

Student and Graduate Medical Education Trainee International Travel

Effective Date Monday, October 5, 2015

Status Final

Last Revised Monday, December 11, 2023

Policy Type [Executive Vice President & Provost](#)

Contact Office

[Vice Provost for Global Affairs \(Office of the\) International Studies Office](#)

Oversight Executive

[Executive Vice President and Provost](#)

Applies To

Academic Division

Table of Contents

[Policy Statement](#)

1. [Minimum Requirements for Students Traveling Abroad](#)
2. [Group Travel](#)
3. [Site and Itinerary Review for Group Travel](#)
4. [U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories, Centers for Disease Controls Travel Health Notifications, U.S. Department of Treasury Sanctioned Countries, and University Travel Restrictions](#)
5. [Crisis Management and Response](#)
6. [Petitioning for Exemptions](#)
7. [Compliance with Policy](#)

Reason for Policy

The University of Virginia recognizes: (1) the importance of international experiences and aspires to provide students with the mindset, skills, and tools that will help them to become leaders of their chosen professions in the global society of the 21st century; and (2) that there are times and places where personal health, safety, and security issues may outweigh the advantages of exposure to international experiences and may consequently place restrictions on travel or prohibit travel to a location due to concerns about health, safety, and/or security. To this end, the policy supports the University's broad menu of education abroad opportunities by promoting the health, safety, and security of students who are traveling abroad for University-related purposes.

Definition of Terms

Conditions of Participation and Assumption of Risk

A written statement provided to students and GME trainees in advance of international travel that explains the extent and limits of University responsibility, defines expectations for student and GME trainee behavior when undertaking travel for University related purposes, and articulates associated risks. As part of entering their

information into the University Travel Registry, students and GME trainees are required to sign this statement to acknowledge that they understand the conditions of participation and their assumption of risk.

Crisis Management Plan for Education Abroad

University protocol that serves as the basis for crisis management readiness and response for UVA education abroad programs for program directors, administrators, faculty, and staff. Published and maintained by the International Studies Office, the Office of the Dean of Students, and the International Travel Risk Management Committee.

Expert Sources and Resources

Include, but are not limited to, the U.S. Department of State Resources for Travelers, U.S. Embassies and Consulates worldwide, Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), Peace Corps, Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO), the University's providers of international health and emergency assistance services, foreign governments, local partners and contacts, and faculty and staff with regional expertise.

Graduate Medical Education (GME) Trainee

An individual who is employed by the University of Virginia Medical Center as a trainee in an Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) accredited or non-ACGME accredited post-graduate training program.

Group Travel Involving Students

UVA faculty-led study abroad programs and travel of groups for University-related purposes led/organized by UVA faculty, staff, or students.

Individual Student Travel

Includes, but is not limited to, study, research, internships, service, conferences, presentations, teaching, performances, or athletic competitions.

International Travel Risk Management Committee

Advises the vice provost for global affairs on matters related to international faculty, staff, and student travel. Membership comprises representatives from the Offices of University Counsel (non-voting, advisory role), Property & Liability Risk Management, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, International Studies, Student Health and Wellness, Dean of Students, Vice President for Research, Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs, and Emergency Management. The Committee also includes at least three faculty members from schools with a particularly high level of student travel abroad programs, each of whom serves a three-year term.

Site and Itinerary Review

Review for alignment with the University's health, safety, and security standards that may lead to requirements for further planning, limits on, or, in some cases, deferral or cancellation of travel.

Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)

A travel registry administered by the U.S. Department of State that automatically distributes country-specific information, Travel Alerts, fact sheets, and emergency messages to registrants. STEP also helps the Department of State better assist travelers in the event of an emergency.

Student(s)

An individual who either has been admitted to a degree or certificate program at the University or has received permission to enroll and is registered for coursework (including credit or non-credit) at the University during any given academic session (including fall or spring semesters, Summer Session, or January Term).

Travel Abroad Health and Emergency Assistance Insurance

Insurance that provides coverage for health care costs incurred overseas and that provides: (1) medical evacuation, (2) security evacuation, (3) repatriation of remains, and (4) emergency assistance. The required aggregate minimum coverage is determined by the Office of Property & Liability Risk Management, the Risk Management Committee for Education Abroad, and the Office of University Counsel.

Travel Registry

A confidential and secure database for maintaining key travel information about students traveling for University-related purposes. The travel registry is the official and authoritative source of traveler information that forms the basis for the University's emergency response protocols and communications strategy (e.g., advisories, alerts, emergency messages, evacuation notices) when responding to an emergency or critical incident abroad. The International Studies Office is responsible for the overall management of the travel registry, though other offices have input and access to the registry for rapid response purposes.

University Travel Restrictions

A restriction on student or Graduate Medical Education (GME) trainee travel for university related purposes issued by the International Studies Office (ISO) under direction of the International Travel Risk Management Committee and the vice provost for global affairs and published on the ISO website. A University Travel Restriction may limit student or GME trainee travel to a region or prohibit student or GME trainee travel to the region. See the policy statement below for a list of the types of situations that could result in the issuance of a University Travel Restriction.

Policy Statement

The University has established requirements for students traveling outside of the national borders of the United States for University-related purposes, which is any travel that is for academic credit and/or utilizes University resources, including travel for study, research, internships, service, conferences, presentations, teaching, performances, recruiting, or athletic competitions. Schools and units may have additional policies and procedures that support this overall policy. Individuals planning and leading group travel activities that will involve students must also adhere to this policy. Unless noted otherwise, all aspects of this policy also apply to Graduate Medical Education (GME) trainees.

The vice provost for global affairs is responsible for implementing this policy and acts as the University's representative in all matters discussed in this policy.

1. **Minimum Requirements for Students Traveling Abroad:**

All students and Graduate Medical Education (GME) trainees traveling abroad for University-related purposes must register their international travel in the University Travel Registry before the expected departure date and, if possible, should update the travel registry as additional information becomes available or changes occur throughout the duration of the trip, including additional countries added during travel.

Students traveling abroad for University-related purposes individually or as part of a University-organized group are required to:

- a. Meet the eligibility requirements of their school of enrollment for education abroad (generally good academic and disciplinary standing);
- b. Enter their travel information in the University's Travel Registry;
- c. Purchase a policy with the University's designated health and emergency assistance insurance provider;
- d. Affirm that they have read, understand, and agree to the University's Conditions of Participation and Acceptance of Risk for international travel;
- e. Enroll in the U.S. Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) if a U.S. citizen; and
- f. Avoid travel to or through nations or regions which have a Level 3 or Level 4 Travel Advisory issued by the U.S. Department of State Travel, are subject to a Level 3 Travel Health Notification issued by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), are a U.S. Dept. of Treasury Sanctioned Country, or are subject to a travel restriction issued by the University unless granted an exemption (see procedures for petitioning for an exemption below).

GME trainees must meet requirements b. – f. (above) and secure approval for their planned travel for University-related purposes from their program director and GME Committee.

2. **Group Travel:**

Faculty and staff planning to lead a credit-bearing education abroad program or include a travel-abroad component in an on-Grounds course must follow the guidelines for program development established by the International Studies Office (ISO) for undergraduate options and the guidelines of their school in cooperation with ISO in the case of graduate programs. Faculty leaders and program staff are responsible for complying with best practices for health, safety, and security planning for pre-departure orientation, during the trip, and post-trip return. (See *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad* posted on the ISO web site.)

Those proposing non-credit bearing forms of group international travel involving students for University-related purposes must consult ISO at least 12 weeks prior to departure and before making any travel related purchases to review the planning process, travel resources, and minimum University requirements for students traveling abroad.

3. **Site and Itinerary Review for Group Travel:**

All plans and destinations for student group travel abroad for University-related purposes are subject to review and approval by the sponsoring school/business unit; the ISO; and, when deemed necessary by the ISO, the International Travel Risk Management Committee and the vice provost for global affairs.

Plans must align with the University's health, safety, and security standards, which include attention to U.S. Department of State and CDC recommendations. Itineraries may be re-assessed as necessary, including during travel. Material changes in health, safety, and security conditions will require a review by the International Travel Risk Management Committee with input solicited from the sponsor of the group travel, ISO, and expert sources. In such situations, the vice provost for global affairs may require itinerary revisions or cancellation of the travel. The vice provost for global affairs will consult as appropriate with the president, the executive vice president and provost, and the executive vice president and chief operating officer. All decisions on the part of the vice provost for global affairs are final. (See Section 4 for a list of situations that could qualify as material changes in health, safety, and security conditions.)

4. U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories, Centers for Disease Control Travel Health Notifications, U.S. Department of Treasury Sanctioned Countries, and University Travel Restrictions:

The University may limit how, when, and where University students may travel abroad for University-related purposes, taking into consideration issues of terrorism, war, disease, and other risks. The U.S. Department of State (DOS) issues a travel advisory for every country. The advisories employ four levels of advice:

Level 1 "Exercise Normal Precautions" – color code blue,
Level 2 "Exercise Increased Caution" – color code yellow,
Level 3 "Reconsider Travel" – color code orange, and
Level 4 "Do Not Travel" – color code red.

A Travel Advisory may also be issued for a particular region of a country. Additionally, a region of a country may be assessed as "High Risk". The University may limit or prohibit student travel for University-related purposes to or through a country or a region for which the U.S. Department of State has published a travel advisory of Level 3 "Reconsider Travel" – color code orange or Level 4 "Do Not Travel" – color code red.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control issues three levels of Travel Health Notifications - Watch Level 1, Alert Level 2, and Warning Level 3. The University may limit or prohibit student travel for University-related purposes to or through countries and regions with a Travel Health Notification of Warning Level 3.

The Office of Foreign Assets Control in the U.S. Department of Treasury administers and enforces economic sanctions programs primarily against countries and groups of individuals, such as terrorists and narcotics traffickers. The University may limit or prohibit student travel for University-related purposes to or through sanctioned countries.

In the event of incidents or conditions that may threaten the well-being of students, employees, or the University, the University may, after due deliberation, also issue a University Travel Restriction, which limits or prohibits travel to areas not under a U.S. Department of State Level 3 or 4 Advisory or a CDC Level 3 Travel Health Notification. University Travel Restrictions may be issued and student travel to a region restricted when any of the following or similar circumstances occur in or near the region:

- a. Civil unrest/violent public protests are common;
- b. Martial law is declared;
- c. A curfew is imposed;

- d. Telecommunications networks, the internet, and/or social media are substantially limited or shut down;
- e. Restrictions are placed on the movement of local citizens and/or U.S. government personnel and/or dependents;
- f. An advisory to defer non-essential travel is issued;
- g. U.S. nationals are advised to evacuate;
- h. The Peace Corps closes or reduces operations due to health, safety, or security concerns;
- i. A U.S. Consular or host government, Security or Emergency Message is issued;
- j. Exposure to serious communicable disease is likely;
- k. Health care resources are limited and/or compromised;
 - l. Strict health care protocols, which may include mandatory quarantine, are instituted;
- m. Serious crime (assault/battery and robbery) and/or violent crime is common or on the rise;
- n. Local government has limited ability to respond effectively to a natural disaster;
- o. Basic commodities and resources such as rice and electricity are insufficient; or
- p. Other expert sources and resources identify substantive risk.

University Travel Restrictions will be issued by the vice provost for global affairs, in consultation with the International Travel Risk Management Committee; the dean and involved faculty members from schools with programs in the affected locale, region, or country; the Office of University Counsel; as appropriate and feasible, program directors, hosts, and/or providers in the affected areas; expert sources; and, as appropriate, with the president, the executive vice president and provost and the executive vice president and chief operating officer.

All current University Travel Restrictions will be posted, along with DOS Travel Advisories, CDC Travel Health Notifications, and U.S. Dept. of Treasury Sanctioned Countries, on ISO's website. University Travel Restrictions will be reviewed at least quarterly and sooner if there is a material change in health, safety, and security conditions.

Students and GME trainees are advised that University Travel Restrictions, DOS Travel Advisories, CDC Travel Health Notifications, and the U.S. Dept. Of Treasury list of sanctioned countries may not completely capture all risks associated with international travel. Students who have concerns about traveling to foreign countries with a known history of discrimination against individuals of certain backgrounds and/or orientations should contact the ISO for additional guidance.

Restrictions on University-related travel apply to students and to GME trainees of any nationality in the country or region during the period of time that a Level 3 or 4 DOS Travel Advisory, Level 3 CDC Travel Health Notification, U.S. Dept. Treasury Sanctioned Country designation, and/or University Travel Restriction is in effect unless exempted according to the petition process described below.

No University student or GME trainee is permitted to embark on travel for University-related purposes in the affected locale, region, or country subject to the Level 3 or 4 DOS Travel Advisory, Level 3 CDC Travel Health Notification, U.S. Dept. Treasury Sanctioned Country designation, and/or University Travel Restriction is in effect unless exempted according to the petition process described below in Section 6.

In the event that a Level 3 or 4 DOS Travel Advisory, a Level 3 CDC Travel Health Notification, U.S. Dept. of Treasury Sanctioned Country designation, or University Travel Restriction is issued while a University program is in progress in an affected area, the vice provost for global affairs will decide whether or not to terminate the program and, if so, under what conditions, with the guidance and direction

of the International Travel Risk Management Committee, the school (in the case of graduate programs), and the program director, host and/or provider. If a student is participating in a non-University study abroad program, decisions to terminate travel will be made by the host institution/program provider.

If an evacuation or departure order is issued by the U.S. Department of State, the host country, or the emergency insurance provider, students and GME trainees will be expected to evacuate under that entity's direction. Students and GME trainees are responsible for informing themselves of appropriate refund policies for their program or trip, should the program or trip be suspended or cancelled due to the issuance of a Level 3 or 4 DOS Travel Advisory, a Level 3 CDC Travel Health Notification, U.S. Department of State Sanctioned Country designation, or University Travel Restriction.

5. Crisis Management and Response:

Crisis response procedures are provided in the Crisis Management Plan for Education Abroad, available by contacting the ISO. University faculty, students, and staff are expected to follow these procedures. These procedures should also be employed to assist individual student travelers.

6. Petitioning for Exemptions:

a. Individual Student Travel - Graduate Medical Education Trainees:

Trainees must petition for an exemption to travel to a country or region under a Level 3 or 4 DOS Travel Advisory, a Level 3 CDC Travel Health Notification, U.S. Department of State Sanctioned Country designation, or a University Travel Restriction if they cannot complete a comparable clinical elective or research project anywhere else in the world and it is deemed essential to their training. Such travel must first be approved by their program director and the GME Committee (See [GME POLICY 33, International Electives](#)) who will assess the elective or project for educational merit. If approved, the subsequent petition must include written justification and the approval of their faculty advisor and department chair. As part of the petition, GME Trainees must acknowledge the risks associated with the elected travel to the area and sign the High-Risk Travel Waiver/Release, assuming all risk and releasing the University from any future liability for their personal choice.

Petitions should be addressed to ISO and will be reviewed by the International Travel Risk Management Committee and the vice provost for global affairs. The decision of the vice provost for global affairs will be final. The decision will be communicated to the GME Trainee, the program director, faculty advisor, the department chair, and the Designated Institutional Official by email.

b. Individual Student Travel - Undergraduate Students:

Undergraduate students who want to participate in a non-University study abroad program in a country or region under a Level 3 or 4 DOS Travel Advisory, a Level 3 CDC Travel Health Notification, U.S. Department of State Sanctioned Country designation, or a University Travel Restriction must submit a Petition for Program Approval through the [online study abroad application process](#) (managed by ISO). As part of the petition, students must acknowledge the risks associated with the elected travel to the area and sign the High Risk Travel Waiver/Release Form, assuming all risks and releasing the University from any future liability for their personal choice.

ISO reviews petitions from undergraduate students on the same basis as any other petition for approval of an outside (non-University) program. This includes review of the academic merits of the

program, student support services, and administrative processes, including emergency/risk management. The decision of ISO is final and communicated to the petitioning student by e-mail. If the petition is approved, the student must complete the [required study abroad processes](#) administered by ISO.

Generally, only petitions from undergraduate students to join an established study abroad program will be considered. On rare occasions, a petition from an undergraduate student to travel to a country under a Level 3 or 4 DOS Travel Advisory, a Level 3 CDC Travel Health Notification, U.S. Department of State Sanctioned Country designation, or a University Travel Restriction for another University-related purpose will be considered. Petitions from undergraduate students to undertake independent travel for University-related purposes will be held to extraordinary standards before approval is granted.

Petitions should be addressed to ISO and will be reviewed by the International Travel Risk Management Committee and the vice provost for global affairs. The vice provost for global affairs will consult as appropriate with the president, the executive vice president and provost, and the executive vice president and chief operating officer. The decision of the vice provost for global affairs will be final. The decision will be communicated to the student, the student's advisor, and the student's dean by e-mail.

c. Individual Student Travel - Graduate Students:

Graduate students must petition for an exemption to travel to a country or region under a Level 3 or 4 DOS Travel Advisory, a Level 3 CDC Travel Health Notification, U.S. Department of State Sanctioned Country designation, or a University Travel Restriction. Petitions may be accessed as part of the international travel registration process. Generally, only petitions from graduate students who cannot complete their study, research, or training anywhere else in the world and whose travel is deemed essential to their academic progress will be considered. Such travel must be approved by their faculty advisor, department chair, and the dean of their school of enrollment (or dean's designee). The petition must include written justification from the student's faculty advisor. As part of the petition, graduate students must acknowledge the risks associated with the elected travel to the area and sign the High-Risk Travel Waiver/Release, assuming all risk and releasing the University from any future liability for their personal choice.

Petitions should be addressed to ISO and will be reviewed by the International Travel Risk Management Committee and the vice provost for global affairs. The decision of the vice provost for global affairs will be final. The decision will be communicated to the graduate student along with the student's faculty advisor, department chair, and the dean's office.

d. Group Travel Abroad Involving Students:

Faculty/staff must petition ISO for approval for component(s) of a class or program involving travel to a country or region under a Level 3 or 4 DOS Travel Advisory, a Level 3 CDC Travel Health Notification, U.S. Department of State Sanctioned Country designation, or a University Travel Restriction. Written justification along with the approval of the faculty member's department chair and school dean must be included with the petition. Petitions should be addressed to ISO and will be reviewed by the International Travel Risk Management Committee and the vice provost for global affairs. Except in case of emergency, deans and involved faculty members will have the opportunity

to discuss their concerns and share information with the vice provost and the committee as part of the committee's review of the petition. The vice provost for global affairs will take into account the faculty member's or school's experience in or knowledge of the area subject to restriction. The vice provost for global affairs will consult as appropriate with the president, the executive vice president and provost, and the executive vice president and chief operating officer. The decision of the vice provost for global affairs will be final and will be communicated to the faculty member and dean via e-mail.

All students who join an approved program or travel component of a class must acknowledge the risks associated with the elected travel to the area and sign the High-Risk Travel Waiver/Release Form, assuming all risk and releasing the University from any future liability for their personal choice.

7. Compliance with Policy:

Failure to comply with the provisions of this policy may result in denial of transfer credit, withholding of University funding, and/or disciplinary action.

Questions about this policy should be directed to the [Office of the Vice Provost for Global Affairs](#) or the [International Studies Office](#). Questions specific to the process for petitioning for an exemption to travel to a country or region under a Level 3 or 4 DOS Travel Advisory, a Level 3 CDC Travel Health Notification, U.S. Department of State Sanctioned Country designation, or a University Travel Restriction should be directed to hoosaborad@virginia.edu.

Related Information

[FIN-055: Faculty and Staff International Travel](#)

[University Judiciary Committee](#)

[Honor Committee](#)

[ISO Education Abroad "How to Apply"](#)

[International Studies Office](#)

[Graduate Medical Education Committee Policy No. 33 \(Graduate Medical Education Trainees' International Experiences\)](#)

Major Category [Executive Vice President & Provost Policies](#)

Next Scheduled Review Monday, April 20, 2026

Revision History Added Section 6.c 12/11/23; Revised 4/20/23, 3/23/18, 11/14/17, 10/17/17, 12/5/16, 8/31/16.

Applies To Text

Academic Division.

Supersedes Policy Text

PROV-010: Travel Abroad Warning for University Students; Undergraduate Student Travel Warning Policy, August 29, 2005.

Last modified February 5, 2024 - 3:11pm

Approved By Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

Approved Date October 5, 2015 - 12:00pm