

International Group Winter Term Projects

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How are Trip Leaders chosen to lead an International Group Winter Term Project?

Continuing International Group Winter Term Projects are usually led by the same faculty, staff member, or student organization, from year to year. New projects are generally led by the individual who brought forward the proposal. The Office of Study Away encourages anyone who would like to lead an International Group Winter Term Project to contact the office to discuss their idea.

2. What kind of communication should parents expect regarding an International Group Winter Term Project?

Trip Leaders will be encouraged to send parents pre-departure materials that contain the group's itinerary and contact information while abroad. Students will be given various pieces of documentation at their pre-departure orientations, including a waiver, insurance information, and country-specific information. Students are expected to share course information with their parents.

3. How involved is Oberlin College in helping to plan an International Group Winter Term Project?

The Office of Study Away offers Trip Leaders various resources in order to assist them in planning their project. The office meets with Trip Leaders to discuss their project and offer assistance with regard to administrative matters. Typically a representative from the office attends a pre-departure meeting with the group to go over administrative details, and to provide a country specific orientation handout. The Trip Leader is responsible for planning the details of the trip. The project sponsor (an Oberlin College faculty or staff member) is responsible for making the sure the project meets Oberlin College standards, and for awarding Winter Term credit for the project.

4. What safety and security precautions are taken?

The Office of Study Away reviews conditions in the destination country and provides the group with basic safety and security information specific to their destination. The group is also encouraged to register their presence on the State Department website.

5. Under what circumstances might an international trip be cancelled?

While rare, there are several situations that might precipitate the need to cancel an International Group Winter Term Project. These include dangerous conditions in the destination country, budgetary infeasibility, and an unexpected inability of the Trip Leader to attend. For more information refer to the policy for Cancellation of International Group Winter Term Projects.

6. What if the Trip Leader can't go?

The impact of the need for a trip leader to step down will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. If this situation arises, the campus sponsor, group members, and Office of Study Away will discuss whether or not it is advisable for the trip to go forward.

7. What happens if the Trip Leader or a Participant becomes ill and needs medical attention?

Oberlin College participants are required to obtain high quality medical insurance while they are overseas. They should not hesitate to seek medical attention if it is needed. If a participant or the Trip Leader needs to be hospitalized, or is otherwise unable to continue to the trip, the Office of Study Away will evaluate the situation and determine whether it is possible for the trip to proceed. Under no circumstances will a group leave a disabled participant behind without arranging for a representative to oversee their care.

8. Are non-Oberlin College students permitted to go on the trip?

Winter Term Projects are presumed to be for-credit endeavors by Oberlin College students. While there might be an exceptional circumstance where a non-Oberlin student would join a group for all or part of a Winter Term project, this is generally discouraged.

9. What administrative requirements does Oberlin College have, and what are the consequences for failing to meet those requirements?

Oberlin College will require each student participating in a student or volunteer led International Winter Term project to do the following: sign a waiver, enroll in our international health insurance plan, or submit proof of a comparable plan; complete a Group Winter Term Abroad Information Sheet and provide a copy of their passport. In addition, the Trip Leader will be required to leave the office a copy of the group's final itinerary as well as an in-country contact number.

10. What if something happens in the country after the group is already there?

If conditions in the host country change such that the group's safety and security is in jeopardy, the Oberlin College will work with parents and all relevant officials to develop a plan that meets the needs of the situation.

11. What about countries under a US State Department Travel Warning?

US State Department Travel Warnings are considered as a possible cause for cancellation of a program. A determination of the program's status will be made in accordance with the policy for Cancellation of International Group Winter Term Projects.