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UT System
Risk Management Conference
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International Travel

&

Institutional Oversight

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Student International Travel and Institutional Oversight



- Types of Student International Travel “Sponsored” by Institutions:
 - Supervised Field Research
 - Independent Field Research
 - Clinical Training
 - Conference Attendance
 - Internships/Work Abroad
 - Service Learning
 - University Operated Study Center
 - Faculty-led Study Abroad
 - Direct Enrollment at Foreign Partner Institution
 - Thesis/Dissertation Research
 - Language Training
 - Study Abroad Provider Programs
- ✓ Short-term faculty-led programs present significant risks
- ✓ If it isn't credit bearing, it may not be “study abroad,” but it still may be university-sponsored travel



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Key Questions and Considerations

- Does the institution know where its students are?
- Are all students required to register their travel with the institution prior to departure? How is this enforced?
- Do all students have international health insurance coverage?
- Have all students signed waivers and covenants not to sue?
- Have all students registered with the U.S. Embassy in host country?
- Are specific oversight procedures in place for student travel to countries or regions that pose heightened health/safety risks (e.g., countries with State Department Travel Warnings)?
- Is there a campus emergency response team? Published policies and procedures?



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Framework for Student International Travel Policy

- All students must register international travel plans
- International travel registry serves as first source of information in event of health emergency, natural disaster, civil or political unrest
 - Recent International SOS Enhancements to Make Registration Easier:
 - Anthony Travel and other university-contracted travel agencies automatically recorded
 - 14 new customized fields with drop-down boxes for ease of entry
 - Changing and updating information/entering new trip information made easier
 - Automatic e-mail security and health updates
- Students covered under institution's emergency assistance and evacuation policy (e.g., International SOS)
- Students must sign waivers and covenants not to sue



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Framework for Student International Travel Policy, Cont.

- Students required to show proof of health insurance coverage that meets guidelines established by university risk management:
 - Medical Expense Benefit: 50K or greater
 - AD&D Benefit: 10K or greater
 - Medical evacuation/repatriation of remains: 50K or greater
 - Provisions for pre-existing conditions? mental health?
 - Optional UT health insurance provided by United meets or exceeds guidelines as of April 2009 and provides limited prescription drug benefit
- University official responsible for monitoring health and safety concerns worldwide
- Committee oversight of travel to destinations posing heightened health or security risks, including decisions to suspend, evacuate, cancel, etc.
 - Restricted Countries/Regions List
 - Special Petition and Waiver Procedures to Travel to High Risk Countries/Regions
 - High Risk Travel Waiver/Release Forms
 - Manage Institutional Response to Incidents and Crises Abroad



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Role of International Travel Oversight Committee

- **Operate under different names at various institutions:**
 - International Travel Safety and Responsibility Committee (Indiana University)
 - Risk and Security Assessment Committee (Michigan State)
 - International Travel Oversight Committee (Duke)
- **But roles and functions substantially similar:**
 - Evaluate information presented by university officer responsible for monitoring international risk
 - Decide whether it is appropriate to restrict or suspend student international travel to countries/regions with heightened health, safety, and/or security concerns
 - Decide on a case-by-case basis whether to grant an exemption, due to special circumstances, to decision to restrict or suspend travel to a country/region
 - Manage/Respond to critical incidents abroad, including decisions on emergency evacuations and emergency policies and protocols (e.g., who bears financial loss?)

**Good Process Helps Protect
Students and the University**



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Composition of International Travel Oversight Committee

Committees typically appointed by university president or provost and include:

- Academic Deans/Associate Deans/Senior Faculty with Significant Inter'l Experience
- Senior University Risk Manager
- Senior Legal Affairs Staff/General Counsel
- University Medical Officer (e.g., Director of Student Health Center)
- Senior Student Affairs Staff (e.g., VP for Student Affairs, Dean of Students)
- Senior Public Affairs Staff
- Senior International Officer (sometimes serving as Chair)
- Representative from the Provost's Office
- Representative from University counseling center
- University officer responsible for monitoring international health and safety concerns
 - ❖ Director Office of Study Abroad (typically in non-voting, *ex officio* capacity)
 - ❖ Faculty with expertise in a given region may be asked to attend on case-by-case bases
 - ❖ Potential conflicts of interest (or the possible appearance thereof) should be avoided



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Authority of University Travel Oversight Committee

- Committee Members Appointed by President or Provost
- Senior Officers and Faculty from Across Univ. with Broad Expertise
- Encourages Proper Measure of Respect and Authority for Decisions
- Split in Best Practices: At some institutions, Committee makes final decision on suspending student travel and granting exemptions to suspension decisions; at others, Committee recommends decisions to Provost, who retains final decision-making authority.
- Committee Typically Sets Rules and Procedures Governing Appeals



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Factors to Consider in Developing Restricted/No Travel Lists

- ❖ U.S. State Department Travel Warnings;
 - Travel Warnings and Advisories Issued by Other Countries (e.g., Great Britain, Australia);
 - Security and Health Information Provided by Private Services (International SOS, iJet);
 - Health Information and Advisories Provided by CDC, WHO, etc.;
 - Information or Reports issued by Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC);
 - Information Provided by Faculty with Expertise and Experience in the Country/Region; and
 - Actions Taken by Peer Institutions and Reputable Study Abroad Providers.

- ❖ Conformity with best practices requires restricting or suspending student travel to countries for which a Travel Warning issued by the U.S. State Department is in effect. However, in certain instance, based on the totality of the circumstances, it may be appropriate for an institution to restrict travel to countries or regions in which such a warning is not in effect . Occasionally, it may be appropriate to grant an exemption and allow student travel to a country subject to a Travel Warning, due to special circumstances and ability to mitigate key risks.



Country	Notes
*	Countries that the U.S. Government has sanctioned are marked with an asterisk (*) below. All travel to these countries by faculty, staff, graduate/professional students or approved undergraduate students must be cleared by the Office of Export Controls prior to travel. Please contact Director Mark Stomski at 919.688.2711 or via mark.stomski@duke.edu
Afghanistan	Entire country restricted
Albania	No travel to border areas with Kosovo.
Algeria	Entire country restricted
Angola	No travel to rural areas; travel only allowed in urban areas
Armenia	No travel to Nagorno-Karabaskh area
Azerbaijan	No travel to Nagorno-Karabaskh area
Bangladesh	No travel other than to the city of Dhaka
Bolivia	No travel to the Provinces of Pando, Beni, Santa Cruz, Tarija and Chuquisaca.
Burma*	No travel to border areas with Thailand. Sanctioned country please see (*) above
Burundi	Entire country restricted
Cambodia	No travel other than to the Cities of Siem Reap and Pnomh Penh. Updated June 9, 2008
Côte d'Ivoire*	Entire country restricted. Sanctioned country please see (*) above
Central African Republic	Travel only allowed to capital city of Bangui
Chad	Entire country restricted
Colombia	Bogota approved only for transit; Medellin and Cartegena approved for travel; Remainder of country restricted



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Factors to Consider in Granting Waivers/Exemptions to Restricted/No Travel List Countries

- Nature and scope of Travel Warning in Effect, if applicable;
- Experience and training of supervising faculty;
- In-country infrastructure and resources, reliability of in-country personnel;
- Specific steps taken to inform students of heightened risks;
- Specific steps taken to mitigate known risks and likely effectiveness;
- Level and training of students seeking to travel (undergrad. vs. grad.);
- Importance of the educational, research, or professional training opportunity abroad as it relates to students' academic program; and
- Manageability of legal and reputational risk to institution.



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A Few Questions to Consider

- **Who monitors State Department Announcements? Who is told (how, and in what order) that a Travel Warning has been announced or that a suspension is now in effect for a proposed program?**
- **When does the review or suspension come into effect? What about groups currently abroad? Who bears the cost involved in bringing students home? Will refunds be provided for fees paid prior to scheduled departure?**
- **Who makes the waiver application? What content is provided? If waiver is granted, how long does it last?**
- **If a Travel Warning is lifted is the suspension automatically lifted, too?**