October 6, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: Academic Faculty, Administration, and Staff

FROM: Joseph F. Sheley  
Provost

SUBJECT: Protocol for Faculty-Led Off Campus International Activities

A recent audit by the Chancellor’s Office noted that many Sacramento State faculty-led study abroad programs were in violation of relevant executive orders and approved campus procedures. This poses a direct threat to our accreditation, potentially compromises the safety of participating students, and creates major liability risks for the University. As much as we encourage greater exposure to international experiences on the part of our students and faculty, it is important that we engage in such activities in ways that minimize risk. With this in mind and following discussion with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, we have instituted protocols to assure compliance with policy and hopefully to enhance the safety and quality of international experiences for both students and faculty members.

Regular Session: International Internships and Field Trips

The administration of international internships and field trips is the responsibility of departments and faculty members in consultation with and approval from the Office of Academic Affairs. These off-campus activities require that various authorizations and signed liability waivers be obtained from participating students and that those records be retained for a specified period of time. In addition, departments/faculty members must provide students with detailed written instructions for such items as liability waivers, health/safety information, emergency procedures, and student codes of conduct during all approved international field trips. For more information, please see http://www.rms.csus.edu/riskmanagement/internationaltravel.html

Although there is currently no system-wide policy for international internships, the campus process requires departments to seek approval from the Office of Academic Affairs before signing off on an international internship opportunity for each student participant. Academic Affairs must ascertain compliance with all international student travel protocols, the nature and level of contact between the University and the placement entity abroad, and arrangements for supervision and evaluation of the internship experience.

Department chairs/faculty members must adhere strictly to the campus guidelines for the safe execution of all faculty-led international outbound activities before they are approved by the Department and Academic Affairs. For further information about appropriate CSU Board of Trustees Executive Orders, please see http://www.calstate.edu/OE/ and search for EO 745, EO 998, EO 1006, EO 1012, EO 1022, and EO 1041. Further information can be obtained at http://www.rms.csus.edu/riskmanagement/. For consultation and review of proposals for international internships and field trips, please contact Don Taylor in the Office of Academic Affairs (dtaylor@csus.edu ; 8-5933).
Special Session: Faculty-Led Short Term International Travel Programs

The Office of Academic Affairs is responsible for oversight of special as well as regular session international programming. Academic Affairs seeks to ensure that the programs are properly regulated and that risk management and risk assessment are performed prior to the start of any short-term group program abroad. With this in mind, faculty members must pursue one of the following options and should note policy regarding study-abroad programs through “Third Party Providers.”

Option 1, with Academic Credit: Contact the College of Continuing Education (CCE; primary contact person is Jill Matsueda). CCE is the primary unit on campus responsible for coordinating short-term, outbound study groups offered during special sessions. It is assumed that faculty members who choose this option normally will be offering regular course credit to students who participate in the study group. Please see: www.cce.csus.edu/programs/travelstudy.htm.

Option 2, with No Academic Credit: Contact the Office of Academic Affairs (primary contact person is Don Taylor: dtaylor@csus.edu) to obtain and sign various forms that release and hold the University harmless against liability and conflict of interest by all participants in and faculty members leading short-term, non-credit, outbound study groups during special sessions. This option relates to less formal outbound groups for which credit is not earned as a result of the outbound activity. Faculty members who pursue this option cannot offer credit to students participating in the program directly or through the awarding of credit in other current or future coursework based on their participation in the outbound study program in question.

Options 1 and 2 are the only options available by which faculty members may directly lead international travel study programs under the auspices of Sacramento State. Please note that faculty members using either option will be required to pre-plan the program of study and submit their proposals and appropriate documentation for approval at least six (6) weeks prior to departure.

Third Party Providers: Sacramento State employees can direct our students’ attention to “Third Party” study-abroad programs not affiliated with our University. However, in line with CSU EO 1022, absent a formal affiliation agreement between Sacramento State and a “Third Party” provider (including other universities), our employees may not promote or otherwise recruit Sacramento State students into such programs. Similarly, Sacramento State employees may contract for compensation or other benefit to lead or facilitate study-abroad programs for “Third Party” entities. However, in line with State law and CSU policies and absent a formal affiliation agreement between the University and the “Third Party” provider, these employees may not promote or otherwise recruit Sacramento State students into the program in question. For further information about use of “Third Party” study-abroad providers, please contact Don Taylor in the Office of Academic Affairs (dtaylor@csus.edu; 8-5933).

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

c. Lori Varlotta, Vice President, Student Affairs  
   Alice Tom, Dean, College of Continuing Education  
   Don Taylor, Director, Academic Programs & Global Engagement