

For Immediate Release
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Ferris Study Abroad Office has top safety program

BIG RAPIDS – The Study Abroad Office at Ferris State University has received a \$1,500 award after submitting a winning entry for its program to prepare students for emergencies they might encounter while studying abroad.

The recognition came from the Michigan Universities Self-Insurance Corporation (MUSIC) which had sponsored a safety incentive program for the 15 Michigan public universities, according to Debbie Carley, Ferris study abroad coordinator. The safety initiatives were to be student-focused efforts by faculty and staff directed toward student safety and security in an international destination.

Some of the points Carley highlighted about the Ferris program were student advising, a pre-departure orientation session, on-site orientation and insurance, and the benefits of this preparation to the students, faculty and university. Her efforts enabled Ferris to split the total award of \$3,000 with Eastern Michigan University. Carley said the funds would be used to enhance the program.

While education abroad programming for U.S. students dates back more than 60 years, its period of greatest growth encompasses the last few decades, said Carley. In 1997 the Interorganizational Task Force on Safety and Responsibility in Study Abroad was formed by the Council on International Educational Exchange, the Association of International Education Administrators, and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators.

Ferris began its centralized study abroad process after Carley became the program coordinator in 1998, and safety initiatives have since been a major focus of her work. She noted that the policies and procedures developed serve to protect the University and the students and faculty, while maintaining the academic integrity of Ferris' study abroad programs. They are in keeping with the best professional practices in the study abroad field, she said.

More information on the Ferris Study Abroad program can be obtained by contacting Carley at 591-3921, or by emailing at carleyd@ferris.edu.