

Personal Conduct Code

AMERICAN COUNCILS STUDY & RESEARCH ABROAD

As a participant on an American Councils for International Education ("American Councils") program, I understand that the following may be cause for my immediate dismissal from the program, the loss of my academic credit, the revocation of my visa, and/or my early return to the United States:

1. As determined by American Councils, any behavior that significantly impairs the ability of one or more of my fellow students to participate in and benefit from the American Councils program;
2. As determined by American Councils, any behavior that significantly impairs the ability of the resident director, other American Councils staff, or host country instructors to meet their responsibilities to the group at large;
3. As determined by American Councils, any behavior that exposes me, other program participants, the resident director, other staff, instructors, host families or conversation partners to possible physical injury, assault, arrest or detainment;
4. As determined by American Councils, any behavior that impairs future relations between American Councils and host universities, families, conversation partners, other partner organizations, or U.S. government agencies;
5. Violation of U.S. law, host country law or host university rules;
6. Violation of visa regulations, or of program visa and travel policies;
7. Possession, manufacture, distribution or use of drugs, or my presence during drug-use by others;
8. Consumption of alcohol that might reasonably lead to physical injury, endangerment, arrest, or detainment;
9. Engaging in extra-curricular activities, such as independent research, teaching, volunteering, public speaking, giving or conducting interviews, missionary activities, etc., without prior approval from American Councils and the host university;
10. Becoming employed, with or without compensation, to perform any service in any capacity whatsoever for any private or governmental person, organization or agency of any kind, outside of an unpaid internship while on an American Councils program.
11. Destruction of property;
12. Violation of the American Councils program policies, including but not limited to the Personal Conduct Code, Attendance Policy, Academic Honor Code, Housing and Motor Vehicle Rental Policy, Independent Travel, and Language Policy;
13. Violation of agreements with American Councils, including but not limited to the Academic Purpose Pledge, Permission for Emergency Treatment, Release, and Duty to Inform as found in the acceptance materials;
14. Misrepresentation in materials submitted to American Councils, including but not limited to program application materials.

Attendance Policy

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Attendance at all classes is required by American Councils for International Education ("American Councils") and Bryn Mawr College.

Excused absences include only those due to observance of religious holidays and illness. In these cases, participants must notify their resident director or designated contact person as soon as it becomes evident that they will miss a class or an activity/excursion. In the case of illness, participants are required to contact their resident director or designated contact person on each day they will be absent. Participants who miss more than two days of class due to illness may be required to visit a physician. Participants who refuse to visit a physician after being requested to do so but continue to miss class will be considered absent without an excuse. Participants are also required to inform their resident director or designated contact person of tardiness as soon as it is clear that they will be late to class.

Unexcused absences are not permitted. After the first unexcused absence from a class, the participant in question will receive a written notice stating that they may not miss any further classes without a valid reason. Any additional unexcused absence will result in the lowering of all of the student's final semester grades by one half of one grade per unexcused absence (for example, from a B+ to a B). Repeated unexcused absences are grounds for dismissal from the program without reimbursement or academic credit.

Cases of habitual tardiness will also result in grade reductions as follows: If an instructor informs the resident director or designated contact person that a participant has been habitually late to their class, the participant will receive a written warning. If the instructor reports an additional instance of tardiness, all of the participant's final semester grades will be lowered by one half of one grade (for example, from a B+ to a B). Chronic tardiness is grounds for dismissal from the program without reimbursement or academic credit.

Attendance at weekly group meetings is also mandatory. Participants who miss a group meeting without an excuse will receive a written warning. Any further failure to attend a group meeting without an excuse will result in the lowering of all of the student's final semester grades by one half of one grade per unexcused absence. Repeated failure to attend group meetings is grounds for dismissal from the program without reimbursement or academic credit.

The number of excused and unexcused absences cannot exceed five days of class or program activities in total for a summer program or 10 days of class or program activities in total for a semester program. If a participant misses more than five days in summer or 10 days during a semester, they will not meet the attendance requirements for receiving academic credit and may be required to withdraw.

Academic Honor Code

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Program participants are expected to approach their academic work with dedication and integrity, understanding that they are responsible for enhancing their own learning through personal effort. Participants agree to be fully prepared for each class session.

The following behaviors are prohibited:

Plagiarism: Submitting material that in part or whole is not entirely one's own work without attributing those same portions to their correct source.

Cheating: Using unauthorized notes, study aids, or information on an examination; altering a graded work after it has been returned, then submitting the work for reevaluation; allowing another person to do one's work and submitting that work under one's own name; submitting identical or similar papers for credit in more than one course without prior permission from the course instructors. Persons who assist cheating by sharing their work are also guilty of cheating.

Obtaining an unfair advantage: (a) stealing, reproducing, circulating, or otherwise gaining access to examination materials prior to the time authorized by the instructor; (b) stealing, destroying, defacing, or concealing library materials with the purpose of depriving others of their use; (c) unauthorized collaboration on an academic assignment; (d) retaining, possessing, using, or circulating previously given examination materials, where those materials clearly indicate that they are to be returned to the instructor at the conclusion of the examination; (e) intentionally obstructing or interfering with another participant's academic work; or (f) otherwise undertaking activity with the purpose of creating or obtaining an unfair academic advantage over other participants' academic work.

Fabrication: Falsifying or inventing any information, data, or citation; presenting data that were not gathered in accordance with standard guidelines defining the appropriate methods for collecting or generating data and failing to include an accurate account of the method by which the data were gathered or collected.

Falsification of record and official documents: Altering documents affecting academic records; forging signatures of authorization or falsifying information on an official academic document.

Unauthorized access to computerized academic or administrative records or systems: Viewing or altering computer records, modifying computer programs or systems, releasing or dispensing information gained via unauthorized access, or interfering with the use or availability of computer systems or information.

Language Policy

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Improving your target language proficiency should be one of your main goals while abroad, and we expect you to use your target language as much as possible. In addition, it is the policy of the American Councils for International Education (“American Councils”) language programs that English may not be spoken:

- In classes;
- On the grounds of the university, including hallways and the cafeteria (if applicable);
- On the grounds of the American Councils field office (if applicable);
- At home with host families;
- When speaking with university or program staff, officials, and teachers;
- While on group excursions and trips.

Using English in these instances is discourteous to those around you as well as contrary to the objectives of the academic program in which you are participating.

If the host institution staff or American Councils staff hears you speaking English in one of the above situations, you will receive a verbal warning. If you violate the policy again, you will be issued a written warning. If you continue to violate the language policy after receipt of a written warning, all of your final semester grades will be lowered by one half of one grade for each offense [for example, from an ‘A-’ to a ‘B+’ or from a ‘B+’ to a ‘B’.] Further violations of the language policy may result in dismissal from the program and the loss of all academic credit for the program.

Note: In case of emergency or if you need to discuss a serious personal issue with staff, you are temporarily excused from the language agreement.

Testing Consent

AMERICAN COUNCILS STUDY & RESEARCH ABROAD

As part of your participation on an American Councils for International Education (“American Councils”) study abroad program, you will be required to complete a series of tests and recorded interviews in advance of the program and at the end of your program. The data collected during this process provide a means for assessing language proficiency, the quality of the program, as well as research on cultural competency gains and language acquisition.

American Councils protects the privacy and confidentiality of its participants and respondents, maintains the confidentiality of the data collected, and safeguards all processes and procedures against the unauthorized release of data that may be linked to any particular individual. Any analysis of the data for research purposes will be presented only in aggregate form, stripped of all names or other identifying information.

Any data files with respondent names or other identifying information will be accessed only by authorized personnel and will be used only for the purpose for which they were intended. Data will be used for assessment, evaluation, administration and research purposes only.

Participants may request the results of their pre- and post-program tests by contacting the AC Study & Research Abroad office at American Councils: outbound@americancouncils.org.

If you have any questions about this consent form, please feel free to contact Vladka Shikova, Senior Program Manager, by phone (202) 833-7522 or by email: shikova@americancouncils.org.

Independent Travel Policy

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I understand that American Councils for International Education ("American Councils") and my host university must review my plans to travel outside the host city in advance.

I understand that independent travel outside of the host country may not be permitted.

I will therefore discuss with my resident director or designated contact person my intentions to travel independently at least seven days before any planned trip. As part of that discussion, I will provide a detailed itinerary for my proposed trip. I will also provide complete contact information for my trip at that time. I understand that it is my responsibility alone to arrange all necessary documents, transportation tickets, accommodations, and registrations for my trip.

I understand that I should not purchase tickets or pay for accommodations until my independent travel plan has been approved.

I understand that my independent travel plans may not disrupt the American Councils academic program or violate the attendance policy and therefore, I cannot miss class as part of my travel plans.

I understand that I must return to my host city by 8:00 pm at least one night before my next class day. That is, if I have class on Monday, I must return to my host city by 8:00 pm on Sunday evening at the latest.

I understand that at least a two-week interval is required between trips and therefore, I cannot travel two consecutive weekends.

I understand that independent travel is not permitted during the last weekend of the program.

I certify that I will not travel to areas deemed unsafe or off limits by the US Embassy, the host country government, the host university, or American Councils; or violate the terms of the visa issued to me. I understand that the terms of my visa may not allow me to travel outside the host country during the program and that I must leave the host country on the end date of the program.

I understand that American Councils assumes no responsibility or liability, in whole or in part, for any problems related or arising from student independent travel such as lost or misplaced belongings, lost passport, personal travel expenses, unforeseen changes in travel itinerary, missed classes, accident or illness, delays, or other circumstances.

I understand that I may be dismissed from the American Councils study abroad program if I violate these terms.

Housing and Motor Vehicle Rental Policy

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Housing

American Councils provides participants with a host family placement for the duration of the program. Participants are expected to live with their host family while in the host city.

Renting Property (Is Not Permitted)

Renting property in the host country puts participants at risk (i.e. visa, permit, or registration violations) and may lead to unanticipated legal issues with potentially serious implications for both participants and American Councils for International Education ("American Councils"). Further, neither American Councils nor the host institution is able to intervene on a participant's behalf in legal disputes, arrests, or detainments related to independent rental of property.

Therefore, American Councils does not permit program participants to rent property for weekend, short-term or daily use, in order to safeguard participants' health and safety, to ensure participants' legal status in their host country, and to protect American Councils and its partners as the program's organizers and visa sponsors. Again, participants may not stay in short-term property rentals, including but not limited to online hospitality services (e.g., VRBO or AirBnB) or private house rentals. Participants who rent property independently may be immediately dismissed from their American Councils program without reimbursement and lose all academic credit for the program.

Motor Vehicles

Participants may not rent any motor vehicles, including but not limited to cars, scooters, and motorized bikes.

Assumption Of Responsibility or Liability

American Councils assumes no responsibility or liability, in whole or in part, for any problems related to or arising from violations of this policy. Participants who violate this policy agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless American Councils and its employees, agents, officers, trustees, and representatives in their official and individual capacities from any and all liability, loss, damage, or expense, including attorney fees, that may result.

Host Family Contract

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As a participant in the American Councils for International Education Host Family Program, I understand that to be a productive member of my family and to gain the maximum amount from my experience I should:

- Respect the members of my family; accept their customs, diets, and schedules; and recognize that they are not expected to alter their lives to accommodate me;
- Have realistic expectations about what my family can do for me;
- Recognize the effort that my family puts forth in hosting me;
- with family chores;
- Inform my family if I will not be coming home for a meal or if I will be coming home later than usual;
- Be prepared to do my own laundry; if my host family insists on doing this, recognize that they are doing so out of kindness, not obligation;
- Understand that internet may not be available in the home, or that I may not be permitted to use it;
- Understand that my family is being compensated in order to provide two meals a day, but other expenses are my responsibility;
- Check with my host before inviting guests over to visit.

I also understand that I may be removed from the program if I:

- Engage in rude, inconsiderate, abusive or offensive behavior with my hosts;
- Invite group members, friends or relatives to stay overnight in my hosts' residence;
- Fail to abide by the rules of the host family with which I have been placed.