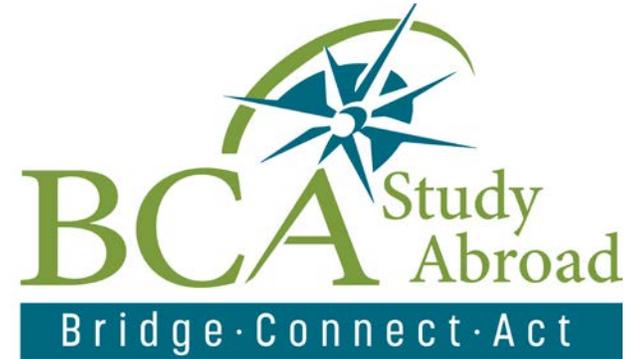


# A Best-Case, Worst-Case Scenario

*Partnering with Study Abroad  
Providers, Insurance Companies and  
Campus Offices During Crisis*



# Goals for Presentation

- Examine Case Study: BCA Xalapa Program
- Understand goals and strategies for each type of organization (provider, insurer, college)
  - How do these goals overlap or conflict?
- Outline relevant information for guiding response
- Explore student and community needs during crisis response
- Identify best practice in emergency response

# BCA Study Abroad

Since 1962, BCA Study Abroad has been committed to helping students understand the complexities of the contemporary world by providing quality academic programs and cross-cultural learning in locations around the globe.

From its start, BCA has focused its educational mission on engaging students with local people and the issues that impact their lives. As a result, students who participate in a BCA program gain a more comprehensive understanding of the world.



# Cultural Insurance Services International

- Founded in 1992, Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI) has offered comprehensive insurance coverage to the international education market for over two decades. We provide insurance coverage, travel/technical/medical/security assistance, and claim paying services to more than 150,000 international students and cultural exchange participants worldwide.
- CISI strives to provide exceptional customer service and insurance plans designed specifically for students and cultural exchange participants.
- Partners with AXA Assistance for Medical, Travel, and Technical Assistance
- Partners with i-Jet for Security Assistance



# Elizabethtown College

- Small, four-year, private, liberal arts college
- Located in central Pennsylvania
- 1,600 undergraduate students
- Approximately 10% of students study abroad
- Study Abroad Office
  - Traditional Study Abroad
    - Dean of Academic Achievement
    - Study Abroad Advisor
  - Faculty-Led Study Abroad
    - Center for Global Understanding and Peacemaking Director and Program Manager



Elizabethtown College

# Wednesday, September 13

## 1:20 am

Today Wednesday, September 13, 2017, there was a serious spike in violence here within the city of Xalapa, and right downtown. I was at the University's Mexican Festival, celebrating Mexico's Independence Day, when a student showed me a text message from a friend, telling her that three bagged decapitated bodies had just been left on the street in front of a small park, on the other side of which the student's host family's house. I have now verified in the official press that this was indeed the case.

Moreover, on this same day there was a killing on one of the main streets of the city, and another non-fatal shooting a few blocks away.

This is a level of violence that Xalapa has simply not seen before, especially in the center of the city. This changes the panorama of the city, and we need to think of what actions need to be taken in both short and long term.

# Participant Poll

Q1: Who are the stakeholders?

Q2: What are your top priorities?

# BCA Goals

- **Ensure student safety**
  - Resource: RD
  - Steps taken: Notify all students immediately; Student curfew/curtailed activities; Group meeting to discuss events and safety strategies;
- Communicate with US-based stakeholders
  - Resource: central office, parents/guardians, study abroad offices
- Understand broader safety situation
  - Resource: RD, CISI, University Partner, US Embassy
  - Steps taken: Meet with local officials, contact US Embassy; Central Office engage with CISI
- Explore programming options & opportunities to “salvage” credit
  - Resource: Other BCA RDs, RD, University Partners
- **Support students throughout emergency (think about social, emotional & psychological needs)**
- **Understand impact of program suspension on community partners**

# CISI Goals

- **Address Program and Participant Safety Concerns / Ensure Participants' Safety**
  - Resources: BCA, i-Jet, and AXA Assistance
  - Steps Taken: Notify i-Jet and AXA of safety concerns and participants' locations within the city; Request security intel and recommendation to move forward with security evacuation
- Maintain clear communication with program and assistance partners
  - Resources: BCA, i-Jet, AXA Assistance
  - Steps Taken: Verify main points of contact with program; Determine whether communication directly with the participants is needed/preferred; Establish clear goals and timeline with assistance partners.
- Determine if commercial travel is safe
  - Resources: i-Jet
- Arrange safe and timely evacuation travel plan
  - Resources: AXA Assistance, BCA
- Confirm Acceptance and Understanding of Proposed Evacuation Plan
  - Resources: BCA

# Elizabethtown College Goals

- **Ensure student safety**
  - Resource: BCA
  - Steps taken: Await BCA's updates, follow the news and contact the student
- **Ensure student could stay on track for graduation**
  - Resource: Registration and Records, academic department
- **Support students throughout emergency (think about social, emotional & psychological needs)**
- **Minimize additional expenses**
  - Resource: BCA and CISI
  - Steps taken: Discuss how independent study faculty expenses and program transfer expenses might be off-set

# Analyzing Goals & Stakeholders

Outside of 3 institutions here, also consider parents/guardians, host institutions, community partners, homestay families

## Shared Goals

- Student health & safety, including on-going support
- Desire for academic credit

## Possible Conflict

- Student goal: may not want to leave location (strong connections)
- Parent goal: may want immediate action
- Costs for managing response
- Best location for student/withdrawal & reenrollment to another program
- Local community: decreased revenue, missed opportunities

# BCA Response & Actions

- Wednesday, September 13: severe safety incident in student homestay neighborhood (evening – late night)
  - Immediate communication with BCA students, host university & US Embassy
  - Student curfew and travel restrictions put in place
- Thursday, September 14: Parent/guardian and sending school notification
  - Outreach to BCA programs with possible enrollment opportunities for affected students
  - CISI communication regarding additional safety information, possibilities for evacuation
- Friday, September 15: Barcelona program identified as student destination
  - Parent/guardian, sending school communication continues
- Saturday, September 16: Students and RD depart for Barcelona
- Sunday, September 17: Students and RD arrive in Barcelona, orientation, homestays
- Tuesday, September 19: BCA Barcelona classes begin!

# CISI Response & Actions

- Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup>: Contacted by BCA regarding safety incident in Xalapa impacting security of their participants
  - Requested address/location details for participants residing in Xalapa from BCA
  - Confirmed BCA to be main point of contact for the participants
  - Notified assistance partners, CISI executives, and underwriters of security evacuation request, and received approval to evacuate
  - Confirmed with i-Jet commercial travel to be safe and appropriate for evacuation
  - Passport details requested from the program
- Friday, September 15<sup>th</sup>: BCA confirmed all 6 students elected to travel to alternate program campus in Barcelona
  - Flight options provided by AXA and approved by BCA for departure Saturday evening, arriving into Barcelona Sunday Morning
- Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup>: AXA confirmed ground transportation arrangements to airport complete
  - Confirmed group departed Xalapa as planned
- Sunday, September 17<sup>th</sup>: Confirmed safe arrival into Barcelona

# Elizabethtown College Response & Actions

- Thursday, September 14:
  - Received BCA's notification of the situation
  - Began exploring the student's options
  - Contacted the student
  - Notified the necessary campus personnel
  - Academic advisor connected with the student
  - Dean of Students called the student's parents
- Friday, September 15:
  - Confirmed the student could return to campus
  - Determined the student could not switch to a different Mexico program
  - Student decided to move with the group to Barcelona, Spain
- Monday, September 18:
  - Student arrived in Barcelona, Spain
  - Connect the student and her parents to the College's counseling services
- Monday, September 25:
  - Followed-up with student about selected courses

# Questions to Guide Response

- Who are your stakeholders?
  - What are the primary goals and objectives for each stakeholder?
  - How do you balance the needs of each stakeholder?
- What data and/or resources do you need for an appropriate crisis response?
- Who will communicate externally?
- How are health and safety events related to questions of power, privilege and relationships with local communities?
  - How support students in analyzing and understanding this?

# Standard 8: Health, Safety, Security & Risk Management

The organization prioritizes the health, safety, and security of its students through policies, procedures, advising, orientation, and training.

- The organization prioritizes health, safety, and security in program development, implementation, and management, conducting appropriate risk assessments for program sites and activities, maintaining written emergency plans and protocols, and identifying and leveraging relevant authorities, networks and resources.
- Staff are trained to anticipate and respond responsibly to student health, safety, or security issues; students are trained to responsibly manage their own health, safety, and security while abroad; and measures are in place for ongoing monitoring of and advising on health, safety, and security issues through a range of U.S. Department of State and other appropriate resources.
- The organization maintains appropriate kinds of insurance at recommended levels, operates in compliance with local laws, and follows best practices in reporting on critical incidents.