



BEYOND SFA

MISSIONS POLICIES & PROCEDURES

BEYOND SFA

Table of Contents

Why we believe in missions.....	3
Who can go on trips.....	3
Application Process Overview	4
How We Assign Teams.....	4
When to Expect Your Assignment	4
Raising Funds.....	5
FAQ.....	5
Letter to Your Parents	8

BEYOND SFA

Why we believe in missions

Every student goes, every student gives, every student prays, every student welcomes! This is the vision of National Chi Alpha for each of our students. It is our desire to see a new student volunteer missions movement rise from within today's generation of university students.

- XA Expeditions Missions Manual

In the Spring of 2011, by what we now believe to be the prompting of the Holy Spirit, Ashley and I began asking this question for ourselves and for SFA Chi Alpha: **HAS GOD EVER ASKED SOMETHING GREAT OF YOU?** The answer was yes... but what it meant surprised us. God wasn't asking us to DO anything... but to BE something we'd never really been before. To BE His church, His people - to BE Jesus with skin on to the people around us. We spend our days trying to learn exactly what that means and we have seen beautiful things built: real, vulnerable relationships between students; a sincere love for our campus (LUMBERJACKS FOREVER); and a group of students ready to give away their time, money, and energy so that someone else might recognize God for who He is.

Beauty always does a few things. One thing beauty does is share itself! Think about it: When you see a really amazing sunset, you always think of a person you wish you could share it with. As we have focused these last few years on the beauty of Christ in and through our relationships, there has grown a natural desire to share that beauty with other people in other places. So much that many of our students began asking us to do missions trips!

The Bible is full of stories of God using a person or place that was small and insignificant to radically alter the course of history or to change a nation. Why not us? If we continue to BE His people, we believe God will help us change the world from Nac-o-nowhere!

Who can go on trips

All General Members of SFA Chi Alpha Christian Fellowship are eligible to apply for a Beyond SFA Mission Trip. Qualifications for General Membership are outlined in our Constitution & Bylaws, updated annually. You can request a copy of our current Constitution & Bylaws from the Office of Student Engagement Programs on the 3rd floor of the Student Center.

In addition, the Directors reserve the right to extend eligibility for application to any persons at their discretion, in conjunction with the Trip Leaders.

BEYOND SFA

Approval of applications will be at the sole discretion of the Director. The Director will work with the recognized staff to make team assignments, but the final decision rests with the Director.

Application Process Overview

Beyond SFA Missions Applications will be distributed or otherwise made available along with a published deadline for return. Each trip will have its own application process, so you'll need to ensure you return all necessary forms / documents. We will not process partial applications.

After the deadline, we will take all completed application packets and assign each applicant to a team. Rarely, we may have to decide not to allow an applicant to participate in any trip. These decisions are rare and are only made when we honestly believe it's in the best interest of the applicant and/or the trips.

Once the teams are full, we will begin notifying applicants of their trip assignments at which time, your trip / team leader will take over primary communication with you concerning any and all missions-related questions.

How We Assign Teams

Team assignments are made based on several considerations. Here are some of the questions we ask when making assignments:

1. How well would this applicant's personality / skill sets / talents fit the needs of this trip?
2. How much missions experience does this person have and how much missions experience does this trip require?
3. Does the applicant feel reasonably able to raise the necessary funds for this trip?
4. Does the applicant have the time to devote to raising funds and preparing for this trip?
5. Would this applicant have another opportunity to be part of a similar trip in the future?
6. Would this person work well with the existing team?
7. Does the applicant's small group leader have any reservations about his/her participation on this trip?

When to Expect Your Assignment

BEYOND SFA

Team assignments are generally ready within 1-2 weeks of the Application deadline. If you fail to turn your Application in by the deadline, we will fill teams with on-time applicants first and, if there are any remaining spots, you may be added to a team later.

Raising Funds

We do not expect most students to be able to write one check to cover their trip costs. Almost every student we've taken on short-term trips has raised the funds through a combination of efforts. Here are some ideas of what we have done in the past to raise missions funds:

1. Personal Letters to family / friends asking for support = by far the most profitable solution!
2. Fundraisers - Car Washes, Bake Sales, Plate Lunch Sales, Slave Auctions, Babysitting, etc.
3. Panhandling
4. Chi Alpha Missions Offering

We will offer a combination of trip-specific and XA-wide fundraising opportunities. The general policy is "You have to work to get the rewards!" Show up to fundraisers and get an equal portion of the money raised.

Bottom Line: Money should never be an obstacle to missions! We've never seen a student who was willing to work hard NOT raise the money to go on a trip!

FAQ

How is the Deposit used?

The deposit due upon submission of your application is part of your total trip cost. It will be used to cover initial payments such as Application Fee, Training Costs, Insurance, etc.

Do I need a Passport?

Team Members on Overseas trips MUST have a valid Passport to travel outside the United States.

How do I get my Passport?

Visit <http://travel.state.gov> for a detailed explanation of the process to order a Passport. Please be sure to read it thoroughly - do NOT sign anything until you go to order your Passport. You will take the Passport Application to the Nacogdoches County District Clerk at 101 W Main Street along with the required photos and documents and your Passport Fees.

BEYOND SFA

You will need 2 checks for your fees - \$25 for the processing fee, and \$110 for the Passport Book or \$140 for the Passport Book and Card.

How long does it take to get my Passport?

As of October 31, 2013, according to the Passport website, processing time is 4 weeks. This is subject to change at any time and we recommend allowing 8 weeks for delivery. There is an expedited processing fee you may opt to pay that would get it to you in 2 weeks. This time is also subject to change at any time. Expedited Service is an additional \$60.

Do I need to get the Passport Card?

Speak with your Trip Leader about the requirements for your destination.

Why isn't my Passport included in my trip cost?

Because you could use your Passport for purposes other than this one trip, we are not allowed to raise funds to cover its cost.

Will I need a Visa to travel?

Speak with your Trip Leader about the requirements for your destination.

Do I need any vaccinations or medication before we travel?

If you aren't current on your tetanus shot, we recommend getting one before air travel of any sort. As far as specific shots required for travel abroad, speak with your Trip Leader about the requirements for your destination.

Can I go on more than one trip?

Yes! Provided there is space on each of the trips you select, and subsequent to a discussion of how you plan to raise funds for all of your trips, you could participate in multiple teams in the same year.

I'm not a leader in Chi Alpha - How do I know if I'm spiritually ready to go?

You're right in thinking that short-term mission trips are not for everyone. It's also likely you may be setting the bar too high.

Simply having a desire to go is the first step - so congratulations, you're doing great already!

SFA Chi Alpha believes that God desires all believers to be actively involved in sharing with others what He's done in their own lives. What God does IN us He wants to do THROUGH us. We call this evangelism or witnessing. There are no qualifications for who can / can't do this -

BEYOND SFA

we ALL have a story to tell! While short-term trips often do include a strong evangelism component, there are additional aspects to be considered before deciding to apply for a trip.

The combination of being stretched to do new / more difficult activities AND the stresses of travel (especially internationally) need to be considered honestly before application for a team is made. Your small group leader would be great for helping you process questions like these: How do you handle new experiences? How easily do you get depressed or angry? How flexible are you? How do you respond to authority figures?

The answers to those questions will help you decide if a (or which) trip is right for you. Notice I said *which* trip. All trips are not created equal! Deciding you may not be ready for an overseas experience does not automatically mean you can't join a state-side trip. Different trips will present different challenges and require a different set of skills.

Talking openly with your small group leader about your current strengths and weaknesses is the best place to start deciding which trip is for you!

Do you have to be good at speaking with people?

Each trip offers a variety of activities and roles for team members, some of which will include speaking, both public and 1-on-1 with people you meet. None of the roles will require you to operate at a professional level. Neither we nor our missionaries expect anything more of our team members than for you to do your best. We trust that God will be able to use anything we do out of a sincere heart of service for His Kingdom! Plus, you won't be alone - when engaging with new people, you can always grab another team member to help keep the conversation going and help answer any questions.

How much Biblical knowledge do I have to have to go?

There is no specific level of biblical knowledge or particular training required of team members except what you will learn during our Trainings and team meetings. SFA Chi Alpha believes that God desires all believers to be actively involved in sharing with others what He's done in their own lives. What God does IN us He wants to do THROUGH us. We call this evangelism or witnessing. There are no qualifications for who can / can't do this - we ALL have a story to tell! Specifically, we will train you to share your story (testimony) in a compelling way and how to walk someone through the process of salvation.

What should I pack?

Speak with your Trip Leader about the requirements for your destination.

BEYOND SFA

Letter to Your Parents

November 2, 2015

Dear Parents,

Hello! My name is Ashley Jackson. My husband, Derrick, and I are the Directors of SFA Chi Alpha, but have been members of Chi Alpha Campus Ministries since our college days at Louisiana Tech University and have been full-time staff members since 2002. In over 10 years of college ministry, we have participated in and led many short-term missions trips both state-side and overseas, and have travelled personally around the world. We love exposing students to other cultures and directly being part of Christianity around the globe!

We are so excited that your child is interested in joining one of our Beyond SFA teams! In the last several years, God has been working into the hearts of SFA Chi Alpha students a strong love for people as well as the energy and initiative to serve people everywhere they go. A natural extension of that love and servanthood is to respond to the *many* requests we receive from missionaries around the world to COME & HELP! Our students want to respond - they want to go and we are committed to helping them!

We pray that you will listen to and engage with your child's desire to be part of these trips. There are many ways you can support them, but here are a few we'd like to mention:

- Verbalize your excitement for their interest and your promise to help and support them in the decision to GO.
- Help them make a list of family and friends they can contact by letter, Facebook message, email, or phone call about supporting the trip financially.
- Offer to host a plate lunch, bake sale, or other fundraiser for the trip in your home town, at your office, or your local church.
- Allow your child time and freedom to stay at school to work at the fundraisers we will sponsor - they must be present to receive a portion of the money raised.
- If you have a home church, speak with your Pastor about having your child share the trip and the financial need with the congregation during a church service and receive an offering to go towards your child's trip.

BEYOND SFA

- Encourage your child verbally and with small reminders of your support and excitement for this opportunity throughout their fundraising process - they'll need the encouragement!

I'm sure you have questions and concerns about your child traveling, perhaps for the first time without you. We want to assure you we are taking every possible measure to ensure your child's safety, and we are working hard to make Beyond SFA Trips a positive, rewarding experience for everyone involved. We are happy to discuss any and all trip plans with parents, so please feel free to contact us any time!

Thank you so much for entrusting your child to us! Derrick and I work hard to be Pastors both you and your child can trust. We are so grateful for the chance to do what we do for a living - we LOVE our students and have committed to making every decision with their ultimate good in mind. If you have any questions about our trips, program, or policies, feel free to look over our Informational Materials at www.sfaxa.org/missions or contact us directly by email at dpj002@yahoo.com or by phone at (832) 786-8580.

His for the Campus,

ASHLEY JACKSON