

# Frequently Asked Questions

This document is meant to supplement the interim instructor checklist. Questions are divided into a variety of categories listed below. If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Off-Campus Programs Office or search this pdf document to find the answers you seek.

## **PLANNING: I AM THINKING ABOUT GOING...**

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- Can students appeal if they are not recommended by the registrar or student life?
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## **LEADERSHIP: ONCE YOU GET ON THE PLANE...**

- What are the behavior expectations while students are studying off-campus?
- Do we need to create opportunities for student worship while off-campus?
- What if a major disaster or world event or incident happens while we are off-campus?
- What if the State Department issues a travel alert or travel warning for the country while we are off-campus?
- What if we have a serious illness while we are off-campus?
- Can students travel independently during an interim?
- Are there any additional resources that might be helpful as I prepare for and lead my interim?

## **PLANNING: I AM THINKING ABOUT GOING...**

### **How can I think strategically about developing an off-campus interim class?**

As you begin to think about developing an off-campus interim class, think about the following questions:

- How can I partner with a colleague to make the course inter-disciplinary? Team teaching is encouraged, in addition, offering inter-disciplinary courses has always been a goal of Calvin interims (both on and off campus).
- How can I connect my course to my department's goals for interim? As we move into the future, it is going to be increasingly important for departments and individual instructors to think strategically about how their interim offerings fit into the strategic goals of the college.

For additional information on guidelines for Interim Term Courses see the following website:

[www.calvin.edu/admin/comm/interim/proposal/guidelines.html](http://www.calvin.edu/admin/comm/interim/proposal/guidelines.html)

### **What criteria will be used in evaluating my interim proposal?**

Overall criteria for evaluating interim proposals (both on and off campus) can be found at:

[www.calvin.edu/admin/comm/interim/proposal/criteria.html](http://www.calvin.edu/admin/comm/interim/proposal/criteria.html)

### **What is the timeline for submitting interim course proposals?**

The timeline for submitting an interim term committee can be found at:

[www.calvin.edu/admin/comm/interim/proposal/timeline.html](http://www.calvin.edu/admin/comm/interim/proposal/timeline.html)

### **What about visiting countries with State Department travel alerts or warnings?**

It is your responsibility to monitor the U.S. State Department's web site for travel alerts and warnings. If you propose an interim to a country that has a current travel alert or warning you will need to work with the Travel Safety Committee to provide more specific itineraries, risk management plans, and justification for travel. The Travel Safety Committee will review this plan and will either approve or cancel the interim. The timing of this decision will depend on the circumstances of the specific situation. For additional information, as well as what materials that the Travel Safety Committee may request, can be found on the risk management protocols page: [www.calvin.edu/academic/off-campus/instructors/risk-management/](http://www.calvin.edu/academic/off-campus/instructors/risk-management/)

## **THANKS TO PROVOST BEVERSLUIS FOR SHARING HER THOUGHTS ON THE NEXT FEW QUESTIONS**

### **What are the key academic components of off-campus interim courses?**

Off-Campus interim courses should make intentional use of the pedagogy of experiential learning. Experiential learning theory stresses the importance of:

- Specific learning goals
- Careful orientation to the experience
- Well designed questions
- Guided experiences
- Guided reflection on the experience
- Evaluation by students and faculty

This emphasis can be seen in many ways. For example, the Interim Term Committee has changed some of the off-campus course titles to reflect the fact that students are not just *spending* the interim in another country, but are *studying specific topics and theories* in that country. So, for example "Interim in Country X" became "TOPIC A in Country X." Again, we want to make it very clear to students that the country is *both a classroom and a topic*.

## What kind of assignments should I include in my class?

**Reading lists:** Although the primary “text” is often the experience itself, well chosen reading materials can provide helpful orientation, background, theory, analysis, etc.

A common student complaint is that faculty fail to take the reading seriously. A solution is to construct writing assignments or discussion/presentation assignments that integrate both the experience and the reading assignment: For example: “*Describe how (what we heard or saw today) illustrates or refutes the theory described by (xxxx).*”

Do not expect students to do extensive interim reading while they are completing their first semester, or even over the Christmas break. Schedule time for reading during the interim (and you might even suggest scenic library locations in which to do that reading.) You can and should expect academic work during interim – we don’t want students to be stuck inside reading and writing the whole time, but we also want them to read and write in close relationship to their other experiences.

**Writing assignments:** “Journals” are the most frequent assignments for off-campus courses. But you should be clear about your learning goals for these journals. Well-focused questions, specific requirements that integrate the readings and experiences, three-column assignments (e.g., “What did you experience? How did this fit the theory /idea of the course? What are the implications?) are all useful kinds of journal guidance. Spot check student work during the trip, to show that you are serious about this kind of learning.

**Group:** Group interaction and cooperative learning can be a significant part of many interim courses. Accountability to the group in a variety of life and learning situations enhances the educational value of the experience and promotes Christian fellowship. Students could be assigned to lead a discussion and/or make a presentation on a topic about which they have read and developed some expertise, such as a play, a type of architecture, a piece of literature, or another aspect of the culture. Also, some instructors have been very pleased with student-led worship activities on Sundays and during the week; this activity can promote spiritual growth and provide experience of Christian community.

**Evaluation:** Some formal or informal examination or assessment of student performance is required. Assessment may include a pre-test, post-test structure; the pre-test can give students clues about places and events deemed most important for retention. For those courses with some on-campus time, a formal paper may be appropriate.

Since flexibility and experimentation are encouraged in the interim term, variety in modes of examination is encouraged. Some experienced instructors have conducted an oral exam of each student for one-half hour, exploring the student's critical reflection on and the meaning of the experience as well as the student's responses to specific questions. The more explicitly and precisely an instructor articulates academic expectations, the less difficult it becomes to discriminate among Honors, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory performances.

**Course evaluation:** Students will be sent an e-mail concerning an on-line evaluation. You will have no responsibilities related to distribution or collection of the evaluations.

## How do I get CCE credit for my off-campus interim class?

**Cross-cultural engagement (CCE)** is a learning goal for many off-campus courses. This means that cross-cultural competency should be a specific learning goal for the course, and appropriate experiences, reflection, and evaluation should be a part of the course pedagogy. The CCE committee and director have good pedagogical resources for faculty members who are teaching a CCE course

## GENERAL POLICIES: WHAT DOES THE COLLEGE SAY ABOUT...

### **Can the group travel on Sunday?**

Departure from Grand Rapids for your interim site and/or your return to Grand Rapids should not be scheduled for a Sunday if it can be avoided. Travel on Sundays during the course should be kept to a minimum as to not interfere with church attendance or group worship time.

### **Can students access on-campus housing prior to the re-opening of the dorms?**

On-site housing is not available prior to the re-opening of the dorms following Christmas break. Students needing to be in GR prior to that time must make their own housing arrangements.

### **Can students appeal if they are not recommended by the registrar or student life?**

A student can appeal if his or her interim application is not recommended. The student should follow the same appeals process as for semester programs. This process is described in the Off-Campus Programs Student Handbook. Interim instructors will make the final decision on appeals (in consultation with the Off-Campus Programs Office and Student Life, in cases of personal probation).

### **Can I allow students drive group vehicles on my interim?**

Yes, if they have gone through the appropriate training. Calvin College requires all operators of any (including your own) motor vehicles used for Calvin business/activities to complete a defensive drivers training course. Every driver (faculty, staff and students) must submit a completed Motor Vehicle Driving Release form to the Physical Plant office in order to be registered for the online training course. The release form is included in the Instructor's Packet on the website.

Once you enroll, you will receive an e-mail from a company called AlertDriving.com. They will give you a user name and password to use at their website to take the courses and pass the tests. The Physical Plant office will be notified of your successful completion of the course(s) and will send you an endorsement sticker to put on the back of your Calvin ID card authorizing you to drive for Calvin College. The College's Transportation Policy and Transportation Procedures may be found on the Physical Plant web page under Vehicle Requests.

### **How many students do I need to assure my course can be offered?**

There must be a minimum of 9 eligible students per instructor to assure that an off-campus interim can be offered. Permission to teach a course with fewer than 9 students must be obtained from the academic deans.

### **What do I need to do to take visitors (Non-Calvin students) on my course?**

Calvin students are given priority on all off-campus interim classes. If all eligible students have been accommodated, contact the Off-Campus Programs Office to receive approval to take visitors. Off-Campus Programs will assign a student ID to each visitor. As you add visitors, please take note of the following:

- Include name(s) and addresses of your non-student participants on your roster. Financial Services receives a copy of the roster and uses it to bill each participant for his or her off-campus interim. Since visitors are not taking the course for credit, they do not register, but their names must appear on the course roster in order to charge them.
- All visitors must pay the same fee as the students (this includes the deposit). This fee should include all expenses associated with the interim, including travel insurance (IMG supplemental travel insurance and immunizations). **In addition to this fee, visitors will be charged a \$50.00 instructional fee. Note that this fee is not revenue for your interim.**
- In limited cases, the instructional fee can be waived. Please discuss this decision with the Off-Campus Programs Director prior to making a final decision.

### **What are the policies related to my spouse or other family members participating in the course?**

Arrangements for the participation of the instructor's spouse or other family members must be approved by the Director of Off-Campus Programs and be in accordance with the College's policy on spouse travel. This policy is available at [www.calvin.edu/admin/comm/interim/proposal/spouse.html](http://www.calvin.edu/admin/comm/interim/proposal/spouse.html)

### **Can students take a January and May interim in the same academic year?**

Students are not allowed to take more than 4 semester hours for interim. Any student that chooses to take both a January interim course and a May interim course will be charged for the additional course credits at the regular semester hour rate.

## ADMIN: FINANCIAL MATTERS...

### **What is the pricing philosophy of off-campus interims?**

Students are required to pay all costs associated with the interim. Students pay the course fee. After the interim experience all expenses associated with the interim are paid and any excess funds are refunded to the students who participated in that interim. If there are additional costs associated with the interim, students would be billed. The cost of interims includes some administration fees and typically covers:

- Transportation to and from the site of the interim as well as in-country transportation costs during the interim;
- Room & Board;
- Admission costs and entrance fees;
- All required immunizations costs (additional immunizations are at the student's expense);
- Travel Insurance (this insurance is a supplemental health insurance policy that also provides financial assistance for medical or political evacuations if needed, this insurance does NOT pay for expenses if the student decides not to participate in the program).

### **Who is the budget officer for my interim?**

Your department chair (not the Director of Off-Campus Programs is your budget officer and provides the second signature on check requests, vouchers, etc. If you are the department chair, you should request the second signature from your dean.

The interim instructor contact person in the Financial Services Office is Becky Brinks. She will issue your account numbers 1-1-#####-40000 for revenue (student fees) and 1-1-#####-50000 for expenses. Only the revenue generated when the students (and visitors) are billed for the course should appear in the revenue account number. All expenses, including all on-campus expenses should be charged to the one expense account number.

### **When can I begin to start charging expenses for my interim?**

Some expenditure for your interim can be made before any revenue is received from student billings. However large pre-payments or deposits (e.g. airline tickets) should not be made without consultation and before you are confident that your interim will not be cancelled or if your destination is under a State Department travel warning.

### **How can I make payments and access money during my trip?**

As the instructor for your course, you have a variety of ways that you can pay for expenses related to your off-campus interim including:

- CHECKS: Financial Services can issue a check for any interim expenses so long as the proper documentation is attached to the check request. An example of proper documentation would be an invoice from a vendor. To request a check, please use the Internal Check Request/Claim for Reimbursement form. The form must be filled out completely including the payee information, description of the payment, interim expense account number, and two signatures (interim instructor and department chair).
- HONORARIA CHECKS: Due to IRS record keeping and reporting requirements, honoraria payments need to be processed through Accounts Payable. To request a payment for services, please use the Honoraria Check Request Form. The form must be filled out completely, including the payee name, address, and social security number. The form also requires the description of the type of service rendered, the interim expense account number, and two signatures (interim instructor and department chair). Occasionally, when traveling overseas, paying honoraria with a Calvin check is not possible. In this circumstance, a cash advance can be used for the honorarium as long as the person receiving the payment signs a note stating that he/she received the money in exchange for services and the services were not performed in the U.S.
- CASH ADVANCE: Cash advances can be taken out at the Financial Services Office and used for miscellaneous expenses while traveling. All expenses paid for with the cash advance must be accounted for with receipts/documentation.

Some instructors choose to use the cash advance to give small amounts of money to their students on a daily basis. Signatures and a note stating the amount received must be obtained from the persons receiving the cash. These signatures are used to account for the expenditures in lieu of receipts. A sample signature sheet is included with interim forms.

It is also permissible for you as an instructor to take all or part of a cash advance and deposit it into your personal bank account for ATM withdrawal later. If you choose this option, be sure to check with your bank on what your daily maximum withdrawal amount is as well as what types of fees you will incur for withdrawals (some banks are now charging a “foreign transaction fee” of 3-4%). Also, please notify your bank that you will be traveling abroad so they do not block your account when they notice unusual activity in your account. Note that ATMs are not always available or operational, so be prepared with other options.

- WIRE TRANSFER: Funds can be wired in U.S. currency or in many other foreign currencies. If you choose to wire money, you will need additional information (including a (SWIFT Code). This information is requested on the Wire Transfer Request Form (found on the Financial Services web site). Funds wired to foreign countries may not be available immediately, so plan on 3 to 7 days for the funds to hit the beneficiary’s account. With a bit of advanced planning, wire transfers are very efficient and safe method of paying for expenses.

### **When should I begin to think about currency exchange?**

Some instructors choose to purchase foreign currency in advance of leaving. Some, but not all, local banks will sell foreign currency. Instructors are responsible for finding a bank that has a supply of the currency or can order the currency that they need. Please note that Financial Services is unable to accept unused foreign currency when you return from your trip. You are responsible for exchanging the funds back to US Dollars before submitting the unused funds to Calvin.

### **Who collects student deposits?**

Instructors should collect all student deposit checks (written out to Calvin College) and hand them in to the Financial Services Office (FSO). The FSO will NOT accept the checks unless the student numbers of participants are on the deposit checks and “interim deposit” is on the memo line. It is important to tell the person at the front desk that they are deposits for your off-campus interim course. At the time that the students’ accounts are billed for the interim, the deposits will be taken from the “holding account” and placed on the student accounts, and the corresponding revenue will be included in your interim’s revenue account.

Each professor determines what the interim deposit amount must be. The deposits are at least \$500. Please make it clear to your students that the deposit is potentially non-refundable and they will be financially responsible for any additional costs incurred on their behalf. You may require deposits with your application. This is advisable for interims whose enrollment must be determined in the spring or early summer in order to reserve a spot on the roster. In this case if a student is not accepted into the course the deposit will be returned. Another option is to collect the deposits once students are accepted into your course.

Calvin may retain a student’s deposit (in its entirety) if a student drops out of an interim course after his/her application has been approved. All expenses related to the student’s cancellation (airline ticket change fees, hotel deposits, etc.) will be calculated and if the student’s deposit is insufficient to cover the costs incurred by the college, he/she will be charged the additional costs. Each student who drops out of an interim after a deposit is made will be charged a \$45 processing fee. *No refunds of any kind will be issued after December 1 for January interims and March 1 for May interims.*

### **How do students pay for immunizations from Health Services?**

The cost of required immunizations should be included in the total price of your off-campus interim course. If a student gets additional immunizations he or she will be charged the additional cost of the immunization. In the case of required immunizations, Financial Services will transfer the budgeted funds for both students and instructors immunizations and other required medications from your interim course’s account to the Travel Health account. Travel Health will refund any unused portion of the required immunization charge directly to each student’s financial services account. Insurance receipts will be given to each participant for submission to their own insurance for possible coverage.

### **How does Financial Services know how much to bill students?**

Your course roster is the basis for billing for students. It is due to the Off-Campus Programs Office on October 15, sent in electronic format (see Instructor Packet for roster form). Once the price for the interim is posted, any changes to a student billing, such as flight credits, needs to be communicated to the College Bursar, Rana Huisman ([rsh4@calvin.edu](mailto:rsh4@calvin.edu)). Students with a significant past due balance on their account with the Financial Services Office will not be registered for your class by the Registrar’s office.

### **When do my students pay for the interim course?**

Students are billed for January interims in mid-December and billed for May interims in mid-April. (The charge will appear on their MISCELLANEOUS account.)

### **What are contingency funds and how can they be used?**

All interim budgets must include at least \$100 per student for a “contingency fund”. These funds are meant to be available to you to meet unexpected expenses such as a higher entrance fee to a museum, an unexpected transit strike that leads to a need for taxi transportation, or being snowed in at the Detroit airport and needing a block of rooms for yourself and your students. You may not give your students these “excess funds” and you should be careful to not rely on them for anticipated expenses.

### **How do I reconcile the finances for my interim?**

After your interim is completed, contact Financial Services Office (Becky Brinks) to reconcile your accounts. Receipts/documentation must be obtained for all expenses, regardless of payment method. We would encourage you to keep up with your listing and tracking expenses while on the trip rather than trying to do everything once you return.

Financial Services prefers to have all interim accounts closed by late March. Deadline for Reconciliation is March 31. This allows plenty of time for any additional invoices to be paid, credit card statements to be submitted, and cash advances to be reconciled.

Financial reconciliation of your interim's account is YOUR responsibility, not FSO's. Any financial submissions not in good order will be returned to the instructors.

### **When can students expect refunds?**

Once the group returns to campus and all expenses have been reconciled any leftover funds will be refunded to students' miscellaneous accounts. Instructors are NOT to refund money to students of their own at any point during the interim. Refunds will be posted in May for January interims.

If the balance of your interim is a deficit, the students will be billed for the difference unless other arrangements made.

## **ADMIN: TRAVEL ISSUES...**

### **What are the passport requirements for traveling abroad?**

All students studying abroad need a passport, information on obtaining passports can be found at [www.travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html). Please remind students that many countries require that the passport be valid for six months after departure from that country. In the Fall, Financial Services holds an annual Passport Application Event at the Campus Store that students can attend to start the process of obtaining a passport.

### **Do I need to get visa for my interim trip?**

Maybe, it depends on the country. Please monitor the visa regulations of the countries that you will be visiting during your interim. Visa requirements are often different for U.S. nationals and residents of other countries, including Canada. Please be sure that all of your student participants will have the necessary visa status to visit all countries on your travel itinerary. Also, please continue to monitor this regularly prior to departure, as the visa requirements can change at any time.

### **Will international students have additional challenges in participating in an off-campus interim?**

If there are any international students (those with F-1 Student status) planning to take your interim, please check the additional information found in the OCP Student Handbook.

### **What advice should I give students on health insurance while off-campus (especially for groups traveling abroad)?**

First and foremost, all students are responsible for their own primary health insurance (this is a requirement to attend Calvin). Students should check to find out what kind of coverage they have on their primary health insurance while traveling abroad. For example, for students covered by KnightCare, Calvin's student health insurance plan, have health coverage but it only covers 60% of any medical bills incurred internationally. However, Calvin's secondary travel insurance (purchased for everyone traveling internationally) will cover any additional costs after the deductible of \$1,000 is paid. For students, whose primary health care does not cover any medical costs while traveling

internationally should consider purchasing HTH worldwide. It is the policy recommended by Calvin's insurance provider.

In addition, please remind students of the following:

- **Insurance:** The student's signature on the interim application indicates their acknowledgement that they have read and accept the terms of waiver and release. This document includes the requirement that they be insured for emergency and urgent care while on an off-campus interim.
- **Payment of medical expenses:** Most U.S. insurance companies require that the insured pay medical expenses and retain receipts for later reimbursement if medical attention is needed outside the United States. Those students off-campus in the United States should check with their insurance company as to the procedures for approval of treatment (if required) while away from campus and for payment of those expenses.
- **Insurance coverage:** Student's traveling before or after the official dates of the interim course are not covered by Calvin's supplemental travel insurance policy. They have the option of extending their coverage by contacting Financial Services; the extra cost can be billed to their Calvin miscellaneous account.

### **Do I (as the instructor) need to purchase additional travel insurance?**

Calvin has a blanket policy for faculty, their spouses and students for medical or political/security evacuation, should it become necessary. When traveling with your interim, Calvin will purchase supplemental travel insurance for you (as well as your students). The cost of this insurance is built into the administrative costs of the interim.

### **What resources are available to prepare students to manage their health (both physical and mental) as well as their safety while on an off-campus interim?**

Calvin offers a variety of resources to help instructors prepare for their health and safety while abroad. These resources include:

- **Health Form:** All students need to complete the health form (found on the Instructor's resource page) and turn it to you during the application period. You should review each form and discuss with the student any concerns generated by his/her responses on the form. If you are traveling outside the United States, Western Europe, Australia/New Zealand or Japan, Health Services will need to review the student health forms. Please send the health forms and a complete list of participants by Mid-October. Health Services will review the health and immunization forms and return them to you and should remain in your possession for the duration of the course.
- **Mental Health Form:** All students need to complete the Mental Health Information form (found on the Instructor's resource page) and turn it in to you during the application period. You should review each form and discuss with the student any concerns generated by his/her responses on the form. If a student has signed the "Authorization to Release Information" form at the bottom, forward a copy to the Broene Counseling Center and consider discussing the student's mental health needs with their counselor. If the student has not signed the authorization, keep the form for your own records until the completion of the course.
- **Immunizations:** Once you send in the Travel Health Preliminary Questionnaire in Mid-September, Health Services will contact instructors to discuss travel locations, living conditions, activities planned and the duration of the course. This will determine which immunizations (vaccines) that will be required of students (as recommended by the Center for Disease Control in conjunction with the World Health Organization). **Students must get all required immunizations to participate in your off-campus interim class.** In addition, on

interims where immunizations are required students (and instructors) are required to view an instructional online video and make an individual health appointment with Health Services.

- Off-Campus Programs Student Handbook: There is a complete section on Medical Issues, Health and Safety in the OCP student handbook. This handbook can be found on-line on the OCP webpage.
- Supplemental Travel Insurance: All students are responsible for their own primary health insurance (this is a requirement to attend Calvin). In addition, to this primary coverage the college purchases supplemental travel insurance for all groups traveling outside of the United States. This insurance is a supplemental health insurance policy that also provides financial assistance for medical or political evacuations if needed, this insurance does NOT pay for travel expenses if the student does not participate in the program for any reason. Additional information about Calvin's supplemental Health Insurance can be found at [www.calvin.edu/admin/travel/international/insurance.html](http://www.calvin.edu/admin/travel/international/insurance.html)

## ADMIN: STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION...

### **Where can students access application materials?**

Student application materials are available from the Off-Campus Programs office as well as on the OCP website: [www.calvin.edu/academic/off-campus/interim/apply.html](http://www.calvin.edu/academic/off-campus/interim/apply.html)

### **Where do I send the completed Interim Applications?**

Once you make sure that all the questions have been answered on the application and the application is signed, send the completed applications directly to the Registrar's Office. Please make sure to keep any deposits, recommendation forms, or forms in your office. Do not attach or leave them attached to the application.

### **Could you describe all the forms I need to collect from students?**

The list of required forms of all students applying for your off-campus interim is presented below. You may want to collect these forms with student applications, rather than try to track these forms down later in the process.

- Application Form
- Recommendation Form(s)
- Health Information Form (contains critical emergency information)
- Mental Health Information Form
- Legal Waiver (gives you authority to make medical decisions if necessary. Students agree that they have read the waiver and release when they sign the interim application.
- Copy of his or her passport (for international off-campus interims).

### **What do I do when my interim course is full?**

Rejoice! You may also want to start a waiting list. Please inform students if they are not included in your final roster so that they can pursue other options if they so desire.

### **Who is eligible to participate in an Interim course?**

Students must have at least sophomore standing and a 2.0 GPA to participate in an off-campus course, first year students may appeal to the Off-Campus Programs Office if there are special circumstances related to their application. (For May interims, first-year students may apply, provided that they will have accumulated sufficient credits to have sophomore standing at the end of second semester.)

Students placed on personal probation will be denied participation in off-campus programs for 12 months from the date of their sanctioning. Students placed on disciplinary probation will be ineligible for off-campus programs for 18 months from the date of the sanctioning. The course instructor may make exceptions only after reviewing the student's file with Jay Wise. Once the review has been made, the decision will be made by the *instructor*, in consultation with the Director of Off-Campus Programs and Student Life, in cases of disciplinary probation.

Students with less than 2.0 GPA: If an applicant has less than the required minimum GPA of 2.0, that student may appeal to the Director of Off-Campus Programs for permission to participate in the off-campus interim. The OCP Director will take into account the student's overall academic record, the relevance of your interim's topic to the student's course of study, the frequency of offering of the interim course and any special considerations the student wishes to provide in addition to the above.

### **What criteria can I use in selecting students to participate in my course?**

As the instructor you can set up your own criteria for the class but remember you may need to justify this criteria to students and colleagues. The criteria used in the selection process should be shared to applicants, preferably in writing. Criteria may include:

- Class level status
- Minimum cumulative GPA
- Academic prerequisites
- Appropriate preparation (e.g. physical fitness)
- Willingness to abide by other appropriate conditions set by the instructor(s) including stipulations regarding alcohol use, smoking, dress, etc.

Remember that it is unlawful to refuse admission to a student because of a medical or mental health condition unless you have specified a health requirement in your pre-requisites for the course. However, if you have concerns about the advisability of that student's participation, you may counsel the student about the demands of the course and recommend that he/she withdraw. If he/she is adamant about participating, have the student sign a statement to that effect, to avoid later claims of ignorance about the difficulties you discussed.

If you have a concern about a student's physical or mental health disability, please consult the Student Academic Services Office. This office is helpful in advising students with disabilities and determining appropriate accommodations.

Likewise, If you have a concern about how the emotional health of a particular student might impact their success during the course, you may contact the Broene Counseling Center staff for consultation. Confidentiality laws require that counselors share personal information about a student only when the student has authorized them to do so. You are free to share any information pertaining to a student (or discuss general questions related to mental health accommodations) with Broene staff, whether or not the student has signed an authorization for mental health records to be exchanged. Broene staff are also available to facilitate a discussion between you and the student concerning how to best support their mental health during the off-campus interim course.

### **What do I need to include when I inform students of their status for the interim?**

You should inform students of status (admitted, on waiting list, or not admitted) as soon as possible. If they have been admitted, please inform students that they do NOT need to register for the course. Off-Campus Programs will send your roster to the registrar for registration of your students. Your submission of the final roster to the Registrar is vital for billing and registration purposes. The deposits of those not admitted to the course should be refunded (see Financial Services if those deposits have already been placed in your interim's deposit account).

### **Once I have selected the students for my interim, what is next?**

Once your group has been identified, please complete the roster sheet and turn it into the OCP office. This roster sheet (should include both students and visitors) and has columns for the following information:

- First and Last Name
- Student ID number
- Total cost of the interim (includes all charges including admin costs, insurance fees, immunization costs and the extra \$50 fee for visitors). When you list the cost, please include total cost, NOT the cost after the deposit is paid.
- Emergency Contact name, phone and email
- For courses that will be traveling internationally, please include the following info:
  - Date of Birth (DOB)
  - Passport #
  - Nationality
  - Departure Date and Return Date

### **How can students apply for additional financial aid for my interim course?**

Student may apply for interim scholarships and interim grants. Check your checklist for the approximate dates that applications are due. Applications for both scholarships and grants are available in the Financial Aid Office or at: [www.calvin.edu/academic/off-campus/interim](http://www.calvin.edu/academic/off-campus/interim)

A student is eligible for approximately 20% of the total cost of the interim (minus room and board adjustments discussed below). Student must submit the interim grant application and also qualify for need based financial aid. Financial need is determined by filing the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) or the Calvin Canadian Financial Aid Form. International students are also eligible to apply for this grant.

### **Are students eligible for a room and board adjustment if they participate in an off-campus interim?**

A portion of the cost of each off-campus interim covers room and board expenses for the students in that course. In an attempt to make these program costs feasible, Student who live ON-CAMPUS, who are enrolled in an off-campus interim are credited an amount *proportional to the amount of time their course is away from campus*. Student (or instructors) can check with the Student Housing Office to find out the exact refund they will be credited.

Students should be aware of the following policies and procedures:

- Students living on-campus who are going on an off-campus Interim must inform the Housing Office of their intent by completing the November Survey Card, available at their residence hall desk.
- The student must vacate his/her room at the conclusion of his/her final exams for the fall semester.
- Students may move back into their rooms after 2:00 pm of the day following the conclusion of the interim term. Please note that meal plans do not become activated for second semester until the first day of second semester classes.
- Housing allowance credits should appear on a student's first billing statement following the conclusion of interim. If the credit does not appear on that statement, the student should contact the housing office.

### **How do students register for my interim class?**

Students do not have to register for off-campus interims, this is done for them by the registrar's office after you turn in your roster sheet to the Off-Campus Programs Office in mid-October.

## ADMIN: TRAVEL PLANNING...

### **How do I know which travel agency to work with in planning my interim?**

After you fill out a Travel Request Form and email or ICM it to the Director of Financial Services ([swanner@calvin.edu](mailto:swanner@calvin.edu)), Financial Services will determine which travel agency (either Witte or Carlson Wagonlit) will work with you. If you have a preference in travel agencies, check the relevant box on the Travel Request Form. Financial Services will send you an e-mail confirmation that your Travel Request Form was received and that your request was sent on the appropriate travel agent.

If you have any special travel needs not provided by the two travel agencies provided, or have contract agreements, which need a signature for travel arrangement, contact the Director of Financial Services for review and approval.

### **Do I (as the instructor) need to travel with the group?**

You must travel with your group for departure and return, and you must accompany your group at all transition points (airport, train, station, etc.). Any exception must be approved by the Directors of Off-Campus Programs.

### **Do students need to travel with the group from Grand Rapids?**

It is strongly encouraged that students travel with the group from Grand Rapids. Remind students that they are responsible for getting themselves to Grand Rapids on time for the group's departure. January weather can cause serious delays and they should "play it safe" in scheduling travel time for the return to Grand Rapids after the Christmas break. The financial consequences of a missed departure are the student's responsibility, not the college's responsibility. NOTE: if the group's departure is delayed, the travel agency will assist instructors in making new arrangements.

### **Any helpful hints in working with airlines?**

Pay close attention to airline deposit deadlines. After the deposit is paid, any reduction in the number of seats reserved may mean the loss of the deposit for those seats.

Try to get a group rate. Groups are defined as 10 people or more traveling together (same date and time) from the same place to the same destination and all returning to the same departure city.

Check your airline regulations regarding check-in time, number and weight of luggage. It is a good idea to check your reservations a few days prior to departure, to be sure there is no changes in departure times.

### **Any helpful hints in setting up lodging?**

Plan whether your group will stay in hostels or hotels (or both) during your interim trip. Travel agencies normally do not book lodging in hostels, but many can be reserved via the internet.

If you opt for hotels, be clear with the travel agent on the level you want (simple, moderate, 3-star), and talk to the travel agent about what each level means.

If you end up with an uneven gender split, there will be one or more "single supplements" for students who end up without a roommate. Be sure these charges are included in your trip estimate.

### **Any helpful hints for renting vehicles in the United States?**

All instructors driving rented vehicles in the U.S. need to have a copy of Calvin's insurance and accident report form with them when traveling. Copies are available from the Physical Plant Office. Please contact Nola Nielsen, Services Manager, at x6-7154.

Arrangements for renting vehicles for groups departing from Grand Rapids must be made via the Physical Plant and vehicle requests can be made on the Physical Plant website. Bus requests can be made on-line through Vehicle Requests as well.

Arrangements for “non-local” rentals (vehicles to be available at your destination – not in Grand Rapids) should be made by contacting the Calvin Travel Services Office. As a reminder, you must still become a Calvin Authorized Driver prior to driving any personal or rental vehicle for Calvin business.

In Canada or U.S. territories or possessions, do not pay additional fees for any type of insurance coverage. Be sure to book the rental/lease in the name of Calvin College, not your own name, and carry the insurance and accident report forms with you while traveling. The insurance forms and accident report forms are available from Physical Plant.

### **Any helpful hints for renting vehicles outside of the United States?**

In countries other than the U.S., primary liability coverage must be purchased from the rental agency. Collision damage insurance is triggered by the use of Calvin’s American Express card (for a fee of \$4.00).

Be sure to book the rental/lease in the name of Calvin College (not your own name) and pay for it with your College American Express Card. If you have questions regarding this policy, please contact Ada Castle.

Use the American Express Card to pay the rental fees for all international rentals.

Rental companies are increasingly asking for the names and license numbers of those who will be driving the vehicle(s) so be prepared with this information.

### **Do we have a generic packing list for students?**

General packing advice can be found in the Off-Campus Programs Student Handbook, found on the Off-campus programs website.

### **Should I offer any orientation meeting for students to help them prepare for their off-campus interim?**

The Off-Campus Programs Office STRONGLY recommends that you have at least one orientation session with your students before the end of fall semester?

### **What information should I include in my orientation meeting?**

The list below presents suggestions for what to cover during your orientation meeting, feel free to adapt as needed. While pre-travel meetings can create excitement and anticipation, remember this is a busy time for students as well.

- Review the academic components (reading list, writing assignments, etc.) of the course.
- Review the specific behavior expectation of the course, including a review of the waiver and release form and relevant portion of the Student Conduct Code. Try to foster a discussion or student’s expectations of themselves, each other and the instructor.
- Review safety information (found in the OCP student handbook). You can also show a DVD entitled Safe Passages (available from the OCP office).
- Make sure you have all needed paperwork for every student. If traveling internationally make sure all student passports are valid for the length of time required by the country/countries you are visiting. Many countries require passports to be valid for 6 months after the person leaves the country.
- Remind students of their financial commitments and that the college does not provide trip cancellation insurance.

- Do something fun, as it is never too early to start building your group. Paying attention to group dynamics early can pay big dividends on the course later.
- Provide the following for students and encourage them to share this information with their parents:
  - Itinerary of the class;
  - Emergency contact numbers for the group while you are traveling as well as emergency numbers at Calvin;
  - An overview of the focus of the course and what the group will be studying

## LEADERSHIP: ONCE YOU GET ON THE PLANE...

### **What are the behavior expectations while students are studying off-campus?**

Instructors should insist on demeanor consistent with the Christian nature of Calvin College, and with the law of the state, province, or country in which the interim course will be taught. The official and most current version of Calvin's Student Conduct Code is found online at [www.calvin.edu/admin/student\\_life/form\\_policies.htm](http://www.calvin.edu/admin/student_life/form_policies.htm)

In promoting a course in a location where the "law of the land" or social mores are more or less lenient than in Michigan, an instructor should be very explicit during informational meetings and interviews concerning the behavioral expectations and sanctions which will be in effect for the duration of the course. Students' option for "responsible freedom" may be exercised in their choice of an Interim course, not in whether they will choose to abide by the expectations imposed and explicitly articulated by the instructor. The instructor should take into account the health and welfare of the students, concern for Christian witness, and behavior which defers to the people and the culture in which the off-campus course will take place.

### **Do we need to create opportunities for student worship while off-campus?**

You have an ideal opportunity to introduce students to Christians and churches in other places. You also have the opportunity to help students take responsibility for group devotions and worship. Do what you can to foster these opportunities. Perhaps there is a theme that is fitting for your particular country or academic experience. Students appreciate this chance to grow both closer together and more connected to the global church, and they comment when these opportunities are missed.

### **What if a major disaster or world event or incident happens while we are off-campus?**

As you travel with your group, you should monitor world events, if a major event takes place in your region of the world where you are traveling, please contact the OCP office immediately. For additional direction, instructors are encouraged to review the risk management protocols found at: [www.calvin.edu/academic/off-campus/instructors/risk-management/](http://www.calvin.edu/academic/off-campus/instructors/risk-management/)

### **What if the State Department issues a travel alert or travel warning for the country while we are off-campus?**

You should contact the nearest embassy or consulate for advice, at the same time contact the Off-Campus Programs Office immediately. Given these points of reference, we will develop the best course of action moving forward.

### **What if we have a serious illness (either physical or mental) while we are off-campus?**

If a student becomes ill during the interim, you should make sure that he/she gets appropriate care and that one person should remain with the ill or injured person at all times. Never leave a student alone. If necessary, the Calvin instructor can help arrange payment for medical services with the understanding that the student will reimburse Calvin. Calvin is not responsible for medical expenses. For additional information, instructors are encouraged to review the risk management protocols found at: [www.calvin.edu/academic/off-campus/instructors/risk-management/](http://www.calvin.edu/academic/off-campus/instructors/risk-management/)

If a student displays significant emotional or mental health problems during the interim, refer to the risk management protocol concerning Students Experiencing Mental Health Issues for guidance in how to respond, see risk management protocols:

[www.calvin.edu/academic/off-campus/instructors/risk-management/](http://www.calvin.edu/academic/off-campus/instructors/risk-management/)

If mental health treatment is needed, consult with the student's international insurance provider, the U.S. Embassy, or a local university, hospital, or church to obtain references of local, English-speaking mental health providers. Payment for such services is the responsibility of the student. Broene Counseling Center staff are available to consult with directors by email or phone concerning student mental health needs.

**Can students travel independently during an interim?**

Due to the short nature of the interim experience (3 weeks) there should be little time for independent student travel (anytime a student would spend a night away from the group). However in cases when independent travel is allowed, students need to complete a Independent Travel Release Form (found on the forms page of the OCP website) and turn it into to you. This form includes student itinerary and how they can be reached in case of emergency.

**Are there any additional resources that might be helpful as I prepare for and lead my interim?**

A variety of web resources are included in the OCP Student Handbook.