

The University of Oklahoma

Policy for Dependents, Extended Family Members, and Guests of OU Study Abroad Program Leaders

I. Dependents

A. Spouse/Partner

1. The term “partner” will be used to refer to the domestic partner of an unmarried program leader.
2. A spouse/partner may accompany the program leader for the duration of the program as long as they do not interfere with the program leader’s duties to the program and the study abroad students.
3. Spouses/Partners shall not have responsibilities related to the academic program (e.g., taking attendance, monitoring tests, managing working funds, etc.) unless approved in specific cases by the Associate Provost for Global Engagement.
4. Spouses/Partners must follow all program requirements including any required vaccinations and insurance.

B. Children

1. The program leader’s children or legal dependents may accompany the program leader for the duration of the program or for a significant portion of the program as long as they do not interfere with the program leader’s duties to the program and the study abroad students.
2. Grandchildren, nephews and nieces who are not a program leader’s legal dependents are not considered dependents but rather extended family members as set forth in Section II of this Policy.
3. The program leader is ultimately responsible for the supervision and welfare of any children or legal dependent. The program leader should sign a Minor’s Release for each child or legal dependent who accompanies the program leader
4. The program leader should not be responsible for the supervision of any children or legal dependents. If a child is under the age of fourteen (14), the program leader must provide a caretaker to accompany and supervise the child for the duration of the child’s presence with the program. This caretaker must be eighteen (18) years of age or older and may not be an active participant of the program. A sibling under the age of eighteen (18) may not act as the caretaker for their younger sibling(s). This caretaker may be the spouse/partner of the program leader so long as they are not serving in an official program capacity.
 - a. The program leader shall never ask students on the program to serve as a caretaker.
 - b. The program leader cannot be considered the caretaker.

- c. The program leader shall never ask other faculty or staff members involved with the program to serve as the caretaker.
5. It is strongly recommended that program leaders consider carefully the number of children being taken on study abroad programs. The more children that are involved, the more difficult it becomes to make arrangements that will accommodate large families, and the more difficult it is for the program leader to focus their full attention on the study abroad program.
6. Program leaders should consider carefully their ability to care for the OU participants of the program in an emergency situation if their family members are present and potentially affected by the emergency situation.
7. Children must follow all program requirements including any required vaccinations and insurance.

C. Financial Considerations

1. State law and OU's financial policies require that program leaders pay all expenses of their spouse/partner, dependents and caretaker of their dependents. Therefore, separate payments directly from the program leader will be required for expenses for their spouse/partner, dependents and caretaker.
2. If a program leader requires additional housing to accommodate their spouse/partner or dependents, the program leader is responsible for the cost of the additional space or additional room(s) (e.g., if paying for a double room instead of a single room in a hotel, the program leader would pay the difference between the single and the double to accommodate an accompanying spouse/partner).

D. Logistical Arrangements

1. Program arrangements are not made to accommodate the needs of a spouse/partner and/or dependents, except for housing arrangements if the spouse/partner and dependents are staying in the same accommodations as the program leader. All program accommodations are made with the understanding that this is an academic program designed to meet the needs of the students and the program leaders. Accordingly, the program leader must make all logistical arrangements for their spouse/partner and dependents, other than housing accommodations if their spouse or dependents are staying with the program leader, throughout the duration of the program (e.g., local transportation, entry fees, excursions, meals, etc).
2. If a program leader's spouse/dependents require accessible or special accommodations, the program leader is responsible for acquiring the appropriate accessible accommodations for their spouse/dependents throughout the duration of the program.
3. At least one program leader should be housed on-site with the students. Exceptions will only be granted in rare cases and must be approved by the Associate Provost for Global Engagement.
4. Program leaders are responsible for organizing all travel arrangements for their spouse/partner and dependents, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Obtaining passports and visas
 - b. Transportation to and from the study abroad location

- c. Excursions during the study abroad program
 - d. Housing, if spouse/partner or dependents are not staying in the same accommodations as the program leader
 - e. Meals
5. Program leaders must obtain international insurance for their spouse/partner and dependents through OU's Office of Education Abroad. Program leaders are responsible for paying for international insurance for their spouse/partner and dependents.
 6. Dependents are not permitted to share accommodations with students.
 7. Dependents shall not compromise the planned academic program in any way, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Preventing the program leader from attending or leading field trips or other academic elements of the program
 - b. Disrupting class or field trips
 - c. Preventing students or other program leaders from engaging fully in the academic program.

II. Extended Family Members and Personal Acquaintances

- A. "Extended family members" are those relatives of a program leader other than the program leader's spouse/partner or children.
- B. "Personal acquaintances" are generally individuals who have no official connection with the program and who are not related to the program leader.
- C. General Guidelines
 1. It is strongly recommended that extended family members and/or personal acquaintances visit before or after the official program dates, during a scheduled vacation (e.g., Spring Break) or during a free weekend. Visits during other time periods could be disruptive to the academic program.
 2. Personal acquaintances are not permitted to stay for the duration of the program and are not permitted to travel with the study abroad group on program field trips or weekend excursions.
 3. Extended family members are not permitted to stay for the duration of the program and are not permitted to travel with the study abroad group on program field trips or weekend excursions except in the following situations:
 - a. The extended family member is an enrolled student in the program or
 - b. The program leader has received prior approval from the Associate Provost for Global

Engagement

- i. In order to receive approval for an extended family member to stay for the duration of the program or to travel with the study abroad group on program field trips or weekend excursions, a program leader must submit a detailed, written request to the Associate Provost for Global Engagement.
 - ii. All requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
 - iii. Prior to granting or denying a program leader's request, the Associate Provost for Global Engagement shall consult with the Office of Risk Management and the Office of Legal Counsel in regard to any additional risks or legal obligations the request might place upon OU.
4. All expenses and travel arrangements for extended family members and personal acquaintances shall be separate from those of the program and must be paid by the program leader.
5. Extended family members and personal acquaintances are not permitted to share accommodations with students.
6. Extended family members and personal acquaintances shall not compromise the program in anyway, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Preventing the program leader from attending or leading a field trip or other academic element of the program
 - b. Disrupting class or field trips
 - c. Preventing students or other program leaders from engaging fully in the academic program.
7. Extended family members and personal acquaintances are responsible for obtaining their own international insurance. OU's international insurance policy may cover extended family members or personal acquaintances upon request at the program leader's own cost. The insurance coverage available through OU is provided under the same insurance policy required for program leaders on faculty-led programs. If an evacuation must occur, the program leader will be required to be evacuated with the participating students. If their extended family members and personal acquaintances are not covered by OU's international insurance provider, OU will not be able to assist in evacuating the program leader's extended family members and/or personal acquaintances.
8. Extended family members and personal acquaintances are responsible for making their own travel arrangements including passports, visas, transportation, food and housing, etc.
9. Extended family members and personal acquaintances must follow all program requirements including any required vaccinations and insurance.

Contacts

Policy Questions:

Jeremy Lambeth, Director of International Risk Management

405-325-1622 or helpabroad@ou.edu

Shanna Vincent, Director of Education Abroad

405-325-1693 or ea@ou.edu

Forms

In support of this policy, the following form(s) are included:

Minor's Release and Acknowledgement of Rules and Guidelines – Attachment D of Minors on Campus and/or Events Involving Minors – Guidelines for the Norman Campus:

<https://www.ou.edu/content/dam/homepage/landing/policies/minors-on-campus.pdf>