



# TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER EL PASO

## Operating Policy and Procedure

**HSCEP OP:** 10.29, **Global Health Programs for Students**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC El Paso) Operating Policy and Procedure (HSCEP OP) is to enable TTUHSC El Paso students to participate in TTUHSC El Paso global health courses and programs by ensuring that those programs are:

1. Centered around students or meet the requirements as part of a degree program;
2. In conformity with standards of safety and responsibility as established by recognized academic consortia (e.g., NAFSA: Association of International Educators, Consortium of Universities for Global Health [CUGH], the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board [THECB], the Texas Administrative Code [TAC], and TTUHSC El Paso HSCEP OPs);
3. Operated by all TTUHSC El Paso academic units in a manner that meets approved operation and program standards;
4. In conformity with the laws, rules and regulations of the host country, the host institution, and TTUHSC El Paso; and
5. Of benefit to the host institution, community, and TTUHSC El Paso faculty and/or students.

**REVIEW:** This HSCEP OP will be reviewed by February 15th of every odd-numbered year (ONY) by the Senior Director of the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Global Health and Executive Leadership of the Global Health Council, with recommendations for revisions forwarded to the Vice President for Outreach and Community Engagement and the President by March 15th.

### **POLICY/PROCEDURE:**

#### **I. Definitions**

- A. Abroad- Travel to countries outside the United States
- B. Advising- Guiding students in choices among program options (where and when to go) and assisting students in the completion of applications
- C. Exit Survey- Surveying students who have completed their global health program to obtain their evaluation of the program and their experience
- D. Funding- Scholarships, grants, awards, and financial aid that are available to TTUHSC El Paso students to assist them in covering all or some of the expenses associated with their global health programs
- E. Orientation
  1. Safety and security orientations dealing with both routine and emergency procedures for students abroad

2. Program-specific orientations dealing with site-specific information including, but not limited to, information on expectations of faculty, organization of classes and programs, cultural adjustment, practical information on day-to-day living (e.g., how to obtain currency, call home, and health and safety issues that are site specific)
  3. General orientations providing general information on travel abroad, health issues abroad and general cultural adjustment strategies including recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other security/ health sources.
- F. Visa Information- Providing information to students regarding where they can obtain the most up-to-date information for a country-specific visa; providing assistance when visa requirements include students taking the visa application with them when they travel abroad and/or picking up the passport with the visa in person
  - G. Recruiting- Encouraging students to participate in approved global health programs
  - H. Screening- Evaluating and selecting applicants by schools and degree programs
  - I. Approved Sites- Universities, institutes of higher education, or global health programs with which TTUHSC El Paso has a formal agreement or memorandum of understanding (MOU);
  - J. Restricted Regions A country or area within a country that requires additional review before consideration for approved travel.
  - K. Program Administrator/ Point of Contact (POC) - The program administrator is the contact person at the host institution/organization or faculty member leading the program abroad.
  - L. Acronyms

ART—Assessment and Response Team  
 AVPSS – Assistant Vice President for Student Services  
 CGHC – Chair of Global Health Council  
 GHC – Global Health Council  
 MOU—Memorandum of Understanding  
 ODIGH—Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Global Health  
 SDODIGH—Senior Director of Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Global Health  
 VPOCE— Vice President for Outreach and Community Engagement

**Emergency response procedures are found in section VII of this HSCEP OP and in Attachment B.**

## II. Types of Programs

- A. Institutional Programs are those required courses and/or electives that are part of a school's curriculum, and that are offered at an approved site. The course may be conducted by faculty of the institution abroad, previously identified and approved by TTUHSC El Paso for the purposes of leading the course and/or students.
- B. Faculty-led Programs are those established by TTUHSC El Paso faculty in their area(s) of expertise to teach TTUHSC El Paso students in an environment outside the United States. Faculty design the program in consultation with their school, recruit students for the program, accompany the students abroad, administer the program abroad, and are

responsible for the educational content of the program.

### III. **Establishment of Programs**

#### A. Inaugurating Agreements with Foreign Entities / Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

1. To promote institution-wide standardization, the ODIGH and the GHC are available to offer guidance for the establishment of any new degree program, school-, or institution-wide agreements between TTUHSC El Paso and foreign institutions or organizations.
2. All agreements between programs or schools having to do with international courses and exchanges in those programs and schools will be reviewed and approved by GHC and then forwarded to ODIGH for routing through the TTUHSC El Paso contracting system.
3. All institution-wide agreements will be forwarded to the president for signature following signed certification by CGHC and ODIGH that the agreement incorporates required standard provisions.
4. The signed original of all written agreements will be provided to ODIGH, which serves as the institution's central repository for global health programs for students.

#### B. Faculty-led Global Health Program Proposals

Steps for faculty members interested in establishing a faculty-led global health program, not necessarily in the following order, are:

1. Meet with ODIGH to discuss the procedures and guidelines for establishing such programs.

Items to consider:

- a) Location of the global health program site with reference to:
  - Previously established TTUHSC El Paso programs at the site; and
  - Sustainability of global health programs at the site with respect to other programs;
- b) Safety/security issues;
- c) Justification and uniqueness of the proposed site;
- d) Confirmation that courses to be taught are in the TTUHSC El Paso inventory and are approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to be taught off campus.

2. Complete a program proposal (Attachment A) and meet with ODIGH to discuss procedures that need to be followed, as referenced in this HSCEP OP.

3. Present to the GHC, addressing such issues as academic merit and use of faculty and other resources.

#### C. Other Programs

Other programs such as Reciprocal Exchange Programs, Affiliated Programs, Joint Degree Programs, and/or Consortium Programs may be added to this HSCEP OP in the future, as these programs become incorporated into TTUHSC El Paso's international activities.

#### IV. **Prior to Departure**

##### A. **Global Health Programs**

1. Students participating in TTUHSC El Paso global health programs are required to complete a pre-departure orientation through ODIGH. Students are solely responsible for making arrangements with ODIGH for the orientation.
2. A pre-departure orientation will include the following:
  - a) Completion of required emergency and liability forms;
  - b) Standardized information regarding international health/MEDEVAC insurance, personal safety, security awareness, emergency preparedness, export controls, and practical issues related to travel, packing, and obtaining currency;
  - c) Site specific information concerning required and recommended immunizations, suggested modes of in-country transportation, and cultural acclimation; and
  - d) Visa information.

Students must maintain good academic standing through the period during which travel will occur as determined by the dean of each school.

A follow-up consultation with ODIGH may be necessary to demonstrate proof of international health/MEDEVAC insurance and immunizations.

##### B. **Faculty-led Global Health Programs**

1. For faculty-led global health programs, the faculty member will have primary responsibility for publicizing the program and recruiting participants.
2. Faculty-led program administrators will be responsible for:
  - a) Screening applicants to ensure that all requirements and pre-requisites are met (e.g., minimum GPA requirements, non-existence of academic or other probation);
  - b) Providing students with site-specific information, including visa information, at program meetings before departure. Faculty are encouraged to conduct trip specific orientations beyond what ODIGH provides;
  - c) Providing ODIGH with a plan of evacuation should the site become unsafe for TTUHSC El Paso students. A decision to remove students from a site is made in conjunction with ODIGH and others, as provided under "Emergency Procedures."
3. For faculty-led global health programs, the faculty should direct students to

ODIGH for a pre-departure orientation, which will include:

- a) Document review;
- b) Standardized information on international health/MEDEVAC insurance, personal safety, security awareness, emergency preparedness, export controls, and practical issues related to travel, packing, and obtaining currency;
- c) Site specific information concerning required and recommended immunizations, suggested modes of in-country transportation, and cultural acclimation; visa information and
- d) Funding information such as availability of awards.

C. International Travel by Students

- 1. All students traveling abroad must abide by the guidelines set forth in TTUHSC El Paso OP 77.08, Student Travel Policy OP.
- 2. It is the responsibility of students to meet with a program coordinator or advisor before the start of the global health program to gain pre-approval for participation in the program abroad.
- 3. Restricted Regions
  - a) Travel to a restricted region is prohibited without prior written exemption and approval by the president of TTUHSC El Paso. Exemptions may be considered and granted on an individual basis when there is compelling justification.
  - b) The ODIGH maintains a list of restricted regions. The restricted regions list includes, but is not limited to:
    - Countries with a current U.S. Department of State Travel Warning, and
    - Countries with locations that have a travel risk rating of High or Extreme, whether or not there is a U.S. Department of State Travel Warning.
  - c) TTUHSC El Paso retains the right to withdraw travel approval and/or require return to the U.S. due to changes in conditions or circumstances.

No program participant can be required to travel to a restricted region.

V. **Funding**

Information about available funding, including guidelines for International Education Fee disbursement, is available through the ODIGH.

Funding for students participating in TTUHSC El Paso global health programs will not be released until students have:

- A. Met all program-specific qualifications;
- B. Met with a program coordinator or advisor in their degree program to receive approval of courses to be taken in the global health program;

- C. Maintained good academic standing through the period during which travel will occur as determined by the dean of each school;
- D. Committed to providing a presentation on their global health experience or completing a project related to global health activities;
- E. Completed and submitted all forms required by ODIGH; and
- F. Completed the ODIGH pre-departure orientation requirements.

VI. **Exit Survey**

Upon return from participation in a global health program, students will be required to complete an "exit survey" as administered by staff from ODIGH. An evaluation of the program to be completed by the students will be administered as part of the exit survey.

VII. **Emergency Procedures**

- A. The TTUHSC El Paso Planned Response to Emergencies Abroad (Attachment B) will be used to guide response by the home institution to emergencies facing global health programs.
- B. Policy on Canceling Programs in Progress
  - 1. ODIGH monitors State Department advisories and other safety information. When a State Department warning is issued advising U.S. citizens not to travel to a specific location, the SDODIGH and AVPSS will convene a meeting of the Assessment and Response Team (ART) to determine and implement an appropriate response.
  - 2. If ODIGH receives information from a contact or program administrator at the site reporting that the global health program site is dangerous for TTUHSC El Paso students, the SDODIGH and AVPSS will convene a meeting of the members of the ART to consider moving the program to an alternate site within the country or bringing the student(s) home.
  - 3. If a third party contacts ODIGH and expresses concern regarding information provided by the global health program participant or outside sources, the SDODIGH will contact the site program administrator to ascertain the facts of the situation.
- C. Suspension of a TTUHSC El Paso Global Health Program due to safety concerns before departure from the United States
  - 1. The decision to suspend a TTUHSC El Paso global health program should be considered carefully and will be made by members of the ART.
  - 2. If a faculty-led program does not have a sufficient number of participants to proceed, the decision of whether or not to suspend the program temporarily should be made by the appropriate dean.
  - 3. ODIGH closely monitors the most recent safety information available from the U.S. Department of State and other sources, including insurance providers for the program, and will be able to provide the most current information if concerns arise. A State Department warning or alert advising U.S. citizens to avoid travel to

a specific locale is a valid reason to cancel a program. If a question regarding whether or not to temporarily suspend or cancel a TTUHSC El Paso global health program due to issues of safety or security of TTUHSC El Paso students, the SDODIGH must be consulted.

- a) If no such warning exists, counterparts at the site should be contacted to determine if there is a compelling reason to cancel the program, and such information may form the basis for a decision.
- b) If a faculty leader decides that he/she does not want to take the students abroad for personal reasons, the school has an obligation to the participants of the program to find an alternate leader or to make every effort to accommodate the students in a comparable program.
- c) If a third party contacts ODIGH to voice concerns about issues related to the trip, the SDODIGH will contact the program administrator to seek first-hand information. This information will enable the ART to make a decision as to whether the program should be suspended or delayed.
- d) Temporary suspension or cancellation of a global health program may be made at the discretion of the SDODIGH and/or the GHC.

D. Members of ART

- 1. Senior Director and/or designee of the ODIGH
- 2. Chair or assigned representative from the GHC
- 3. Vice President for Outreach and Community Engagement
- 4. Assistant Vice President for Student Services
- 5. Dean(s) or designee(s) of the school(s) affiliated with program participant
- 6. Faculty member(s) onsite, when possible
- 7. Faculty mentor(s), when possible
- 8. Additional members at the discretion of the GHC