



THE GEORGE  
WASHINGTON  
UNIVERSITY  
WASHINGTON DC

**Responsible University Official:**  
Associate Vice President for  
International Programs  
**Responsible Office:** Office of  
International Programs  
**Origination Date:** NA

## INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL APPROVAL POLICY

### 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 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 Needs to Know This Policy

Faculty, staff and students

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## Policy/Procedures

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### I. 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.

- Requirements applicable to Travel Organizers are described in Sections II, IV and Appendix A.
- Requirements applicable to Travel Approvers are listed in Appendix B.
- Requirements applicable to faculty and staff engaged in individual International Travel or International Travel with one or more GW students are described in Sections II and IV.
- Requirements applicable to undergraduate and graduate students who engage in International Travel are provided in Sections III and IV.

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**II. Pre-travel Requirements for Individual Faculty and Staff Travelers, and for Travel Organizers**

Type of Faculty or Staff International Travel	Required Written Approvals for Faculty or Staff Traveling	Registration with Int'l SOS Assistance Required?	GW Acknowledgement of Risk Forms Required?
<u>Without students</u> to Ordinary Risk Destinations (see <i>Definitions</i> section)	<b>None</b> , unless otherwise required by individual office, school, or departmental policies. Travelers are strongly encouraged to review <a href="#">International SOS Global Security Information</a> , as well as <a href="#">U.S. Department of State</a> travel planning resources and other pertinent information	Yes, for all travelers	No
<u>Without students</u> to High Risk Destinations (see <i>Definitions</i> section)	<b>None</b> , unless otherwise required by individual office, school, or departmental policies. Travelers are strongly encouraged to review <a href="#">International SOS Global Security Information</a> , as well as <a href="#">U.S. Department of State</a> security warnings, alerts, travel planning resources, and other pertinent information	Yes, for all travelers	No
<u>With students</u> to Ordinary Risk Destinations (see <i>Definitions</i> section)	<p><u>Faculty Travel Organizers</u> must review and follow the procedures at <a href="http://international.gwu.edu/Policies.aspx">http://international.gwu.edu/Policies.aspx</a> and in Appendix A</p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 10px auto;"/> <p><u>Staff Travel Organizers</u> must obtain approval from sponsoring VP and the Associate VP for International Programs</p>	Yes, for all travelers	Standard Form Required for Students
<u>With students</u> to High Risk Destinations (see <i>Definitions</i> section)	<p><u>Faculty Travel Organizers</u> must review and follow the procedures at <a href="http://international.gwu.edu/Policies.aspx">http://international.gwu.edu/Policies.aspx</a> and in Appendix A</p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 10px auto;"/> <p><u>Staff Travel Organizers</u> must obtain approval from Sponsoring VP and the Associate VP for International Programs</p>	Yes, for all travelers	Standard Form and High Risk Forms for Students Required

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**III. Pre-travel Requirements for *Students***

Type of International Travel	Required Written Approvals for Persons Traveling	Registration with Int'l SOS Assistance Required?	GW Acknowledgement of Risk Forms Required?
<b><u>FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS</u></b>			
<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)	Students in this category must consult the Office for Study Abroad for all academic and travel policies and requirements	Yes, for all travelers	Standard Form Required; additional High Risk Form for High Risk Destinations
<u>Undergraduate students</u> traveling under the auspices of any student or other university organization that <u>does not constitute study abroad</u> or international study and those traveling internationally solo for internship or research purposes connected to their academic work	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Ordinary Risk</u> – Sponsoring VP or, if connected to academic work, Associate VP for International Programs.  <b>Risk levels are in Definitions, below.</b></p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin: auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>High Risk</u> – Sponsoring VP and Associate VP for International Programs</p>	Yes, for all travelers	Standard Form Required; additional High Risk Form for High Risk Destinations
<b><u>FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS</u></b>			
<u>Graduate students</u> participating in a program organized by GW faculty for <u>academic study</u>	Students in this category must consult the Office of Study Abroad for all academic and travel policies and requirements.	Yes, for all travelers	Standard Form Required; additional High Risk Form for High Risk Destinations
<u>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 internationally solo for internship or research purposes connected to their academic work.	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Ordinary Risk</u> – Report travel plans to chair or program director and review and follow the procedures at <a href="http://international.gwu.edu/Policies.aspx">http://international.gwu.edu/Policies.aspx</a>                      Travel on sponsored projects requires Research Service Coordinator approval  <b>Risk levels are in Definitions, below.</b></p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin: auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>High Risk</u> – Associate VP for International Programs</p>	Yes, for all travelers	Standard Form Required; additional High Risk Form for High Risk Destinations

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### IV. Additional Requirements Applicable to all International Travelers

#### A. International Travel Insurance Requirement

**Prior to departure, all individuals who undertake International Travel must register for International SOS Assistance per the University's [International Travel Insurance Policy](#). Registration is available through the [Office of Risk Management](#). [International SOS Assistance](#) provides coverage for medical emergencies and political threats, including coverage for worldwide evacuation services and full-scale evacuation by private air ambulance. SOS also provides telephone advice and referrals. SOS is not health insurance.**

Travelers planning to travel as part of a group or program and who are uncertain as to whether they have been registered for International SOS Assistance should contact their Travel Organizer or the Office of Risk Management at (202) 994-3265.

#### B. Health Insurance Requirement

Students engaged in International Travel will either be provided with health insurance coverage through the Office for Study Abroad or will be required to retain their own health insurance policy, which must include sufficient coverage for the duration of the International Travel. Faculty and staff must provide their own health coverage and should check with their insurance carrier for details.

#### C. Preparedness and Review of Pertinent Information

Prior to departure all international travelers are strongly encouraged to review [International SOS Global Security Information](#), 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 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. 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 U.S. 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.

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### E. 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.

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### Forms

[Acknowledgement of Risk Form](#)

[Acknowledgement of High Risk Form](#)

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### Website Addresses for This Policy

[GW University Policies](#)

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### Contacts

Subject	Contact	Telephone	E-mail
International Travel Approval	Office International Programs <a href="http://www.specialacademic.gwu.edu/">http://www.specialacademic.gwu.edu/</a>	(202) 994-0470	<a href="mailto:sipadmin@gwu.edu">sipadmin@gwu.edu</a>
	Office for Study Abroad <a href="http://www.gwu.edu/~studyabr">www.gwu.edu/~studyabr</a>	(202) 994-1649	<a href="mailto:studyabr@gwu.edu">studyabr@gwu.edu</a>

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### 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:

- international research, teaching, and administrative travel, with or without students,
- study abroad,
- exchange programs, and

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- student group travel (of any duration and whether offered for credit or not).

For 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, or study at GW, or
- 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 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 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**

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[A Brief Primer on Doing Business Abroad: U.S. Laws that Affect GW's International Activities](#)  
[Compliance with U.S. Laws when Conducting University Activities Overseas](#)  
[Export Control Policy](#)  
[GW International](#)  
[International Travel Insurance Policy](#)  
[Travel, Entertainment and Business Expense Reimbursement Policy](#)  
[Office for Study Abroad](#)  
[Office of Risk Management: International Travel Assistance](#)  
[Office of the Vice President and General Counsel](#)  
[Center for Disease Control](#)  
[Center for Global Education: SAFETI Clearinghouse](#)  
[International SOS Global Security Information](#)  
[U.S. Department of State](#) (Citizen Services, Student Tips, Travel Warnings, Visas)

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## **Appendices**

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**Appendix A**                      **Requirements for Travel Organizers**

**Appendix B**                      **Requirements for Travel Approvers**

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## **Who Approved This Policy**

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Robert A. Chernak, Senior VP for Student and Academic Support Services  
Laurel Price Jones, Vice President for Advancement  
Louis H. Katz, Executive Vice President and Treasurer  
Donald R. Lehman, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Beth Nolan, Senior Vice President and General Counsel  
John F. Williams, Provost and Vice President for Health Affairs

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## **History/Revision Dates**

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**Origination Date:**                      NA  
**Last Amended Date:**                      June 17, 2008  
**Next Review Date:**                      June 30, 2010

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## Appendix A

### REQUIREMENTS FOR TRAVEL ORGANIZERS

Note: Those wishing to propose faculty-led study abroad with students should refer to <http://www.studyabroad.gwu.edu/ShortTermPrograms/faculty.cfm>.

- A. Orientation for Faculty and Other Group Travel Organizers.** Prior to traveling with a GW student or students to an international destination, Travel Organizers must attend an orientation session organized by the Office for Study Abroad 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:
- Telephone and other contact information for their SOS travel assistance;
  - Emergency contact information for all travelers;
  - Telephone and email contacts for appropriate GW offices (approver, dean, supervisor, or Office of Special and International Programs as appropriate); and
  - The number for 24-hour emergency contact at GW: Campus Police at (202) 994-6111 (after office hours, ask for the shift supervisor).

Traveler Organizers are responsible for providing 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. International Cell Phone.** Travel Organizers are required to have a cell phone that will operate in the destination country; this contact number and another contact number must be left with appropriate parties at GW (e.g., Travel Approver, Dean, Office for Study Abroad).

Travel Organizers also must provide the 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.

- D. Registration with Consular Officials.** Travel Organizers must register groups with U.S. consular officials in the destination country. Organizers should go to <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/> to register.

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## Appendix B

### 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:

- [International SOS Global Security Information](#)
- U.S. Department of State website for any travel advisories in effect, and for general information on safety and health issues ([http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel\\_1744.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html));
- The Centers for Disease Control website for information on health risks for the destination (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx>);
- Office for Study Abroad website ([www.gwu.edu/~studyabr](http://www.gwu.edu/~studyabr)); and
- Further resources for evaluating international travel risks are set forth in the *Related Information* section of this policy.

#### **B. Travel to High Risk Destinations**

- 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.
- The Travel Approver must disallow travel in cases where educational or professional benefit is judged not to outweigh safety concerns.
- 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.

#### Once International Travel Has Been Approved

**A. International SOS Assistance:** International Travel Approvers must advise travelers that, in order to participate in a GW international activity, they must register for International SOS Assistance per the [International Travel Insurance Policy](#). (For information and forms see the Office of Risk Management website at

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[http://www.gwu.edu/~riskmgnt/program/insurance/intl\\_travel\\_insurance.cfm](http://www.gwu.edu/~riskmgnt/program/insurance/intl_travel_insurance.cfm)) as described in section IV (A) of this policy.

- B. Health Insurance:** Travel Approvers must advise international travelers of the Health Insurance requirements listed at section IV (B) of this policy.
- C. Contact Information:** Travel Approvers must obtain emergency contact information for all international traveler(s), including U.S. Traveler's emergency home contact information and how to reach them while abroad.

Travel Approvers seeking guidance on these or any other travel requirements should consult the Office of Special and International Programs or the Office for Study Abroad.