



PROTOCOL INTERNATIONAL CLINICAL SITE PLACEMENT FOR HEALTH PROFESSION STUDENTS	
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Date of Last Revision:	February 7, 2013
Responsible Office/Department:	Office of the Vice Provost for Health

I. BACKGROUND

We now live in a global society and the challenges of our nation are global in nature. To become successful in navigating today's global environment, it is important to educate our students to become informed and competent citizens and leaders. Cultural differences are more than just differences in language, food, appearances, and personal habits. Culture reflects one's perceptions, beliefs, and values that influence world views. Students who engage in experiences while living and learning in countries other than their own expand their worldview and come to understand the perspectives of other cultures. Study abroad offers students the opportunity to reconsider their own beliefs and values, and readjust perspectives toward other cultures and peoples.

While preparing for and engaging in an international independent study program, students may discover new strengths and abilities, conquer new challenges, and solve new problems; through encountering situations that are unfamiliar, students learn to adapt and respond in effective ways. Students who study abroad are more apt to be self-motivated, independent, willing to embrace challenges, and are able to cope with diverse problems and situations. From an employment perspective, these skills set students apart from other job applicants. Study abroad experiences provide invaluable immersion in foreign culture and customs, preparing students for the competencies required to function in a global society.

II. RATIONALE

Choosing to study abroad as part of a higher education program is a valuable component in developing the student's abilities as a health professional. These unique experiences prepare the health professional to achieve optimal outcomes through an understanding of the differences and perspectives of the client. International clinical site placements differ from

other study abroad programs because they involve a health care-related partnership between an international agency and Grand Valley State University (GVSU). A formal affiliation agreement must be established between the agency and GVSU for the protection and security of the interests of the student, university, and the agency. As such, international placements also differ from domestic placements in that they generally require more research, preparation, and paper work.

It is common for health profession students to independently identify an international agency with which they desire to participate in a clinical experience. When arranging for independent study abroad, specific protocols should be followed to insure that the student is well-prepared to travel, live, and work abroad, and to minimize potential safety hazards and liability risks. It is important to establish a direct line of communication between the student, Program Coordinator, Health Compliance Coordinator, and Padnos International Center Coordinator for successful placement and an optimal clinical experience.

III. RECOMMENDATION

International clinical site placement for an independent study experience involves a collaborative effort involving the student, Program Clinical Coordinator, Health Compliance Coordinator, and the Padnos International Center Coordinator. When a student requests placement at an international clinical agency, the Program Clinical Coordinator will notify the Health Compliance Coordinator to determine if an affiliation agreement is required, and if so, this process will be initiated (refer to General Health Compliance Policy). It is recommended that the student and Program Clinical Coordinator follow the procedures outlined below in preparation for the study abroad experience. All requirements should be completed at least six (6) weeks prior to the internship start date.

Note:

Students participating in independent study programs abroad for GVSU credit will pay GVSU tuition in addition to the independent study program provider, *if applicable*. Typically, this does not apply to health profession students participating in independent study international clinical site placement, and the student will pay only GVSU tuition for program courses.

IV. PROCEDURE

- A. Student makes contact with international agency and is accepted for a clinical experience. Student will inform Program Clinical Coordinator (Coordinator), and provide Coordinator with agency name, address, phone number and contact information including name, title, phone number, and email address.

- B. Coordinator will contact agency to determine if agency and preceptor meet program licensure and accreditation requirements needed for course credit. If so, proceed with placement arrangements.
- C. Coordinator will contact Health Compliance Coordinator (HCC) to determine if an affiliation agreement must be established. If so, Coordinator will provide HCC with agency and student information and the process will be initiated. The HCC will notify Coordinator when the agreement has been completed. If there are any difficulties in establishing the agreement, the HCC will inform the Coordinator in a timely manner (refer to General Health Compliance Policy).
- D. Coordinator and student will meet as soon as international placement has been approved by program to discuss details of the placement process. Coordinator will direct student to the Padnos International Center (PIC) website and will inform student of his/her responsibility for preparing for international travel, work, and living arrangements.
- E. Student will follow PIC procedures to make all necessary arrangements:
 - 1. Student logs onto www.gvsu.edu/pic
 - a. Choose “Study Abroad Students” in the left-hand blue column
 - b. Choose “Study Abroad Programs” in the left-hand blue column
 - c. Choose “Independent Study Projects” from the icons on center page
 - d. Carefully read all information on the Independent Study page and in the links provided
 - 2. Student will make an appointment to meet with Elena Selezneva, PIC Coordinator of Faculty-Led Programs. Student must bring all information about the program/agency, a completed and signed faculty supervisory form, and a course syllabus.
 - 3. Student will complete an online OASIS Independent Study Application on the PIC website. The Independent Study Application will be reviewed by the PIC Coordinator. Acceptance for an independent study program through PIC is not guaranteed.
 - 4. Student will follow the Pre-Departure Timeline to insure that all necessary arrangements are met:
 - a. Passport and Visa applications
 - b. Arrangement for independent study program credit
 - c. Financial and travel arrangements
 - d. Travel Warning and Liability waivers, if applicable
 - e. Health and immunization requirements
 - f. Familiarity with the travel destination legalities, customs, culture, and language
 - g. Register trip with U.S. State Department
 - h. Develop an emergency plan and exchange emergency contact information with family, PIC staff, and Program Clinical Coordinator
 - i. Attend all pre-departure meetings as required by PIC

- F. Program Clinical Coordinator and student will meet no later than 2 weeks prior to departure to review arrangements. Student will provide Coordinator with contact information (email, phone numbers, Facebook, etc.) that student will use while abroad.
- G. Coordinator will follow student's progress at the agency throughout the course of the internship as per program policy and protocol. Student will remain in contact with Coordinator as pre-arranged prior to the student's departure for the placement.
- H. Student will remain in contact with PIC Coordinator weekly (via personal or mass email, phone, blog, and/or Facebook) and will inform PIC Coordinator if traveling to other locations/destinations during the internship.

References:

Padnos International Center Independent Study Projects. (November 26, 2012). Retrieved from www.gvsu.edu/studyabroad/independent-study-programs-14.htm.

Preparing globally educated americans: Global challenges require more americans to study abroad. (2007, October). NAFSA: Association of International Educator.