



Best Practices for International Group Travel

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Presentation Outline

International Group Travel: Operations; The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly at:

Gonzaga University

Ohio State University

STA Travel Best Practices

GONZAGA
UNIVERSITY

International Travel Faculty Led Study Abroad

→ Controller's Office →



FACULTY LED STUDY ABROAD

- › Gonzaga Study Abroad Office facilitates the process for initiating exploratory study abroad opportunities
- › Application for programs must be made in May for consideration

FACULTY LED STUDY ABROAD



- › Decisions are made in December for programs to take place in Spring
- › 99 applications received in 2016 – number is expected to increase, and is part of the Gonzaga Strategic Plan
- › Programs are subject to cancellation if not enough student interest
- › Training by Study Abroad Office and University Risk Manager are required prior to travel

GROUP TRAVEL AT GONZAGA

- › Center for Community Action and Service Learning
- › Service learning travel – partnered with a regional organization
- › Ecuador 2017
- › Students required to attend 6-7 pre-trip meetings as well as post trip meeting
- › 10-30 participants
- › Academic Opportunity
- › Gifts and grants allowing student travel for international research

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- › **Study Abroad Office** approves and assists with international travel for the academic area
- › **The Travel and Expense Office** works to support *all* travelers – both domestic and Study Abroad
 - › Experts in group travel options and expectations
 - › Airline requirements – name changes, etc.
 - › All travel booked through TMC or Concur



GONZAGA “CHALLENGES”

- › Division of Responsibilities and Working Together
 - › Where does Risk Management end, and Travel Risk Duty of Care begin
 - › Travel Office has automated state of the art tools
 - › TMC providing Travel Risk tools also
 - › Study Abroad Office uses Terra Dotta – *not so state of the art*
 - › These are actually great problems to have, we just need to iron out details
 - › Cabinet has approved the formation of the “Travel Risk Management” Advisory Board who will start meeting in early Spring 2017
 - › Newly formed Zags Travel & Expense Office
 - › 2016 hired one FTE to support travel – will this be enough?
 - › 2016-2017 – On Boarding academic division to our TMC and Concur
 - › Change management difficult in higher education

GONZAGA
UNIVERSITY

International Travel Faculty Led Study Abroad

Controller's Office



Office of International Affairs

- The Office of International Affairs facilitates international opportunities for students and faculty
- Education abroad is housed within International Affairs
- Support services include program advising, pre-departure orientations and health and safety information



Eiffel Tower
Paris, France

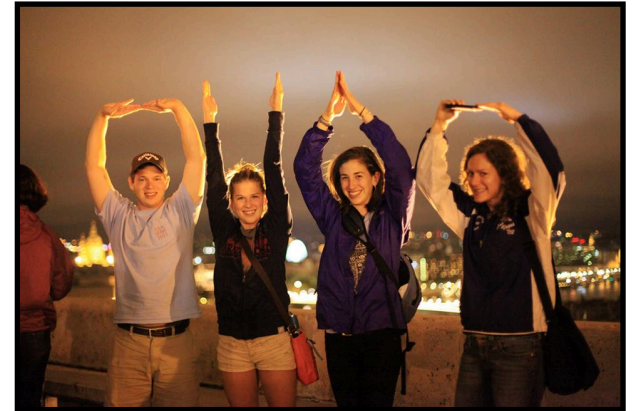
Group Travel at Ohio State

- OIA Faculty Led Programs
 - For graded Ohio State Credit
 - Created by an academic Unit but managed by OIA
- Buck-I-Serv
 - Non-credit bearing service programs
 - Created and managed by Office of Student Life
- Recreational Sports Adventure Trips
 - Recreation and Physical Activity Center

Education Abroad at Ohio State

OIA Faculty-led Programs

- Approximately 1,441 students traveled on a Faculty Led Program in 2015-16
- 99 programs slated for 2016-17
- Group sizes range from 10 to 100 students



O-H-I-O Cheer
Hungary

Education Abroad at Ohio State

Planning Faculty – Led Programs

- University designated travel agent
- In-country provider via RFP or host institution
- Resident Director arranged activities or transportation



Ecuador

Education Abroad at Ohio State

Timeline

- Group airfare or in-country services 10 months prior to travel
- Budget 9 months prior to travel
- Student application deadline 4 months prior to travel



O-H-I-O Cheer
India

Education Abroad at Ohio State

Ohio State's Good

- Centralized Education Abroad Office
- International Risk Manager
- University travel agency
- Common application system (OIA programs)
- Pcards for Resident Directors



Costa Rica

Education Abroad at Ohio State

Ohio State's Bad

- Group flights out of CMH
- Common university systems for international transactions and planning
- International student travel on group programs



Denmark

Education Abroad at Ohio State

Ohio State's Ugly

- Guests and family members traveling on faculty-led programs

STA Travel Overview

Largest student and youth comprehensive travel agency (however, STA is a full service travel agency and can provide services to anyone)

STA operates as a one-stop-shop for all travel needs, offering more than 35 years of industry experience

Our world-class travel partners allow us to offer exclusive, flexible low-cost air fares to our customers

Moving more than 2 million passengers a year, with over 200 branches across the globe, our knowledgeable team provides USA based 24/7/365 service for all travel needs and emergencies

STA provides logistical support for the following:

- Airfare (groups and individuals)
- Land products: accommodations (hotels, hostels, etc.)
- Rail and train passes
- Tours
- Renting classroom space, renting vehicles, etc.
- International health and travel insurance (24/7/365 service)
- Risk management
- Comprehensive reporting

STA Best Practices

Group Travel/Airfare Rule:

- STA can book out 330 days in advance of a program departure
- Recommend starting the process at least 6-9 months ahead of time as airline rules can change and this is typically when the best rates are found
- Booking a group flight allows all travelers to lock in the same fare and itinerary, and airlines are more accommodating if there is a deviation required, canceled flight, etc.
- For STA, at 90 days prior to departure, need to know number of students. Once a group is booked, we can drop seats free of charge (as long as the group size remains above the minimum of 10) prior to the 90 day mark
- Names and final payment typically not due until 35-45 days ahead of time (affords great flexibility). After final payment seats are generally nonrefundable, and a limited number of name changes may be allowed by the airline to account for any last minute group changes
- These are general rules, if a group needs greater flexibility we can seek out those particular needs with specific airline partners

STA Best Practices

Location:

- Choosing the destination is a nuanced and often challenging process, considering:
 - Cost, Culture, Accessibility, Safety/Risk Management Issues, Compliance with University Policy, Sustainability, ADA Compliance, etc.

Trip resources:

- STA has a wealth of resources for trip planning. From destination specific brochures, both digitally, and in print, to personal experience from our well-travelled staff. STA also offers through the ISIC card, destination specific discounts, 24/7 concierges service, and basic travelers insurance

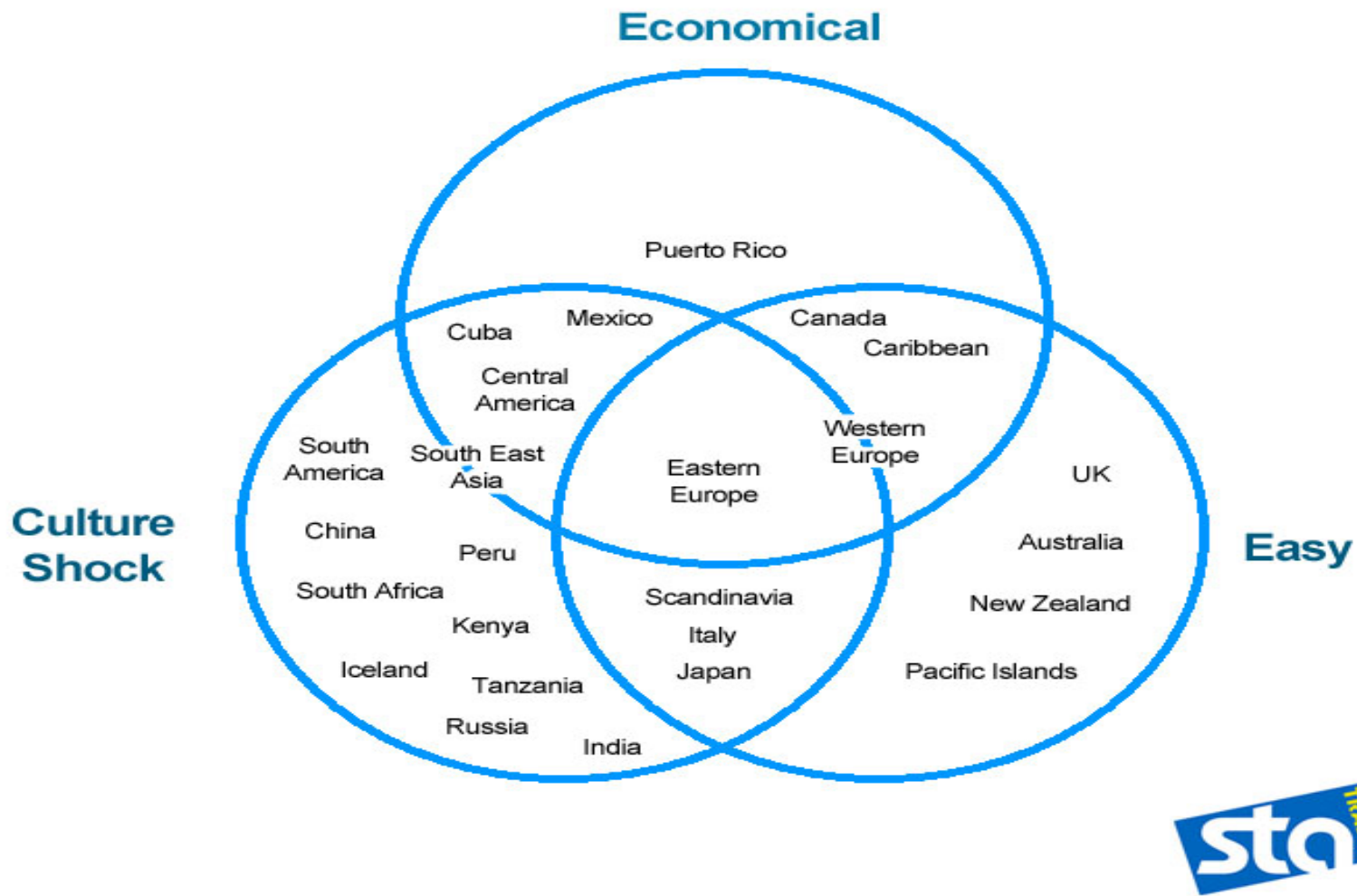
Negotiating Hotel Rates:

- You should work with someone with proven experience and global contacts who can compare/contrast multiple hotels based on group needs. E.G.: Is a particular location absolutely necessary or can we move outside of the downtown tourist area to save on finances?
- Most hotels are willing to negotiate a group rate/discount (discounts based off of time of year, number of rooms, number of people per room, availability, etc.)

STA Best Practices

- **How to make the trip a success for students-** The key to a successful trip is providing the students a culturally enriching destination while educating through hands on, real world, experience. The travel aspect should be well planned, by an expert in student travel, and well thought out to maximize the time the students have abroad and reduce travel days, in addition to the management of expectations pre-departure.
- **Post travel necessities-** A post travel survey to collect feedback on everything from the course work to the lodging is recommended. We should strive to make every trip more educational, efficient, and enriching than the past. The three E's of study abroad travel.
- **Payment methods-** STA travel offers a wide variety of payment methods. For universities we are able to accept check, wire, or credit card (with no additional credit card fee). STA can split the cost between the student and the university. For example, we can set a designated amount the university will pay for per ticket and collect the rest from the student traveler. For individual payments STA Accepts all major credit cards and is able to offer convenient online solutions for all payments.

Destination Decisions 101



Questions for the Audience

What challenges have you all incurred with faculty-led and group travel?

What are your barriers to successfully supporting faculty? What is the institutional support you receive for FL groups and programming?

Key differences between faculty-led group travel vs. corporate group travel, vs. athletic group travel, vs. student group travel?

What approaches have you found successful?

What are some of your best practices?

Additional Audience Questions....

THANK YOU!