

Consortium for Overseas Student Teaching (COST)

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Expectations for any event can make an experience positive or negative. It is important to have realistic expectations for your time abroad. Fundamentally, we are guests of the host country and the institutions that host us. Therefore, we must behave in such a manner that would not bring embarrassment to our local hosts, the COST program, or our home university.

Some things in a new culture are difficult to prepare for specifically. By participating in the COST program, you are becoming a student of the host culture. When in doubt, follow the lead of your host in giving proper respect to situations you encounter. It is expected that you will make an effort to find information pertaining to your host country that describes the cultural norms and expectations (ex. [CultureGrams](#), [CIA World Factbook](#), and [US Department "Learn about Your Destination"](#)). If you have any questions about the Code of Conduct statements, discuss them with your COST coordinator prior to signing this document and making a commitment to the COST program.

The following are expected of you during your COST experience.

General Behavior

1. I will do my best to make sure that the people with whom I am in contact during my stay overseas are left with a positive impression of Americans by being courteous and considerate at all times.
2. I intend to make the most of this valuable educational experience. I will do my best to maintain a positive, responsible and cooperative attitude during the student teaching experience in order to enhance my experience.
3. I understand that food is an important part of any culture, and I look forward to encountering various types of local cuisine during my stay. I will try to keep an open mind and palette towards new culinary experiences and do my best to sample the widest variety of foods. I agree to be gracious when served food that I am not accustomed to eating.
4. I understand that I need to respect local culture, customs and laws. I must be courteous, respectful and pleasant at all times, even when I encounter inconveniences or things that don't appeal to me personally.
5. I agree to make adjustments to my behavior, appearance, and use of resources (electricity/ water/ internet) to respect cultural norms as requested by program teachers, faculty, staff, and homestays. I will do so to the extent I am able and to the extent it does not compromise my personal identity, integrity or my individual rights. I will conduct myself in an ethical and culturally sensitive manner.
6. I agree to be discreet and not behave in a manner offensive to my hosts.
7. I understand that I must be flexible when things do not go as planned.
8. I know the rules of behavior for my home university apply to the COST program.
9. I am fully responsible for the choices I make including the consumption of alcohol.
10. Theft of any items from my furnished apartment or host family is theft, and as such is not tolerated.
11. Unlawful narcotics, drugs, or drug paraphernalia will not be tolerated. Even if lawful in my host country, I will not participate in these activities. Misuse of alcohol or the illegal use, possession, or distribution of drugs or illegal substances will result in my immediate transport home at my own expense.
12. I understand that expectations and rules surrounding the use of Internet vary by country. I will respect and abide by the rules and expectations set forth by my homestay and school authorities.

Placement Specific Behavior

13. I understand that I must be prepared for every class.
14. I agree to be on time for teaching and any COST or school coordinated events.
15. I will dress professionally for my teaching assignment.
16. I am expected to treat all students, school personnel, and school community with respect.
17. I will be prompt and regular in attendance. I will follow the schedule expected of teachers. I am required to be full-time in the school in the teaching field for which I am seeking certification. Absences should not occur except for emergencies (e.g., sickness). If an absence is unavoidable, I will contact my cooperating teacher and home university supervisor. I understand that I am required to make-up any absences. If I have not fulfilled this requirement by the last day of teaching, I will be evaluated by my home supervisor, which may result in returning to a school site to complete the attendance requirement.
18. I am expected to attend all school functions that my cooperating teacher is required to attend (e.g., faculty meetings, PTA meetings, school/community events).
19. I will work with my cooperating teacher and university supervisor to resolve internship concerns in a professional manner. I am expected to follow the chain of command in resolving issues that occur during my internship. If an issue relates to occurrences at the school site, I will discuss my concerns with the cooperating teacher and keep my university supervisor apprised of the situation. If an issue relates to internship requirements or supervision, I will share my concerns with my home university supervisor. If issues are not resolved through these efforts, I will share my concerns with the person in the next level of authority at the institution.
20. The responsibilities assigned to an intern are equivalent to the responsibilities of a full-time position. Satisfying the internship requirements in a satisfactory manner requires that I devote a considerable amount of time and effort to my teaching responsibilities. During my internship, I am advised to limit my personal travel and understand that weekend trips may need to be postponed, as my teaching responsibilities must come first.
21. If I maintain a blog or any other Internet site in the public domain about my COST experience, it is prohibited to make personal comments about teachers and students in the schools where I am placed. It is inappropriate to make comments about the school, my teaching experience, and my placement teacher on a blog site. Such actions may result in unfortunate and perhaps detrimental consequence for me as well as the entire COST program.
22. Communication regarding placement or living concerns is important. I will report any incident with my on-site coordinator and/or home university supervisor.
23. I will communicate my whereabouts and independent activity plans, including detailed itinerary (flights, cities, lodging) to my local COST coordinator.

In-Country and Living Abroad Behavior

24. I understand that my housing will be reflective of the culture. It will not be like home. There are numerous types of housing available. I may be placed in a home stay environment, apartment or flat, or school dormitory. I may be placed with other COST students or local college students. I may also be placed with a home stay family who may or may not speak English fluently. I understand that my housing has been arranged and approved through my local COST coordinator. I must be appreciative and receptive to my living arrangements as to not offend all of my local hosts.
25. Each housing situation is unique and specific to the site and culture. It is considered socially appropriate to take a host family a small token gift representing my culture or homeland. The same is true for my classroom, cooperating teacher, and local COST coordinator.
26. Payment for housing is individually handled and should be a pre-departure question asked of my local COST coordinator. I will make prompt and full payments for my housing as advised by my local COST coordinator.

27. It is recommended not to go to my host city more than a couple days before the start of my teaching experience. I understand that if I choose to arrive early, I will be responsible for my plans and expenses.
28. I will coordinate and communicate my arrival (flight, date, time) with both the COST receiving site and home coordinator.
29. I may have family or friends visit me abroad, but only AFTER my obligation for teaching has been met or it is a holiday as determined by the school I am placed in. I will not ask my host family to house my guests. I will not have guests stay in my apartment because it could disturb my roommates.
30. I understand that I could be living with other students assigned by my local COST coordinator to my host family or apartment. I will do my best to get along with my roommates.
31. Operating a motor vehicle abroad can be hazardous and pose significant safety risks. Unfamiliar roads, signage, and road conditions, and limited knowledge of local traffic laws and local rules of the road can increase risks while driving abroad. I understand that COST prohibits students from purchasing, renting, or operating motor vehicles of any type while abroad (including automobiles, trucks, motorcycles, mopeds, motor scooters, e-bikes, or off-road vehicles).

Consequences of Non-Compliance with COST Code of Conduct

Failure to adhere to these standards may result in corrective measures and/or disciplinary actions, which may include immediate dismissal from the program.

1. Violations of Code provisions could affect overall grade of violators.
2. Serious violations of the Code of Conduct put one at risk of being expelled from both COST and your institution’s program.
3. Violations of provisions 10 and 11 of the Code of Conduct are punishable by immediate expulsion from the COST program. Students will also be held accountable by local authorities for breaking any laws.
4. Any student who is expelled from the COST program for Code of Conduct violations will be required to arrange his/her own transportation back home and will not be allowed to physically stay in the COST arranged housing after his/her expulsion. The overall expenses of expulsion can be substantial and will be born directly by the offending student.

I agree to abide by the COST Code of Conduct and conditions of participation and accept the consequences of non-compliance. I accept termination of my participation in this experience by the COST program with no refund of fees. I accept responsibility for transportation expenses home if I fail to maintain acceptable standards of conduct as established by my home University, the sponsoring institution, local COST coordinators and/or foreign affiliates.

Signature

Date

Print Name

Thankful acknowledgement to the following programs who shared their code of conduct materials: The University of Akron, University of Wisconsin – River Falls, Grand Valley State University, Auburn University, International Business Seminars, and Passports International.