



International Sustainable Development Studies Institute สถาบันการศึกษาการพัฒนาที่ยั่งยืนนานาชาติ

Expectations & Guidelines for Faculty-Led Programs at ISDSI

Faculty-led programs provide an opportunity for faculty members to explore and teach in the field while students benefit from a culturally-immersive academic experience. With more than twenty years of experience coordinating study abroad programs in Thailand, the International Sustainable Development Studies Institute (ISDSI) facilitates successful programs by establishing clear expectations and demonstrating a high level of communication and mutual trust. The following expectations, guidelines, and processes reflect ISDSI's extensive experience and best practices within the field of study abroad and are followed with the value of maintaining exceptional faculty partnerships and programs.

Program Development

ISDSI has long-standing relationships with local communities, organizations, and businesses in Chiang Mai, Thailand and neighboring villages. These local relationships are the backbone to developing faculty-led study abroad programs that are academically rigorous and meaningful to students, faculty, and our Thai partners. ISDSI approaches faculty-led programs as a collaborative effort to achieve the program's academic goals; however, there may be cultural, logistical, or safety reasons why a specific activity or site cannot be included in the program. If an activity or site location is considered inadvisable based on cultural, logistical, or safety reasons, ISDSI will suggest alternative options that meet the faculty member's academic goals and preserve the standard of excellence that reflects positively on the faculty partner, sending institution, and ISDSI.

Program Implementation: On Site in Thailand

Shared ISDSI/Faculty Expectations

As partners in the planning and implementation of the study abroad program, faculty and ISDSI staff share the following expectations:

- Follow all ISDSI, sending institution, and Thai laws/policies.
- Communicate regularly as a program leadership team to ensure clear expectations are understood.
- Develop and foster a well-functioning team of students by reinforcing positive group dynamics.
- Demonstrate care for students by being attentive to their overall wellbeing.
- Respect the ISDSI substance policy by abstaining from alcohol in the field, at official program events, or with students at any time.
- Understand and comply with all agreed budget limitations.
- Demonstrate flexibility and the ability to adapt.
- Follow all safety standards and risk management policies.
- Model culturally-appropriate behavior and follow all expectations as communicated in the ISDSI student handbook.
- Respect the ISDSI alcohol policy by never drinking alcohol with students or permitting students to drink alcohol at ISDSI events or activities. *As a risk management issue, alcohol is never served at ISDSI events or activities. Faculty and ISDSI staff alcohol consumption outside of ISDSI events is permitted if (1) allowed by the sending institution and (2) not in the company of students.*

Expectations of Faculty

Recognizing that the faculty member is the expert in their given field and has a unique relationship of trust and responsibility with the students, the following are expectations of program faculty:

- Assume the lead in managing discipline concerning academic issues.
- Serve as the primary instructor, including student assessment and assigning final course grades.

- Support the leadership of ISDSI staff in the field with regard to cultural standards of behavior, dress, and expectations.
- Seek clarification on any ISDSI policies and procedures when needed.
- Defer to ISDSI as the coordinator of all budgetary or schedule changes, whether prompted by unexpected outside changes with local partners or internal requests from faculty. Understand that changes requested by faculty partners might not be possible due to financial, logistical, or other limiting factors.

Expectations of ISDSI

Recognizing that ISDSI is the expert in the logistics, risk management, and cultural aspects of facilitating study abroad programs in Thailand, the following are expectations of ISDSI staff:

- Assume the lead in managing discipline concerning cultural and risk management issues.
- Manage the budget and finances.
- Educate, model, and enforce cultural behavior and expectations.
- Support the leadership of faculty partners regarding academic issues and sending institution policies.
- Respond to medical and mental health issues.
- Conduct risk management assessment prior to arrival and manage issues on site.
- Coordinate all program logistics, including booking hotels, guest houses, home stays, meals, and transportation.
- Arrange guest speakers and other activities, as discussed prior to arrival.
- Manage schedule changes, whether prompted by unexpected outside changes or internal requests from faculty, all contingent on budget and scheduling constraints.

Student Withdrawal / Dismissal Process

According to ISDSI policy, students may withdraw or be dismissed from a program for personal reasons, an inability to do the work required, issues regarding safety or behavior, or policies of the sending institution. The decision to dismiss a student is incredibly difficult and is not made without careful assessment of the severity of the situation. However the consequences of not dismissing a student from a program can lead to liability exposure, impact local communities, threaten ISDSI's continued ability to operate in Thailand, and risk the safety and success of the other students on the program. For these reasons, we take issues of safety and behavior very seriously. Please be familiar with the following guidelines for handling student withdrawal/dismissal:

- If a student voluntarily withdraws from the program for personal reasons, all parties will work together with the faculty leader, the sending institution, and ISDSI to make the process as smooth as possible.
- It is the responsibility of the faculty member and the sending institution to determine whether a student who voluntarily withdraws receives course credit.
- If a student is unable to complete the program academically and the faculty member decides that they should be withdrawn from the program, ISDSI will assist in supporting the faculty member and facilitating the withdrawal of the student.
- If a student causes significant behavioral or safety issues, endangers themselves or others, or places the program in jeopardy, ISDSI will work with the faculty partner and their institution to withdraw the student from the program. Any subsequent disciplinary consequences are the responsibility of the sending institution.
- Students who are withdrawn/dismissed will not be eligible for a refund from ISDSI. The sending institution may choose to refund the student at their discretion.