



Policy Title:	International Travel
Policy Number:	UNIV-491
Revision Date:	September 2023
Policies Superseded:	N/A
Policy Management Area(s):	Center for Global Engagement

SUMMARY

The regulations in this statement govern international travel. In support of the University's mission, the University respects the academic freedom of all students, faculty and staff to pursue international research, educational activities and service and recognizes that important work may sometimes take place in locations that pose unusual health and safety risks. The University recognizes that travelers have significant responsibility for their own health, safety and security. The University also has an institutional interest in promoting this health, safety and security while pursuing its mission. This policy defines basic institutional requirements that will promote these joint interests.

POLICY

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. CCU Related Travel Abroad (CCURTA) - is defined in terms of two traveler roles:
 - 1. CCU Faculty/Staff CCURTA: Faculty or Staff members who are involved in Travel Abroad within the context of their job responsibilities are considered to be on CCURTA. If faculty or staff members receive CCU funds or CCU-managed funds for travel, then they are on CCURTA, but such funding is not necessary to identify a trip as CCURTA (for example, a faculty member traveling to deliver an invited presentation in her field, supported by the international host, is considered to be on CCURTA). While a trip might include personal activities outside of the traveler's job responsibilities, if the primary purpose is work-related the trip is CCURTA.
 - 2. Student CCURTA: Student in Travel Abroad include any person traveling in a Student participant role who meets one or more of the following criteria:
 - 1. Receives University in-residence credit for the experience.
 - 2. Travels on a program or trip that is University Managed or Organized.
 - 3. Participates in a travel abroad experience that is necessary to achieve a degree requirement. This could include experiences such as degree milestones, dissertation field research, practica, internships, etc.
 - 4. Travels on a program or trip organized by a Sponsored Student Organization

- or a program or trip that is formally sanctioned by a University unit as a Sponsored Event.
5. Receives funding from a University unit or receives funds managed by the University for their travel.
- B. Group Travel Abroad - a cohort of University student participants with similar program experience dates, itinerary, related activities at the destination, and identical or related accommodations, for whom an organizer or leader is assuming some responsibility on CCURTA. There is significant interdependence of participants within the cohort. Group travel abroad may be for study, research, joint project work, athletic or other competitions, musical performances, or similar University activities.
- C. High-Risk Activities – known and/or planned activities during CCURTA, which obligate risk mitigation considerations and practices. Activities include, but are not limited to, the following:
1. Activities excluded from the University’s international insurance coverage;
 2. Use of power tools, engaging in construction type activities, using farm implements, operating heavy machinery;
 3. Handling of bio-hazardous materials (e.g. blood products, bodily fluids, etc.);
 4. Working in a lab without a lab safety course available;
 5. Performing medical procedures or interventions of any kind;
 6. Operation of a motorized vehicle;
 7. Visiting an area known for high risks: refugee camps, areas of known disease (e.g. garbage dumps, high risk mosquito related disease areas, highly contagious disease areas, etc.); or
 8. Impact/service/interventions to and/or with at-risk populations to include but not limited to poor, frail, disabled, economically disadvantaged, homeless, racial and ethnic minorities, persons with low literacy, victims of abuse or persecution, and persons with social risk factors such as isolation.
- D. High-Risk Travel - travel to areas with heightened risk to the health, safety, and/or security of travelers as noted by US Department of State, Centers for Disease Control, or other sources.
- E. International Experience – is considered University-Managed or University-Organized when a University unit, faculty or staff member is involved in creating, funding, or approving the experience, or coordinating the applications and selection of participants.
- F. International Travel Risk Management Committee (ITRMC) – the committee responsible for evaluating the risks posed, mitigation factors, and conditions for participation to support health, safety and security of those engaged in CCURTA.

- G. International Crisis Management Team (ICMT) – is defined as the group of directors and University officers of areas impacted by an emergent incident occurring on CCURTA that comes together to develop response strategies and follow up activities to support the health, safety, and security of participants and reputation of the University.

- H. Travel Abroad - refers to university travel to destinations outside the fifty states of the United States of America and the District of Columbia. While the State of South Carolina classifies travel to Canada as non-foreign travel, for the purposes of risk management and support by international insurance for incidents that may occur in Canada, this policy includes travel to Canada as travel abroad.

II. UNIVERSITY TRAVEL ABROAD REQUESTS

- A. Requests to Travel Abroad will be submitted and reviewed through a process led by the Associate Provost designated as Senior International Officer, on behalf of the Office of the Provost, with review levels dependent upon the level and types of risk in the destination(s) of intended travel and the activities proposed therein. Further details will be provided about this process and outcomes at the University Travel webpage: <https://www.coastal.edu/financialservices/ap/inside/travel/>.

- B. All Travel Authorizations requesting travel support for international travel MUST have the approved International Travel Request attached and must follow all guidelines per FAST-201 Travel – Authorization, Expenditures and Reimbursement and STUD-333 Student Travel Policy.

III. GROUP TRAVEL ABROAD

For group travel abroad, risk is magnified by the increasing numbers of participants, as well as the interdependence of participants within the cohort, and because an organizer or leader is assuming some responsibility for others within the cohort.

- A. University-Organized or University-Managed Group Travel Abroad
Group travel abroad (faculty-led short-term study abroad programs, research group travel, faculty/staff travel with students abroad for research, competition, conferences) that is organized or managed by a University unit must be approved in advance by the Dean or designated administrator of each academic or business unit in which the program in addition to complying with requests for Travel Abroad as noted above. Sponsoring units or leaders are responsible for:
 1. Obtaining approval from the Dean or designated administrator as specified by the sponsoring School / College / Unit;
 2. Completing the review process for the respective program based on the

- timelines/guidance as published annually by the Center for Global Engagement.
3. Ensuring that all trip itinerary, lodging, and overseas contact information is entered into the University Travel Registry for each participant and any accompanying faculty/staff.
 4. Verifying that all participants have obtained travel abroad health insurance through the University's authorized vendor.
 5. Ensuring that all University guidance relative to travel abroad is followed, including requirements relative to warnings and restrictions.
 6. Following best practices for: health, safety and security planning; pre-departure orientation; on-site activities; and post-trip review.
 7. Following any additional unit-level guidance or requirements for Student travel.

Student group travel under the auspices of a Sponsored Student Organization (SSO) or Voluntary Student Organization (VSO) whose travel is formally sanctioned by the University as a Sponsored Event, are considered University organized and managed. The sponsoring unit is responsible for ensuring that the tasks listed above are completed.

B. Travel Abroad Health and Travel Support Insurance

Students, faculty, and staff on CCURTA are covered under the University's travel abroad health insurance policy.

All students, faculty, and staff on CCURTA are required to have travel abroad health insurance coverage from the University's authorized vendor, regardless of whether the traveler has other health care coverage. Travelers are responsible for verifying travel abroad health insurance coverage either through self-enrollment or coordination with their sponsoring units. Units sponsoring CCURTA are responsible for informing travelers of this travel abroad health insurance requirement.

Costs of the Travel Abroad Health Insurance are to be covered by individual traveler and/or the sponsoring units and are eligible to be included on costs covered on a University Travel Authorization per FAST 201 Travel – Authorization, Expenditures and Reimbursement. The process for filing for Travel Abroad Health Insurance is managed by the Center for Global Engagement.

All University faculty, staff, and students are responsible for covering incidental expenses incurred for medical support while involved in CCURTA, maintaining receipts, and working with the Office of Risk Management to file claims for recovery of covered expenditures as included in the University Travel Abroad Health Insurance and/or as directed.

III. UNIVERSITY TRAVEL REGISTRY

The University Travel Registry is a confidential and secure database for maintaining key information for CCURTA. The University's Senior International Officer, Associate Provost for Global Initiatives, on behalf of the Office of the Provost, is responsible for the overall management of the University International Travel Registry.

The University Travel Registry is the official and authoritative source of traveler information for locating and communicating with travelers abroad, responding to emergencies, and managing media and public relations during critical incidents abroad. It also serves as the central source of travel abroad data for institutional reporting.

All those participating in CCURTA must register their travel in the University Travel Registry before the expected departure date. This is completed by filing the request for Travel Abroad Health and Travel insurance as noted above. Whenever possible, travelers are expected to update the registration, including travel dates, destinations, and on-site contact information, if updated information becomes available.

Individual travelers are responsible for verifying their travel registration through either self-registration or coordination with their sponsoring units.

Units sponsoring CCURTA are responsible for informing travelers of this requirement.

A. Emergency Evacuation Insurance and Support

All participants in CCURTA are covered under an insurance policy for emergency evacuation due to political unrest or natural disaster. The decision to activate this evacuation support is made by the evacuation insurance provider in coordination with the Associate Provost designated as the Senior International Officer on behalf of the Office of the Provost.

Students, faculty or staff who remain in-country after being advised to evacuate will not be eligible for University funding or academic credit related to the travel experience and may be subject to disciplinary action.

B. University Travel Compliance in High-Risk Travel Settings

1. Students cannot be required to participate in any travel abroad experience in destinations subject to High-Risk Travel declarations. If Travel Abroad to an area deemed to be High-Risk Travel is required for a student's degree requirements, an alternative destination or experience should be arranged.
 - a. All student CCURTA to High-Risk Travel settings must occur under an ITRMC approved safety plan, either submitted individually or as a group. Faculty or staff managing or organizing student group travel abroad are responsible for developing and seeking approval of safety plans through appropriate processes. Individual faculty/staff travelers on CCURTA are not

required to complete a safety plan but are strongly encouraged to do so.

- b. Participants to High-Risk Travel Settings will be expected to follow all requirements/conditions of travel as set by University approval of the respective travel.

C. Support During Crisis or Incident in Travel Abroad

The University will maintain an on-call response for incidents and crises taking place on CCURTA. The Associate Provost designated as Senior International Officer will be responsible for organizing, communicating, and designating staffing for this response readiness. In the event of an incident or crisis that requires additional campus collaboration, the Associate Provost designated as Senior International Officer will call the International Crisis Management Team (ICMT) composed of directors and University officers of areas impacted by the respective incident. On the basis of the ICMT findings, appropriate follow on activities will be undertaken to support the health, safety, and security of all participants and the reputation of the University.