligibility to participate on the program. Further, I understand that failure to complete all necessary forms and documentation can have an impact on my domestic financial aid and scholarships.

Travel and Foreign Conditions

Heightened Risk: I understand that independent research/field experiences/service learning may be inherently higher risk than many organized study abroad programs due to the lack of on-site personnel and oversight.

Communication: I understand that USF strongly recommends that I carry a cell phone that will work in the country and regions in which I will be studying. I understand that I will be expected to check-in with the EAO, and my home department and to provide in-country contact information prior to or upon arrival to my foreign destination.

Cancellation/Interruption: I understand that if the University of South Florida deems the host country or region to pose significant threat to my wellbeing and safety, I may be prevented from going, or may be required to leave the host country or region. I understand that USF will not be liable for any unused tickets, or non-refundable payments related to my cancellation of my independent program of study. The expense of an evacuation may be covered by USF's International Health and Accident Insurance Coverage (CISI). I understand I may be required to use the remaining value of the airline tickets purchased for the travel involved with this course of study. In the event I do not comply with the requirement to leave the country or region, I understand that if I remain I do so at my own risk and my decision may result in the loss of academic credit and support by the university.

Personal Safety: I must assume responsibility for my personal safety and conduct, and release USF from any liability. Further, I understand that I am required to attend all USF Pre-departure orientations, read and follow all pre-departure materials, and to abide by US State Department and CDC requirements and recommendations regarding travel to my foreign destination.

Assumption of Risk in Study Abroad and International Travel: I understand that there are unavoidable risks in travel and study overseas that may not ordinarily be encountered at home or on campus. Those risks include, but are not limited to: terrorism, war, insurrections, traveling to and within, and returning home from, one or more foreign countries; foreign political, legal, social and economic conditions; different standards of civil defense procedures, design, safety and maintenance of buildings, public spaces and conveyances; local medical and emergency services; local weather and environmental conditions.

Students with Disabilities: I understand that it is my responsibility to discuss any special accommodations I require due to a documented disability with the Education Abroad staff and with relevant USF administrative offices (Students with Disabilities Services, Student Counseling Center, Student Health Services) well in advance of my program start date.

Foreign Conditions & Special Requests: I understand that services in foreign countries (air conditioning, telecommunications, transportation, internet, utilities, health services etc.) may be less advanced or in certain cases unavailable.

Travel Documents: I understand that it is my responsibility to obtain a passport to travel, and that I might require a visa for my study abroad program. The USF Education Abroad Office will endeavor to assist me in obtaining a visa, but it is my ultimate responsibility to obtain the appropriate visa. I also understand that USF cannot be held responsible if I am denied entry into a country, and that should I be unable to acquire all necessary travel documents, USF will only be able to refund recoverable funds.

Release and Waiver of Liability: I assume the risk of inconvenience and harm and release the State of Florida, the State Board of Education, The Florida Board of Education, the University of South Florida Board of Trustees and the University of South Florida, as well as the agents, employees, and members of the aforementioned from all actions, causes of actions, damages, claims or demands which I, my heirs, executors, administrators or assigns may have against any and all of the aforementioned for any and all personal injuries known or unknown which I have or may incur by engaging in this independent research or field experience abroad and for all damages to my property. I expressly agree that the foregoing Release and Waiver of Liability and Assumption of Risk is intended to be as broad and inclusive as is permitted by Florida law and that if any portion thereof is held invalid, it is agreed that the balance shall, notwithstanding, continue in full legal force and effect.

I have read the foregoing entire document (2 pages) and have had the opportunity to ask questions about it. I understand it and agree to abide by it.

_____	_____	_____
Print Name	**Signature**	**Date**