

Family Guidelines for Study Abroad

www.chapman.edu/cge > Information for Families

The Center for Global Education (CGE) understands that parents, guardians, and families play a critical role in their student's international experience. We recognize that engaging families as partners can help us in ensuring the experience is as powerful and rewarding as possible. While fully recognizing that our students are adults, we view parents/guardians as collaborators in the preparation of our students. Know that your support and ongoing communication with your student, both before and during their program, can be an instrumental part of their success. We have created this list of what you can expect from the Center for Global Education as parents/guardians, as well as our suggestions regarding how you can support your students.

Assurances from the Center for Global Education (CGE):

- All programs have been vetted by Chapman on the basis of academic quality, cultural immersion, and safety. Safety can never be guaranteed, but the CGE believes that ongoing reviews of our program offerings and careful selection can help to mitigate risk.
- The CGE will send information and communication to student applicants throughout the study abroad experience: before, during and post-program. We will also communicate with students' program or host institution as needed.
- All students attend a mandatory Pre-Departure Orientation to prepare them for their term abroad. This includes a health and safety presentation from the Dean of Students office.
- The CGE hosts an optional Family Pre-Departure Orientation each semester. Details will be sent to students, who are asked to invite their families. For those family members who cannot attend, the CGE sends students a link to a recorded version to send to their families.
- The CGE is in communication with our partners in the U.S. and abroad who monitor potential social and political unrest and provide your student with instructions regarding how to respond safely if needed.
- The CGE provides the [contact information](#) for our programs including emergency numbers available to students for ongoing support or emergency needs.
- You can [contact](#) the Center for Global Education during regular university hours. In case of an emergency after hours, call Public Safety at (714) 997-6763.
- The CGE seeks to empower your student to handle most situations independently, but may choose to involve the students' emergency contact during emergencies. Parents can expect support and timely responses whenever they seek out the CGE's expertise in situations.

Suggestions for Parent/Guardian Involvement and Collaboration:

Families can:

- Review our [Study Abroad Timeline](#) and [website](#) to understand all that is involved with your student's experience abroad.
- Discuss with your student their goals and expectations for their chosen program.
- Seek to understand how the program works and how it will impact your students' academics upon their return to Chapman.
- Assist your students with financing and budgeting concerns. Create a plan using the [Study Abroad Budget Worksheet](#) which is given to all students when they apply.
- Engage your student in a thorough discussion of safety and behavioral issues, as well as the [Chapman Student Code of Conduct](#). In particular, speak frankly about the use of alcohol and illegal drugs while abroad, as the use thereof is the number one factor in on-site emergencies and personal crises abroad.
- Encourage your student to disclose early on any mental health, physical health, or disability accommodations. Laws, services, and medications can be different overseas. If students disclose early, we can work with them to determine the best fit program and location.
- Establish a communication plan with your student as to when and how often to be in contact while abroad. Be aware with the time difference, phone service, and internet connections, communication may not be as frequent as in the U.S.
- If your student encounters a challenging situation, encourage your student to bring up issues and concerns **directly** to their on-site staff (e.g., roommate concerns, academic issues, cultural adjustment problems, etc.). The skills students gain by addressing and solving their own challenges are incredibly valuable and transferable soft-skills they can use later in life! Strive to balance the concerns of the student with the advice and expertise shared by their program and U.S. staff.
- Understand how [FERPA](#) laws affect what universities and the CGE can and cannot share with parents and guardians (i.e., certain legal protections regarding the release of personal information for adult participants affect what the CGE is able to share).
- Encourage your student to take the lead in the planning and execution of this time abroad, but provide support when they face inevitable challenges adjusting to a new environment.
- Discuss any independent travel plans and activities not included in their program, and strongly encourage your student to notify on-site staff of upcoming travels in case of emergency.
- Coordinate with your student if planning to visit the host country so as to not conflict with class schedules, exams, or excursion dates and special events included in their program. We recommend if you are going to visit, do so at the end of the program. At the start of the program, it is important for students to participate in orientation activities and navigate a new educational system and city with their peers and support from on-site staff to build their confidence and independence.