



Seattle University

Safety Policy for International Travel with a Leader Representing SU

Winter 2012

*This replaces the **University International Student Travel Policy** and includes all international travel when an SU representative is responsible for the leadership of a group of participants through SU affiliation.*

Seattle University is committed to providing international travel opportunities for study, research, service, training, missions and other activities that fulfill SU's mission. The university has established policies to reasonably ensure that these activities are conducted safely.

Program Leaders

Faculty and staff with leadership responsibilities for SU international programs are legally acting as representatives of the university. While on campus, many safety issues are managed by campus departments such as Public Safety, facilities, Student Health Services and housing. However, when traveling, all safety concerns become the responsibility of program leaders who are entrusted to use their best judgment on behalf of the university and program participants.

Information and Judgment

Program leaders are responsible for staying informed of on-the-ground conditions. The design of the program activities and locations should avoid exposing participants and the university to unreasonable risk. With the guidance of Education Abroad Office (EAO) staff, program leaders are responsible for making and executing emergency plans appropriate to local conditions. They are also responsible for assisting participants with health issues and on-the-ground logistics.

Training

Program leaders are required to attend safety training before they can lead programs that involve international group travel. Students are also required to attend training before they travel internationally. The EAO coordinates this training. In addition, program leaders are expected to prepare their participants for local conditions (including culture and personal safety) and emergency plans related to the specific program.

Participant Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of SU and its program leaders to prepare for a safe experience through program design, location choices and advance training for participants. However, participants are ultimately responsible for their own choices and decisions.

Safe Conditions

It is the policy of Seattle University that program activities which involve leadership of a group abroad may not:

- Travel to locations where there are official warnings about safety and health such as those issued by the [US Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs](#), the [World Health Organization](#) and the [Department of Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control](#).
- Travel to locations where there is a high likelihood of crime, violence, catastrophe, injury or illness
- Engage in activities that jeopardize health or safety

Documentation and Approval

Leaders who represent SU for international travel should provide a written risk assessment to the EAO at least six months prior to departure. The risk assessment guide follows on page three. EAO will approve the proposed travel or suggest improvements/alternatives. One month before travel, the risk assessment should be updated with EAO. Additionally, program leaders must monitor local conditions throughout the program and be prepared to change the program or leave the location if conditions become unsafe.

Exceptions

In extraordinary circumstances, SU may consider an exception to the travel warning policy (see above under “Safe Conditions”). Such circumstances could include programs and program leaders with a long and safe history in a specific location; program activities that are restricted to local areas that are not affected by country-wide concerns; student participants who are uniquely qualified for the proposed activities.

Request for an exception should be made in writing to EAO with strong evidence supporting the determination of the program leader that risk is minimal. This is required at the time a proposal is submitted for approval or when changing conditions make travel unsafe. A standing Risk Assessment Committee appointed by the Associate Provost for Global Engagement will determine whether or not to recommend an exception and, if so, under what conditions. This committee may also determine that they wish to convene a special review committee to evaluate the request for exception. Recommendations will be made to the provost who will make the final determination. Program leaders will be notified in writing by EAO.



Seattle University

Risk Assessment Guide

Winter 2012

Safety is not a static state, but requires ongoing assessment and judgment. Risk assessment considers whether or not an unsafe event is likely and how severe the consequences could be. A risk assessment is an objective evaluation of relevant conditions and plans to mitigate likely risks. Assessments that do not accurately reflect local conditions raise serious doubts about the qualifications of program leaders.

Determinations of safety and risk include assessment of:

- the qualifications of those involved – leaders, participants and partners
- the geographic location, its political and legal environment and its history of safety (provide a map of the specific locations where program activities will take place)
- the physical environment including roads, buildings and equipment
- modes of ground transportation
- proximity to emergency and health support such as hospitals
- the number of participants and leaders
- design of the program including types of activities and established rules
- established emergency procedures and participant training
- awareness of and mitigation of possible risks
- contracts with clear responsibilities and obligations
- adequate health/medical and liability insurance coverage

Recommendations should include not only whether or not a program should run, but also what change of conditions might cause the recommendation to change.

The written proposal should demonstrate consideration for the safety concerns above and should be provided to the EAO six months prior to departure. This will be kept on file for reference and insurance purposes.