

## **R-7: INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL POLICY FOR PENN STATE STUDENTS, STAFF AND FACULTY**

### **Preamble:**

Penn State is committed to providing credible international experiences that will enhance our students' journey toward global citizenship. Helping our students to acquire critical global competencies through immersion experiences requires us to manage the risks that exist and validate that they are commensurate with the potential benefits to the participants and their academic experience.

The University discourages faculty members, students, and staff from traveling to countries on the U.S. State Department Travel Warnings list. **However, exceptions can be made using the process outlined below.** Exceptions and waivers would be based upon proposals by each person or group proposing the travel and would be reviewed by a Standing Advisory Committee appointed by the Vice Provost for International Programs. The findings by this Committee as well as other inputs from other expert sources on the country being visited will inform the Vice Provost's recommendation to the Executive Vice President and Provost who has the final authority to approve or reject such proposals.

### **Guidelines:**

The University will continue its current practice of suspending Education Abroad-affiliated programs in countries under active U.S. State Department Travel Warnings. However, exemptions can be granted as follows:

1. Faculty members may petition for a waiver to lead a short-term program involving students to travel to safer areas of countries under active State Department Travel Warnings. The standing advisory committee will evaluate petitions on a case-by-case basis with a written proposal outlining the detailed travel plan brought forward by the lead faculty member. The proposer should clearly give the compelling reasons for the travel in the proposal, the awareness of the inherent risks associated with the trip and efforts to minimize these risks.
2. Students can also petition for a waiver to study for semester or academic year Education Abroad-affiliated programs, which have been suspended because they are in countries under active Department of State travel warnings. A list of Education Abroad-affiliated programs can be found at: <http://www.international.psu.edu/> . A student's petition must show evidence of an excellent academic record, a solid rationale for studying in the suspended program, and due diligence in understanding the risks involved with studying in a nation under travel warning status and efforts to minimize the risks. If the student's petition for a waiver is approved by the Standing Advisory Committee, the student would be eligible to apply for financial aid through Penn State's Office of Student Aid.
3. Travel by faculty members with legitimate and compelling need to travel to countries on the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) list can be permitted only through a similar

petition process as outlined below, where the University has secured a license from the U.S. Department of Treasury. If the petition is approved by the Executive Vice President and Provost, University or grant-based support will be permitted for the travel.

**Procedure:**

1. A standing advisory committee formed by the Vice Provost for International Programs will review proposals from faculty members and students proposing educational programs including research study that involve travel in countries under active State Department Travel Warnings. The Committee is chaired by the University Office of International Program's (UOIP) Director of Education Abroad.
2. The Committee includes two faculty members with active engagement in international educational activities, along with representatives from the Graduate School, the Office of Undergraduate Education, the Office of Risk Management, the Office of Public Affairs, as well as the Director of the Center for Studies of International Terrorism.
3. The Committee will meet periodically to review faculty and student requests for international travel to sensitive areas. The Committee will make its recommendation to the Vice Provost for International Programs, who will use it as the basis for making final recommendations to the Executive Vice President and Provost. If approved, the program may then proceed.
4. Finally, students and faculty approved for travel to countries under a U.S. State Department Travel Warning must sign a waiver with the UOIP that Penn State will not be held liable for anything that may happen to them in connection with their travels to such countries.

Approved: Executive Vice President and Provost Rodney Erickson (7-03-08)

Please refer questions concerning the above policy to:  
Director of Education Abroad, 406A Boucke Building, University Park, PA 16802  
Telephone: (814) 863-6035; Email: [jmk13@psu.edu](mailto:jmk13@psu.edu)

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