



CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN A CROSS-CULTURAL SETTING

International Student and Scholar Services

NAFSA

Association of
International Educators

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Missing International Student or Scholar

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A missing international student or scholar situation can range from an individual being missing for a short period of time to a more severe situation of a missing individual due to mental health or other issues. The international student and scholar services office can utilize this checklist to help the appropriate authorities locate the individual and facilitate his/her safe return to campus.

For additional guidance and resources regarding a missing international student or scholar, read “Missing International Student or Scholar” in *Crisis Management in a Cross-Cultural Setting*, which can be purchased online from the [NAFSA bookstore](#).

CONDENSED CHECKLIST

Precrisis Considerations:

- Offer international students and scholars the opportunity to register an emergency contact annually.
- If your institution enrolls minor international students, advise students that if they are under 18 years of age and are not emancipated, the institution must notify a custodial parent or guardian within 24 hours of the determination that the student is missing, in addition to notifying any additional contact person designated by the student.

Responding to a Missing Student or Scholar:

- Confirm notification of missing international student or scholar.
- Attempt to contact the missing student or scholar using existing information and communication channels.
- Notify relevant school officials if you cannot locate the student or scholar.
- Notify campus police or local law enforcement to report the missing person.
- If an international student is a minor under the age of 18, notify the missing person’s custodial parent or legal guardian.
- Determine whether the missing student or scholar has accessed university services during the time that he or she has been determined as missing (meals, key cards, door access, labs).

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CONDENSED CHECKLIST

- Determine whether the missing student or scholar has accessed online university services during the time that he or she has been determined as missing (phone, network, e-mail access).
- Reach out to individuals from the student or scholar's home country, academic cohort, lab, or office for additional information.
- In the event that the student or scholar is not located within a reasonable amount of time, make further notifications and inquiries:

- Notify the appropriate embassy or consulate in the United States.
- Contact local hospitals.
- Work with university representatives.
- Support any family members that arrive to the United States.
- Decide what action must be taken on the student or scholar's Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) record.

Postcrisis Considerations:

- When the missing person is located, verify that he or she is safe and healthy.
- Meet with the international student or scholar to resolve any unanswered questions or concerns, and to refer to community resources if needed.
- "Close the loop" with all relevant officials.
- Examine internal institutional policies to assess efficiency, appropriateness to situation, and compliance with U.S. Department of Education guidelines; amend as needed.