

Abilene Christian University
INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL APPROVAL POLICY

Responsible Department: Provost's Office
Responsible Administrator: Vice Provost (Dr. Susan Lewis)
Effective Date: 5 May 2014
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Policy Statement

Any student, faculty or staff member proposing to undertake University-supported or University-related international travel must follow the appropriate approval, insurance, and travel security requirements set forth in this policy.

Reason for Policy/Purpose

A global perspective is essential to ACU's academic mission, and the University has long supported international travel to conduct research, study cultures and languages, promote collaboration with peer institutions, represent the University, and for other academic, administrative, and sanctioned student activities. The purpose of this policy is to outline the approval process for University-supported or University-related international travel, and related requirements, thereby promoting such travel while mitigating associated risks.

Policy/Procedures

I. Scope of Policy

The policy applies to all University-supported or University-related international travel, including but not limited to international travel for research, educational (non-credit related), co-curricular, or administrative purposes (with or without a student or students), exchange programs, mission internships, and student group travel of any duration.

This policy applies regardless of whether the international travel is undertaken by faculty, staff, or students, and regardless of whether organized by schools, departments, faculty, staff, student organizations, or students. This policy also applies to all ACU employees and students who, as defined by this policy, organize international travel ("Travel Organizers") or approve it ("Travel Approvers").

*All credit-related international travel (i.e., study abroad) is overseen by the Center for International Education ("CIE"), and is subject to the policies and procedures set forth by the CIE (under the supervision of the Provost). **Credit-related international travel is not addressed in or by this policy.** Please see the ACU Study Abroad website (www.acu.edu/studyabroad) and the executive director of the CIE, as well as the Non-Hub-Site Faculty-Led Short-Term Study Abroad Program Proposal document, for more information on procedures, protocols and processes for credit-related international travel.*

II. Pre-travel Requirements for Individual Faculty and Staff Travelers and for Travel Organizers – For All Non-Credit-Related International Travel

Regardless of where the planned or proposed travel fits within the chart below, it is the ultimate responsibility of the traveler or Travel Organizer to be informed of the risks associated with all University-related travel.

Type of Faculty or Staff International Travel	Necessary Approvals
Without students to Ordinary Risk Destinations (see <i>Definitions</i> section)	<p>No formal approval necessary.</p> <p>Travelers should review U.S. Department of State security warnings, alerts, travel planning resources, and other pertinent information (including consulting with the CIE) prior to travel.</p>
Without students to High Risk Destinations (see <i>Definitions</i> section)	<p>Formal approval necessary.</p> <p>Travelers must review U.S. Department of State security warnings, alerts, travel planning resources, and other pertinent information prior to the request for approval.</p> <p>Approval must be obtained from the appropriate Travel Approver, using the “International Travel Approval Form.”</p>
With students to Ordinary Risk Destinations (see <i>Definitions</i> section)	<p>Formal approval necessary.</p> <p>Travel Organizers must obtain approval from appropriate Travel Approver, using the “International Travel Approval Form.”</p> <p>Travel Organizers must review and follow the procedures found in Appendix A of this document.</p>
With students to High Risk Destinations (see <i>Definitions</i> section)	<p>Formal approval necessary.</p> <p>Travel with students to High Risk Destinations is not allowed under this policy.</p> <p>For exception to be granted, Travel Organizers must obtain approval from Travel Approver, Executive Director of the CIE, University Risk Manager, and the EVP or Provost, using the “International Travel Approval Form.”</p>

III. Additional Requirements Applicable to all International Travelers

A. International Travel Insurance Requirement

Prior to departure, all individuals (faculty and staff) who undertake International Travel should register with ACE Travel Service per the University's International Travel Insurance Policy. Registration is available through the Office of Risk Management. ACE Travel Service provides coverage for worldwide evacuation services and full-scale evacuation by private air ambulance. ACE also provides telephone advice and referrals. ACE Travel Service is not health insurance.

Faculty and Staff planning to travel as part of a group or program and who are uncertain as to whether they have been registered for the ACE Travel Service should contact their Travel Organizer or the Office of Risk Management at ext. 2363.

B. Travel Health Insurance Requirement

Students engaged in international travel associated with an official ACU activity or program will either: (1) be provided with travel health insurance coverage as organized by the Travel Organizer, or (2) will be required to obtain a travel health insurance policy, which must provide sufficient coverage (including medical evacuation and repatriation) for the duration of the International Travel.

Faculty and staff should check with the ACU Human Resources Office regarding details of travel health insurance policy coverage and are advised to consider appropriate insurance for any accompanying spouse and/or dependents.

C. Preparedness and Review of Pertinent Information

Prior to departure all international travelers should review security warnings, alerts, travel planning resources, and other pertinent information provided by the U.S. Department of State, and to register with U.S. consular officials (see Appendix A) in country (if not already registered by a Travel Organizer).

D. Travel and Related Expenses

International travelers who will incur expenses to be paid or reimbursed by the University must follow the Travel, Entertainment and Business Expense Reimbursement Policy, and are responsible for familiarizing themselves with this policy in advance of incurring expenses.

IV. Definitions

Credit-related International Travel

Any international travel that is connected to a course for which an ACU student is receiving academic credit (i.e., Study Abroad). *Credit-related international travel is not covered by this policy.*

High Risk Destination

A high-risk destination is any country for which the U.S. Department of State has issued a formal declaration of "Travel Warning." See: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html.

Given the sometimes political nature of U.S. Department of State Travel Alerts and Warnings, in certain situations the University will also take into account the actions of globally respected NGOs and other U.S. universities when determining High-Risk Destinations, as well as the advisories and warnings of other governments.

International Travel

Any University-supported or University-related international travel, with or without a student or students, by employees or students, including but not limited to:

- International research, teaching, and administrative travel, with or without students,
- Internships,
- Exchange programs, and
- Non-credit-related student group travel of any duration.

For the purposes of this policy, international travel is University-related when:

- The travel is undertaken because an individual is acting in an academic or professional capacity relevant to the person's areas of responsibility, activities (including co-curricular and extracurricular ones), course of research, teaching, administrative duties, or
- Is undertaken with or organized by any ACU organization, division, department, or office, even if not for an academic or professional purpose.

For purposes of this policy, university-supported international travel is any non-credit related international travel that is funded to any degree by the University. Travel with non-ACU organizations may still qualify as University-supported or University-related international travel.

Non-Credit Related International Travel

All international travel that is not credit-related (as defined above).

Ordinary Risk Destination

An Ordinary Risk Destination is one that is not defined as a **High Risk Destination**.

Travel Approver

A Travel Approver is an individual who is authorized to approve international trips for University-supported or University-related travel for travelers who are either employees or students of ACU. Examples of Travel Approvers are deans, vice presidents, executive director of the CIE, director of HIM, the EVP, and Provost; each of whom has this authority under specified circumstance.

Travel Organizer

A Travel Organizer is anyone who arranges University-related or University-supported non-credit-related international travel for a student or group of students (e.g., a faculty or staff sponsor of an ACU student group). Travel Organizers might or might not actually participate in the travel.

Appendix A

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRAVEL ORGANIZERS (for non-credit related travel)

- A. Orientation for Faculty and Other Group Travel Organizers.** Prior to all non-credit related travel with an ACU student or students to an international destination, Travel Organizers must attend an orientation session organized by the CIE to cover safety, health, legal, and financial responsibilities, policies, and procedures.
- B. Contact Information.** For the duration of travel, Travel Organizers must carry with them at all times the following information:
- Emergency contact information for all travelers;
 - Telephone and email contacts for appropriate ACU offices (Travel Approver, dean, supervisor, or Center for International Education as appropriate);
 - The number for 24-hour emergency contact at ACU: ACU Campus police at (325 674 2305);
 - Telephone and other contact information of the local U.S. Embassy or Consulate; and
 - Telephone numbers for the local emergency personnel (police, ambulance, fire dept.)
 - Travel Organizers must provide domestic emergency contact information for group members to the Travel Approver prior to commencing travel
 - Travel Organizers should encourage all international travelers to carry the above contact and emergency information for the duration of travel.
- C. Registration with Consular Officials.** Travel Organizers must register groups with U.S. consular officials in the destination country (the U.S. Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Process - STEP). Organizers should go to travelregistration.state.gov to register travelers.
- D. Waiver/Indemnification.** For all travel involving ACU students or non-ACU faculty or staff, a signed waiver and/or indemnification form must be obtained for each traveler.

See the CIE for ACU faculty and staff responsibilities pertaining to credit-related international travel.

Appendix B

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRAVEL APPROVERS

Travel Approvers are responsible for following the requirements set forth below when determining whether to allow or disallow non-credit-related University-sponsored or University-related international travel.

Assessing and Approving International Travel

A. Resources to Consider: Travel Approvers must consider, among other possible factors:

- The mission of ACU;
- Specific goals and activities of the anticipated travel program, and the strategic fit with the University's international activities;
- Adequacy of planning and preparation of the Travel Organizer(s) or Traveler(s), and general risk management variables;
- General conditions they can expect to encounter.

Travel Approvers should consult available information on travel, health, and security risks, including resources such as:

- U.S. Department of State website for any travel warnings or advisories in effect, and for general information on safety and health issues (<http://travel.state.gov/>);
- The Center for Disease Control and Prevention website for information on health risks for the destination (<http://www.cdc.gov/>);
- Travel notices, advisories and warnings issued by other governments, such as: Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (<http://www.voyage.gc.ca/index-eng.asp>) or British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad>);
- International news organizations (e.g., BBC, Reuters, CNN, etc.)

B. Travel to High Risk Destinations

Travel to High Risk Destinations is *not* allowed under this policy. This applies to all ACU-related travel by any member of the University, not just travel with or by an ACU student(s).

In rare instances where travel to a High Risk Destination is deemed to be of great importance to the University, the appropriate Travel Approver may consider allowing the travel proposal to go forward. The traveler or Travel Organizer should expect a much greater level of scrutiny of the proposal than would be applied to a proposal for travel to Ordinary Risk Destinations.

All High Risk Destination travel must have the final approval of the EVP or Provost, as appropriate to the individual or group proposing the travel.

Travel Approvers seeking guidance on these requirements should consult the Office of Risk Management.

Special thanks to George Washington University for permitting ACU to use its International Travel Approval Policy, which served as a template for this policy.