



**THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY**
WASHINGTON, DC

Responsible University Official:
Associate Provost, International Programs
Responsible Office: Office of
International Programs
Last Revised Date: June 24, 2014

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL APPROVAL

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 and related requirements set forth in this policy.

Reason for Policy

A global perspective is essential to GW’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.

Who is Governed by this Policy

Faculty, staff and students

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Policy

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all university-supported or university-related International Travel (International Travel), including but not limited to international travel for research, educational, co-curricular, or administrative purposes (with or without a student or students), international study, exchange programs, and student group travel (of any duration and whether offered for credit or not).

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 GW employees and students who, as defined by this policy, organize International Travel (Travel Organizers) or approve it (Travel Approvers). This policy further applies to International Travel to both Ordinary Risk and High Risk Destinations.

This policy describes the requirements that must be met before and during International Travel.

- A. Pre-travel Approval Requirements for individual faculty and staff Travelers and Travel Organizers are described in *Chart 1 (see page 3)*.
- B. Pre-travel Approval Requirements for undergraduate and graduate students are described in *Chart 2 (see page 4)*.
- C. Pre-travel Registration Requirements for individual faculty and staff Travelers, Travel Organizers, and undergraduate and graduate students are described in *Chart 3 (see page 5)*.
- D. Requirements applicable to Travel Approvers are listed in *Appendix A*.

Chart 1: Pre-travel Approval Requirements for Individual Faculty and Staff Travel, and for Travel Organizers

<p>Type of Faculty or Staff International Travel</p>	<p>Required Pre-travel Approval for Faculty or Staff Travel</p>
<p><u>Without students</u> to either Ordinary Risk Destinations or High Risk Destinations (see <i>Definitions</i> section)</p>	<p><i>No formal approval</i>, unless otherwise required by individual office, school, or departmental policies.</p> <p>Travelers are strongly encouraged to review International SOS Global Security Information, as well as U.S. Department of State travel planning resources and other pertinent information.</p>
<p><u>With students</u> to Ordinary Risk Destinations (see <i>Definitions</i> section)</p>	<p><u>Faculty Travel Organizers</u> - obtain approval from Sponsoring Dean.</p> <p>Note: Faculty wishing to propose <u>faculty-led study abroad with students</u> should refer to the Faculty Short-Term Abroad Program.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Staff Travel Organizers</u> - obtain approval from Sponsoring VP.</p>
<p><u>With students</u> to High Risk Destinations (see <i>Definitions</i> section)</p>	<p><u>Faculty Travel Organizers</u> - obtain approval from Sponsoring Dean and Associate Provost for International Programs.</p> <p>Note: Faculty wishing to propose <u>faculty-led study abroad with students</u> should refer to the Faculty Short-Term Abroad Program.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Staff Travel Organizers</u> - obtain approval from Sponsoring VP and Associate Provost for International Programs.</p>

Chart 2: Pre-travel Approval Requirements for Undergraduate and Graduate Students

NOTE: Student travel approval and registration are facilitated through an online program (StudioAbroad) accessed through the Office for Study Abroad website. This policy outlines student travel approval and registration requirements, but the process for completing the requirements to comply with the Policy is done electronically through StudioAbroad.

Type of International Travel	Required Written Approvals for Persons Traveling
<p><u>Undergraduate students studying internationally</u> (traveling to another country to participate in an academic program for credit or transfer credit at GW at any time of year and for any duration)</p>	<p>Students in this category must consult the Office for Study Abroad for all academic and travel policies and requirements.</p>
<p><u>Graduate students</u> participating in a program organized by GW faculty for <u>academic study</u></p>	<p>Students in this category must consult their respective Dean’s office for all academic and travel policies and requirements.</p>
<p><u>Undergraduate and Graduate students</u> traveling under the auspices of any student or other University organization that <u>does not constitute study abroad or international study</u> and those traveling individually for internship or research purposes connected to their academic work.</p>	<p><u>Ordinary Risk:</u> obtain approval from Sponsoring VP or, if connected to academic work, faculty advisor/program director/department chair.</p> <p><u>High Risk:</u> obtain approval from Sponsoring VP and Associate Provost for International Programs or, if connected to academic work, faculty advisor/program director/department chair and Associate Provost for International Programs.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> Travel on sponsored projects requires Research Service Coordinator approval.</p> <p>To submit your Travel Proposal in StudioAbroad, refer here.</p>

Chart 3: Pre-travel Registration Requirements for GW International Travel

	Faculty/Staff <i>Individual Int'l Travel</i>	Faculty/Staff Int'l Travel as a <i>Travel Organizer</i>	Student Int'l Travel to a <i>High Risk Destination</i>	Student Int'l Travel to a <i>Low Risk Destination</i>
Consult Int'l SOS Risk Assessments	•	•	•	•
Int'l SOS Travel Registration	•	•	•	•
U.S. Dept. of State Email Alert Subscription	•	•	•	•
U.S. Dept. of State Travel Registration		•	•	•
Health Insurance Coverage Verification	•	•	•	•
Consent and Acknowledgement of Risk and Release for Participation in a GW			•	•
Emergency Contact Info		•	•	•
Itinerary & In-country Contact Info Provided to GW		•	•	•
Passport Info Provided to GW		•	•	•
Int'l Cell Phone		•		
GW Contact Info		•	•	•
Pre-Departure Orientation		•	•	•

A. Consult International SOS Risk Assessments

Faculty and staff engaged in International Travel as Travel Organizers and students engaged in International Travel are required to review the security and medical risk ratings provided by International SOS for their destination(s); Faculty and staff engaged in individual International Travel are also encouraged to review the security and medical risk ratings provided by International SOS for their respective destination(s).

Faculty, staff, and students access [International SOS](#) by logging in with their Net ID and Password (same login as Blackboard).

Faculty, staff, and students are also advised to review the security warnings, alerts, travel planning resources, and other pertinent information provided by the [U.S. Department of State](#) for their destination.

B. International SOS Registration

Faculty, staff, and students engaged in International Travel are required to register their travel plans in [International SOS](#). International SOS provides coverage for medical emergencies and political threats, including coverage for evacuation services. International SOS also provides telephone advice and referrals, but it is not health insurance. Faculty, staff, and students are also required to print and carry their International SOS membership card for the duration of their travel.

Faculty and staff engaged in individual International Travel can complete the [International SOS](#) registration by logging in with their Net ID and Password (same login as Blackboard).

Faculty and staff engaged in International Travel as Travel Organizers and students engaged in International Travel shall complete [International SOS](#) registration in StudioAbroad after their travel proposal has been approved.

C. U.S. Department of State Email Alert Subscription

During the time of travel, faculty and staff engaged in individual International Travel are required to subscribe to and read e-mail alerts from the [U.S. Department of State](#) for the destination(s) to which they are traveling. Faculty and staff engaged in International Travel as Travel Organizers as well as students engaged in International Travel are also required to subscribe to e-mail alerts from the U.S. Department of State; this requirement will be satisfied as part of the process of registering their travel plans with the U.S. Department of State as stated in Section IV.D.

D. U.S. Department of State Travel Registration

Faculty and staff engaged in International Travel as Travel Organizers as well as students engaged in International Travel are required to register their travel plans with the U.S. Department of State. Travel registration with the U.S. Department of State is completed in StudioAbroad after the travel proposal has been approved.

E. Health Insurance Coverage Verification

Faculty, staff, and students engaged in International Travel are required to have sufficient health insurance coverage for the duration of their travel.

Faculty, staff, and students engaged in International Travel on an Office for Study Abroad Program will be provided with health insurance coverage through [Summit America](#).

Faculty, staff, and students engaged in International Travel on a non-Office for Study Abroad Program must verify that their own health insurance will cover them for the duration of their travel. If their own health insurance will not cover them while abroad, faculty, staff, and students may purchase short-term health insurance directly from [Summit America](#).

F. Risk and Release Form

Students engaged in International Travel are required to sign a form called "Consent and Acknowledgement of Risk and Release for Participation in a GW Supported or Related International Activity (Risk and Release Form)." The Risk and Release Form is accessible to students to read and sign electronically in StudioAbroad after the travel proposal has been approved.

G. Emergency Contact Information Provided to GW

Faculty and staff engaged in International Travel as Travel Organizers as well as students engaged in International Travel are required to provide GW with their emergency contact information. Emergency contact information is collected by GW in StudioAbroad after the travel proposal has been approved.

H. Itinerary Provided to GW

Faculty and staff engaged in International Travel as Travel Organizers as well as students engaged in International Travel are required to provide GW with their itinerary, including accommodation, transportation, and in-country contact information. Itinerary information is collected by GW in StudioAbroad after the travel proposal has been approved.

I. Passport Information Provided to GW

Faculty and staff engaged in International Travel as Travel Organizers as well as students engaged in International Travel are required to provide GW with their passport information. Passport information is collected by GW in StudioAbroad after the travel proposal has been approved.

J. International Cell Phone

Faculty and staff engaged in International Travel as Travel Organizers are required to have a cell phone that will operate in the destination country; this contact number should be recorded in StudioAbroad and provided to the appropriate Travel Approver.

Travel Organizers also must provide their Travel Approver(s) with clear instructions for contacting the local sponsoring organization or institution, or alternatively a third party in the country who will be able to confirm the group's presence and circumstances; these instructions will also be recorded in StudioAbroad.

K. GW Contact Information

Faculty and staff engaged in International Travel as Travel Organizers as well as students engaged in International Travel are required to carry the following pieces of GW contact information for the duration of their travel:

1. GW University Police Department: 202-994-6111 (24 hours)
2. GW Office of International Programs: 202-994-0470 (9am-5pm)

L. Pre-Departure Orientation

Faculty and staff engaged in International Travel as Travel Organizers are required to attend a pre-departure orientation organized by the Office for Study Abroad to cover safety, health, legal, and financial responsibilities, policies, and procedures.

Students engaged in International Travel on an Office for Study Abroad Program are required to attend a pre-departure orientation organized by the Office for Study Abroad.

Students engaged in International Travel on a non-Office for Study Abroad Program are required to attend a pre-departure orientation organized by the Office of International Programs.

M. Travel or Work Permit Visas

Faculty and staff preparing for International Travel should consult the appropriate host country embassy or embassies to understand applicable visa or work permit requirements and to obtain any such visas or work permits prior to travel. Failure to obtain the appropriate visa or work permit may prevent the traveler from entering the host country. Studying or working in the host country without appropriate authorization may also be illegal under the host country's laws.

Other GW Policies related to Pre-travel Compliance

A. Travel and Related Expenses

Faculty, staff, and students engaged in International Travel 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.

Any GW employee contemplating the offering, paying, giving or promising of travel or related expenses, or anything of value to foreign officials must also first consult the university's policy on [Compliance with Laws when Conducting University Activities Overseas](#). Any questions should be addressed to the Office of the Senior Vice President and General Counsel (OGC) at 202-994-6503.

B. Travel with Laptop Computers or Electronic Data Mobile Devices

U.S. export control laws may prohibit or restrict taking laptop computers or other electronic data mobile devices (such as GPS equipment, PDAs/Blackberries, or any device that contains encrypted software) overseas. International travelers proposing to take such devices abroad must comply with such laws and with the university's [Export Control Policy](#). In advance of travel, contact the Office of Resource Management, Operations and Emergency Preparedness at 202-994-2312 for guidance.

Definitions

High Risk Destination: A high risk destination is one that is defined by [International SOS](#) as an “extreme risk” or a “high risk” destination. All destinations that do not meet these criteria may be considered Ordinary Risk Destinations.

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:

- A. International research, teaching, and administrative travel, with or without students,
- B. Study abroad,
- C. Exchange programs, and
- D. Student group travel (of any duration and whether offered for credit or not).

For purposes of this policy, International Travel is university-related when:

- A. 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, or study at GW, or
- B. Is undertaken with or organized by any GW 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 international travel that is funded to any degree by the university.

Travel with non-GW organizations may still qualify as university-supported or university-related International Travel.

Ordinary Risk Destination: An Ordinary Risk Destination is one that is defined by [International SOS](#) as a “low risk” or a “moderate risk” destination. All destinations that do not meet these criteria may be considered High Risk Destinations.

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 The George Washington University. Examples of Travel Approvers are deans, vice presidents, and the Director of Study Abroad, each of whom has this authority under specified circumstances.

Travel Organizer: A Travel Organizer is anyone who undertakes arrangements for international travel for a group of travelers who participate in the trip voluntarily rather than as an assignment for work or school. For instance, a Travel Organizer might be a faculty member who offers a short-term overseas course, or a student activities director who invites members of a specific student group to join in an international trip. For GW-sponsored groups, Travel Organizers must obtain appropriate GW approvals under this policy to arrange for the group to study or visit outside the United States. They are also required to take specific steps outlined in this policy in preparation for the travel. Travel Organizers may or may not actually participate in the travel. A Travel Organizer does not refer to a person making travel arrangements for a group of employees traveling as part of their work assignment, such as various faculty members attending a conference or various staff members traveling for fundraising purposes.

Related Information

[A Brief Primer on Doing Business Abroad: U.S. Laws that Affect GW's International Activities](#)

[Center for Disease Control](#)

[Center for Global Education: SAFETI Clearinghouse](#)

[Compliance with Laws when Conducting University Activities Overseas](#)

[Export Control Policy](#)

[GW International](#)

[International SOS Global Security Information](#)

[International Travel Insurance Policy](#)

[Office for Study Abroad](#)

[Office of Risk Management: International Travel Assistance](#)

[Office of the Vice President and General Counsel](#)

[Summit America GW Group Travel Protection Plan Web Page](#)

[Travel, Entertainment and Business Expense Reimbursement Policy](#)

[U.S. Department of State \(Citizen Services, Student Tips, Travel Warnings, Visas\)](#)

Contacts

Contact	Telephone	Email
Office International Programs	202-994-0470	oiip@gwu.edu
Office for Study Abroad	202-994-1649	studyabr@gwu.edu

Document History

- **Last Reviewed Date:** March 19, 2018
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- **Policy Origination Date:** Unavailable

Who Approved This Policy

Louis H. Katz, Executive Vice President and Treasurer

Steven R. Lerman, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Beth Nolan, Senior Vice President and General Counsel

This policy, as well as all [university policies](#), are located on the [Office of Compliance's](#) home page.

Appendix A: Requirements for Travel Approvers

Travel Approvers are responsible for following the requirements set forth below when making determinations whether to allow or disallow university-sponsored or university-related travel.

Assessing and Approving International Travel

A. Resources to consider

Travel Approvers must consider, among other possible factors, the specific goals and activities of the anticipated travel program, the adequacy of planning and preparation of the Travel Organizer(s) or Travelers, and the general conditions they can expect to encounter. Travel Approvers must consult available information on travel, health, and security risks, including resources such as:

1. [International SOS Global Security Information](#);
2. [U.S. Department of State](#) for any travel advisories in effect, and for general information on safety and health issues;
3. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) for information on health risks for the destination);
4. [Office for Study Abroad](#); and
5. Further resources for evaluating international travel risks are set forth in the *Related Information* section of this policy.

B. Travel to High Risk Destinations such as:

1. Where travel involves a High Risk Destination, Travel Approvers must consider whether the particular project or activity can be undertaken at a later date when conditions may have improved in the country and/or whether the activity can be carried out in another country.
2. The Travel Approver has the authority to allow travel to High Risk Destinations in cases where the educational or professional benefit of the travel is, in his or her determination, sufficient to outweigh indications of risk. The Travel Approver must disallow travel in cases where educational or professional benefit is judged not to outweigh safety concerns.
3. Final approval for travel to High Risk Destinations is the responsibility of the Associate Provost for International Programs in consultation with the Office of the Senior Vice President and General Counsel, the Office of Safety and Security, and the Office of Risk Management.