

**Guidelines and Procedures  
University-sponsored Travel to High-Risk Locations**

**University of Kansas  
Office of International Programs**

*April 4, 2018*

***Policy Statement***

The quality of the educational experiences and the health, safety, and security of students, faculty, and staff are the first priorities of the University of Kansas. Due to concerns for student and employee health and safety, the University of Kansas does not support student participation in university-affiliated international activities or the development and administration of formal education abroad programming (to include all international, for-credit and non-credit experiential learning activities) to locations categorized as *Level 3: Reconsider Travel* or *Level 4: Do Not Travel* by the U.S. Department of State or classified as *Warning Level 3: Avoid Non-Essential Travel* by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Students will not receive university sponsorship—including credit for academic programs, financial aid and scholarships, funding for research, or endorsement of co-curricular and extracurricular activities—if traveling to these countries.

The classification level applied to each country can be accessed at the [U.S. Department of State website](#). Information on Level 3 or Level 4 regional designations within a country is available by reading the country-specific advisory. A list of countries under a Warning Level 3 health advisory can be accessed at the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website](#). These lists are updated regularly.

***Exceptional Circumstances***

*Undergraduate Students*

Exceptions to this policy will be considered by petition to the International Travel Review Committee (ITRC), a standing committee of faculty and administrative personnel that meets three or more times each year to consider proposals for KU-sponsorship of international activities in countries, regions, or specific locations given a Level 3 or Level 4 designation by the U.S. Department of State or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Approval by the ITRC is contingent upon submission of a written description of the proposed international activities, a detailed risk assessment and management plan, and the finding of a compelling academic rationale for the proposed international activities to take place. All persons who travel under an exception to this policy will be required to sign an Assumption of Risk and General Waiver and Release form, as a condition of the travel.

*Graduate Students/Faculty*

The University of Kansas recognizes that faculty and graduate students may wish to conduct academic research in countries or regions currently categorized as Level 3 or Level 4 by the U.S. Department of State or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and has made special provisions to accommodate these needs, based on level of risk.

- *Level 3: Reconsider Travel (U.S. Department of State)*

Faculty and graduate students who wish to conduct University-sponsored research in a country or location categorized as Level 3 by the U.S. Department of State must complete and submit

the Faculty, Staff, Post-Doctoral Fellows and Research Scientist Assumption of Risk and General Release Form or the Graduate Student Assumption of Risk and General Release Form, as appropriate, and found [here](#). The original form will be maintained in the Office of International Programs. A copy of the form will be forwarded to the KU Center for Research and the Office of Export Compliance.

In addition, all graduate students must register international travel activities with the KU Office of Study Abroad. Please refer to the [University-affiliated Student International Travel Policy](#) for details. Graduate students must have a completed international travel registration and Graduate Student Assumption of Risk and General Release Form on file prior to departure for University sponsorship to be approved.

- *Level 4: Do Not Travel (U.S. Department of State) or Warning Level 3: Avoid Non-Essential Travel (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)*

Faculty who wish to conduct University-sponsored research in a country or location categorized as *Level 4: Do Not Travel* by the U.S. Department of State or *Warning Level 3: Avoid Non-Essential Travel* by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention must complete and submit the Faculty, Staff, Post-Doctoral Fellows and Research Scientist Assumption of Risk and General Release Form found [here](#). The original form will be maintained in the Office of International Programs. A copy of the form will be forwarded to the KU Center for Research and the Office of Export Compliance.

Graduate students who wish to engage in University-sponsored activities in a country or location categorized as *Level 4: Do Not Travel* by the U.S. Department of State or *Warning Level 3: Avoid Non-Essential Travel* by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention must submit a written description of the proposed international activities (including flight itinerary and accommodation information) and a detailed risk assessment and management plan to the International Travel Review Committee (ITRC). If travel approval is granted by the ITRC, completion of the Graduate Student Assumption of Risk and General Release Form as well as registration of international travel through the Student International Travel Registry will also be required as noted above.

### ***Procedures for Seeking Policy Exception***

The University of Kansas wishes to provide high quality, international academic experiences for all students. While the University strongly urges undergraduate and graduate students to avoid travel, study, research or other international activities in countries where the U.S. Department of State has issued a Level 3 or Level 4 Travel Advisory or for which the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has issued a Warning Level 3, it has established a review process by which travel may be approved.

**International Travel Review Committee (ITRC).** A standing committee of institutional representatives will be appointed by the Associate Vice Provost for International Programs. The committee is charged with reviewing proposals from faculty for undergraduate or graduate group activities and from students for individual study, research, or other university-affiliated activities in locations categorized as *Level 3: Reconsider Travel* or *Level 4: Do Not Travel* by the U.S. Department of State or classified as *Warning Level 3: Avoid Non-Essential Travel* by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The committee will determine whether the proposed international activities should be permitted and, if so, recommend to the Office of the Provost that KU sponsor the proposed activities.

Voting members of the committee shall be tenured or tenure-track faculty. Committee members shall serve staggered three-year terms and may be reappointed. The following units/constituencies should be represented:

- Associate Deans/Chairs, College Liberal Arts and Sciences
- Associate Deans, Professional Schools
- Area Studies Centers
- Faculty members at large
- *ex officio*: Associate Vice Provost for International Programs  
Director of Study Abroad  
General Counsel and/or Office of Risk Management  
Chair/Director of Unit Offering Program  
Faculty with expertise in the regions in question

### ***Petition for Exception to Policy***

**Faculty-Led Education Abroad Programs or University-Affiliated International Travel Activities.** KU faculty and staff interested in offering undergraduate or graduate group study, internship, research or service programs, departments seeking to take students abroad for experiential activities (athletic competitions, music performances, etc.), or student organizations seeking to travel to a country, region, or specific location given a Level 3 or 4 designation by the U.S. Department of State should complete the following steps. (*NOTE: completing the process below does not guarantee that the program will be approved by the ITRC.*)

1. Contact the Director of Study Abroad to discuss the proposed program or activity and the program approval process. At this meeting, the departmental representative will be provided copies of the country-specific information developed by the U.S. Department of State and the Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC). The specific risks outlined in these documents will be discussed along with the individual or unit's expertise and past experiences in the country in question. For credit-bearing education abroad programs, copies of the Faculty-Director Program Proposal Forms will be distributed, and future steps in program development outlined.
2. After meeting with the Study Abroad Director and staff, the unit must submit the following documents to the Office of Study Abroad by the deadlines listed below for review by the ITRC:
  - Program Proposal form completed in collaboration with the Office of Study Abroad. Special attention should be given to the areas of "Academic Program Overview" (if applicable), "Health and Safety Concerns" and "Risk Management," ensuring the proposal addresses the rationale for academic study/research/experiential learning in the proposed country as well as each of the concerns outlined in the Department of State Travel Advisory and/or other travel advisory documents.
  - Detailed program itinerary.
  - Course syllabus, including course objectives, assignments, modes of assessment, and expected outcomes (if applicable)
  - Qualifications and experience of the faculty director or unit in leading student groups abroad, and specifically to the location in question (i.e., professional and/or personal experience in the host country, experience in traveling abroad with students, etc.)

**Individual Student Petitions.** Individual students seeking approval to participate in university-affiliated international activities in a country, region, or specific location given a Level 3 or 4 designation by the U.S. Department of State list should complete the following steps. *(NOTE: completing the process below does not guarantee that the program will be approved by the ITRC.)*

1. Schedule a meeting with the Office of Study Abroad Program Coordinator who oversees the geographic region to which the student hopes to travel. For a list of Study Abroad Program Coordinators and their regional oversight, visit <http://www.studyabroad.ku.edu/index.cfm?FuseAction=StaffMain.Home> At this meeting, students will be provided with copies of the country-specific information developed by the U.S. Department of State, the Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), or other sources. The specific risks outlined in these documents will be discussed, along with other alternate programs or locations which potentially meet the academic and personal needs of the student.
2. After the meeting with the Office of Study Abroad, should the student still want to pursue approval for university-sponsored travel to a high-risk location, the following must be submitted to the Office of Study Abroad for review by ITRC by the deadlines listed below:
  - Petition letter providing a description of the proposed international activities, a detailed risk assessment and personal risk management plan, the academic rationale for the proposed international activities and information on why these academic goals cannot be achieved through an alternate program/destination.
  - Detailed information on the study abroad program and/or host institution to which the student is applying, including contact information (name, address, phone/fax, email, web, other), if applicable.
  - Crisis management plans for the study abroad program and/or host institution abroad, if applicable.
  - Undergraduate Student Assumption of Risk and General Release Form for Travel to a High-Risk Location *(NOTE: this document must also be signed by a parent or legal guardian and notarized prior to submission)* or the Graduate Student Assumption of Risk and General Release Form, as appropriate.

### **Submission Instructions**

The ITRC meets three or more times each year to review proposals for travel to countries currently under a U.S. State Department Travel Advisory Level 3 or Level 4. Late proposals cannot be accommodated.

#### ***Proposal Submission Deadlines***

March 15	<u>Individual student proposals</u> for travel occurring between May 15 and December 31 (Summer or Fall semester travel)
May 15	<u>Faculty-Led Education Abroad Programs or University-Affiliated International Travel proposals</u> for travel occurring between December 15 through May 14 (Winter Break, Spring Break, and Spring semester travel)
October 15	<u>Individual student proposals</u> for travel occurring between January 1 and May 14 (Spring semester travel)

Faculty-Led Education Abroad Programs or University-Affiliated International Travel proposals for travel occurring between May 15 and December 14 (Summer and Fall semester programs)

Proposals must be submitted to the OSA:

The Office of Study Abroad  
1410 Jayhawk Blvd. Room 108  
Lawrence, KS 66045  
Phone: 785-864-3742  
Fax: 785-864-5040  
[studyabroad@ku.edu](mailto:studyabroad@ku.edu)

The Office of Study Abroad will forward all petitions received by the deadlines listed above to the ITRC for review. If approved, students and faculty must work within the procedures established by the KU Office of Study Abroad for overseas study and/or faculty-led program administration.

***Emergency and Unforeseen Circumstances***

Approval by the International Travel Review Committee does not guarantee that a program will be offered by the University of Kansas or that an exception will not be revoked. In the event the U.S. Department of State modifies the Travel Advisory level for a country to which KU study abroad, research, or other international travel activities have been approved or are currently operating, KU, at the discretion of the Provost, may respond by withdrawing the exception authorizing a university-affiliated international activity, which may include cancelling a program or requiring the student(s) to leave the country of an activity already in progress. All participating parties will be notified of the change in the U.S. Department of State Travel Advisory and KU's response. In the event programs are in-progress, copies of the notification will be sent to students' emergency contacts and/or parents or legal guardians, as appropriate.