

## Visiting Professor Program: A Guide for Study Abroad Staff



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### VISITING PROFESSOR (VP) PROGRAM DEFINED

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Professors from USAC Affiliate Universities have the unique opportunity to help internationalize their home universities and support the USAC mission by teaching abroad on summer, or semester Specialty Programs. USAC provides dedicated support (Sabrina Harris & Rochelle Seymour, [VisitingProfessors@usac.edu](mailto:VisitingProfessors@usac.edu)) for your faculty who will assist with the application process and all pre-departure advising. Once on-site, Visiting Professors (VPs) become part of the USAC office abroad. This document provides an overview of the VP program to help Study Abroad staff at USAC Affiliate Universities guide faculty interested in teaching abroad with USAC.

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### BENEFITS TO THE VP AND HOME UNIVERSITY

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Visiting Professors experience USAC firsthand and have the ability to expand their own repertoire by giving them the chance to teach abroad, to create new areas of teaching and research with an international dimension, to strengthen links with international colleagues, and to expand their own knowledge of the world. Most returning VPs comment that teaching abroad was one of their most rewarding professional experiences, and many apply to teach abroad again.

The VP program can also directly benefit your institution because faculty selected to teach abroad will become more involved in promoting study abroad on your campus; and they will become more familiar with your office and processes, which will enable them to better advise their own students considering study abroad. Ideally, they will become ambassadors and, if they are not already, advocates for study abroad.

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### VP PROGRAM VS. FACULTY-LED PROGRAMS

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As you speak with interested faculty, it may be useful to explain how teaching abroad with USAC may be similar and different from organizing a faculty-led program abroad. Teaching abroad through USAC is one step closer to what it is like to teach on their home campus. VPs are not travel agent, tour-director, camp counselor, coach, and psychotherapist all rolled into one with everything on their shoulders; rather they are a part of the USAC community abroad, with access to resources and support from on-site staff.

VPs do not need to worry about the overall logistics of the program as our on-site staff will handle details for both students and faculty, including arranging housing accommodations, the on-site orientation, field trips, and handling any emergency situation that may arise. In addition, VPs have the advantage of drawing students from across the US, internationally, and in some cases even locally, for their courses through USAC's general marketing efforts. They do not have to rely on meeting enrollment quotas from their home university alone. This should also make everything easier on your end, as you will be able to refer your VPs directly back to USAC for most questions and requests.

The following quote from one of our returning VPs reflects this well: "Compared to faculty-led study abroad programs, I really value the support and accommodation given to USAC VPs."

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## **VP APPLICATION CYCLE**

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Each fall semester, USAC releases the new VP application for positions two years in advance. For example, the application available in the fall of 2018 is for positions in summer 2020, fall 2020, and spring 2021. You have the choice between utilizing either the general USAC version of the application, or the customizable version where you may insert your own logo, directions to submit applications to you, etc. Some Affiliate Universities prefer to prescreen and/or review applications before submitting them to USAC while others have faculty apply directly to USAC. The choice is yours – either way, USAC will inform you of who applied, share applications, and seek your approval of each candidate, as well as inquire about any additional feedback you wish to provide prior to the selection. If you would like to connect with Study Abroad staff from other USAC Affiliate Universities who pre-screen or interview their candidates, please contact us.

Applications are due to USAC in December with the selection held in the spring. The USAC Board of Directors, along with input from the USAC President/CEO and Resident Directors, review and select candidates. Your office will be notified of selected faculty and their precise teaching assignments within a few weeks following the selection.

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## **VP QUALIFICATIONS**

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Candidates must be full-time faculty members in good standing at a USAC Affiliate University who will be on campus prior to teaching abroad (so that they can promote their USAC course(s) and return to their home university following their term abroad. The minimum credentials for faculty on our Specialty programs is a master's degree and many faculty have a PhD. Applicants should possess student evaluations that reflect superior teaching abilities, and a willingness to publicize their course at their home university. Further details on other key qualifications can be found in the VP application.

The application also contains details of which disciplines are most desired for which program locations, allowing your faculty to craft course proposals in line with the overall academic program(s) they are applying for. There is of course flexibility in what kinds of classes the Selection Committee may accept, and we recommend that interested faculty reach out to us with draft proposals to seek initial feedback and guidance prior to submitting their official application.

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## **PROMOTION OF VP COURSES**

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One of the reasons that the VP selection takes place so far in advance is that it allows us to include each VP's course(s) and a brief biography in our print catalog. We also highlight their courses on the USAC website and create a special course flyer for their and your use. You can find them by looking up the specific VP or by visiting the Resources Section in USAC Global. Please contact us if you would like to receive editable versions of the flyers to customize them for your campus, or if you would like us to mail you color copies.

USAC is committed to advertising the courses offered by VPs, but we ask that VPs also take ownership and initiative for promoting their own courses. We will work with each VP to provide ideas on how to spread the word about their upcoming teaching engagement and courses to their students and colleagues, and encourage them to reach out to you to participate in or organize any events such as study abroad fairs, info sessions, etc. We ask that you please include them in any plans you may have and draw on them to participate both prior to departure and after their return. The USAC Central Office also sends emails to students from your university who have previously inquired with us to highlight your VPs and their courses.

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## GENERAL TERMS OF THE VP PROGRAM

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### Teaching Load:

Professors teach one course during summer sessions and two courses during semester programs. Courses should be related to the program site/region/country, or specific academic area (please see the USAC Visiting Professor application for a complete list of countries and course subjects).

### Course Confirmation:

VPs need to have at least five students enrolled in their classes by around the student application deadline of their program in order for their course(s), and therefore their participation, to be confirmed. Your office will be copied on the confirmation emails, and faculty are only allowed to make travel reservations once their courses are confirmed. USAC will provide them with regular enrollment updates.

### Compensation:

Summer VPs are paid directly by USAC based on the program length and number of credits they teach while abroad. Details on the stipend amounts are listed in the VP application. Their transportation costs are also reimbursed directly by USAC to the professor.

There are three options for structuring a Semester Visiting Professorship:

- **Faculty Exchange:** We encourage the Visiting Professor's department to consider replacement faculty from one of our host universities abroad to fill the Visiting Professor's position while teaching abroad for USAC. In the event of an exchange, the exchange professor would teach two courses in the Visiting Professor's department for a salary of \$11,000 paid by USAC, and the Visiting Professor's department would receive \$1,000 from USAC to minimize administrative burdens such as visa processing and assistance in locating housing. The home department will inform USAC of the desired characteristics of the exchange professor and USAC will solicit applications based on these preferences. The home department will review applications and will select the candidate of their choosing. The USAC Visiting Professor will receive his/her regular salary, benefits, and status from the Home University during his/her semester abroad, according to the policies and procedures of the Home University. USAC will need to be invoiced for the \$11,000 exchange professor salary and the \$1,000 reimbursement to the department by either your office or the VP's department as we cannot issue checks to individual semester faculty.
- **Departmental Reimbursement:** Visiting Professors will receive their regular salary, benefits, and status from the Home University during their semester abroad (according to the policies and procedures of the Home University), and will not be paid directly by USAC. Instead, their home department will receive \$11,000 to help defray replacement expenses for the semester of the Visiting Professor's participation abroad. USAC will need to be invoiced for the replacement costs by either your office or the VP's department as we cannot issue checks to individual semester faculty.
- **Direct payment by USAC:** Visiting Professors who will not be under contractual obligation with their home university during their semester abroad can be hired and paid the \$11,000 directly by USAC for teaching the two USAC courses.

The professor applying to teach abroad as well as his/her Department Chair or Dean will select which option best fits their needs.

**Travel Expenses:**

USAC pays for round-trip airfare based on the group flight price, as well as reasonable approved ground transportation to/from the airport. Detailed travel policies are listed in the VP Travel Policy document in their USAC Gateway account. Procedures differ for summer vs. semester VPs.

Summer VPs, as well as semester VPs who are paid directly by USAC, can either book through Frosch Student Travel, the travel agency USAC partners with for student group flights, and ask them to invoice USAC directly, or they may make their own reservations and get reimbursed through USAC after their travel is complete.

Semester faculty who are not hired directly by USAC will need to pay for their airfare unless your office or their department are willing to pay on their behalf. USAC will need to be invoiced for their airfare by either your office or the VP's department as we cannot issue checks to them individually.

**Visa:**

It is the Visiting Professor's responsibility to verify which visa may be required, and to obtain, if necessary, the proper visa. USAC will provide supporting documents (when possible) and reimburse the Visiting Professor for the actual cost of the visa, associated mailing costs, and the cost of a visa service where applicable. If USAC offers a group submission process for the visa application for your jurisdiction, the Visiting Professor is required to submit your application through the group submission. If a personal appearance is required and no USAC group visa submission is offered, USAC will reimburse the Visiting Professor for one-half the cost of reasonable travel expenses related to obtaining the visa. The Visiting Professor must seek prior approval for travel related to obtaining a visa to ensure reimbursement.

**Housing:**

USAC provides assistance in locating housing abroad, but VPs are responsible for rent and utilities. A housing information document and a housing form will be provided for each VP. While exact prices cannot be established until closer to departure, we can share pricing for previous years with you at any time.

**Health Insurance:**

VPs are not able to be covered under CISI insurance through USAC as they only cover students under our group policy. It is their responsibility to ensure the extent of their coverage through their home university or take out additional insurance as needed.

**VPs taking USAC courses abroad:**

VPs may enroll in most USAC courses at no cost. Any optional/additional expenses for participating in optional tours or courses with additional fees, etc., will be paid by the VP.

**Companions:**

VPs may bring their families with them, but they should plan well ahead to determine if it will be feasible for them to do so. Qualified dependents and companions of faculty are eligible to take USAC courses at discounted rates. VPs are provided with a Companion form via their Gateway account, which details the policies regarding bringing family members along on the program. Note that USAC's ability to provide assistance with visas for companions is very limited.

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## EXPECTATIONS OF VPs

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- Upon selection into the Visiting Professor program, your participation is still contingent upon student enrollments. USAC courses will only be confirmed if at least five students are enrolled in each Visiting Professor course by around the student application deadline.
- It is expected that Visiting Professors attend and participate in the on-site orientation. Be prepared to introduce yourself and your course (this is your last opportunity to recruit additional students). It is also expected that you share your own international experience (if applicable), your motivations/goals for going abroad, how it affects/ties in with your research, course development, etc.
- While on site, they are expected to become a part of the program and/or host community. They should give thought to how they could contribute to the campus or local community through activities such as giving a presentation to local faculty or the general public, tying in their work with local events, organizing a workshop, etc. There is a lot of room for their own ideas here. Please be aware that, depending on the location, host university campuses may not have as many local faculty members present during the summer/winter months.
- Upon return, Visiting Professors will complete at least one project to help internationalize their home campus. These projects may include but are not limited to presenting research, writing testimonials or newsletter articles, or giving presentations to faculty or students.
- Visiting Professors are expected to actively participate in informing their students about their program and course in order to ensure sufficient enrollment.

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## VP RESOURCES

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The Resources section of your USAC Global account contains documents related to the three most recent years of VPs – you will find the application forms, syllabi for all VPs, and their individual course flyers. Since VPs receive USAC Gateway accounts just like the students, you can look them up and see any of the materials they have access to, including the VP Handbook, VP Travel Procedures document, VP Passport & Visa Guidelines, and more, as they become available.

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## VP PROGRAM CONTACT

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Sabrina Harris and Rochelle Seymour are the USAC Central Office dedicated contacts for you and your faculty for any questions or requests involving the USAC Visiting Professor program. Feel free to contact us with any questions or requests at [VisitingProfessors@usac.edu](mailto:VisitingProfessors@usac.edu) or 775-682-5853.