

UT MARTIN: ACADEMIC AFFAIRS POLICY

SUBJECT: International Travel to Potentially Dangerous Destinations

AUTHORITY: Chancellor's Staff

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PURPOSE: To establish procedures for evaluating the appropriateness of travel to international destinations for which official U.S. government warnings or alerts have been issued.

International travel to destinations with Travel Warnings or Travel Health Warnings

The University of Tennessee at Martin (UTM) does not recommend travel to destinations with an active Travel Warning issued by the U.S. Department of State or a Travel Health Warning issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Consistent with that policy, and subject only to the exceptions listed hereinafter, UTM funds cannot be used nor academic credit awarded for travel to any destination where there is either an active Travel Warning or active Travel Health Warning.

Under no circumstances will the International Risk Management Committee (IRMC) allow students to travel on University funds to countries where an active Travel Warning issued by the U.S. Department of State recommends that U.S. citizens depart from the country or defer all non-essential travel to it. Academic credit cannot be awarded for work completed in these countries.

UTM faculty-led programs in countries with Travel Warnings or Travel Health Warnings

If the U.S. Department of State issues a Travel Warning or the CDC issues a Travel Health Warning for a country in which UTM is planning a faculty-led travel-study and/or study-abroad program before the departure date of the program, the program will be immediately suspended. The faculty leader(s) of the impacted program(s) may petition the IRMC for a program suspension waiver. If granted, a waiver applies to that program only (unless specified by the committee), and a waiver for one program in a country does not automatically apply to another program in that same country. The decision of the IRMC may be appealed to the Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (VCAA).

If the U.S. Department of State issues a Travel Warning or the CDC issues a Travel Health Warning for a country in which UTM is operating a faculty-led travel-study and/or study-abroad program while the program is in session, but where circumstances seem to pose no immediate threat to student health or safety, the program will be reviewed by the IRMC. The Committee will decide if the program is to continue. In the case of an immediate threat to student health,

safety or welfare, the IRMC, in consultation with the Provost/VCAA, has the discretion to suspend the program and begin evacuation immediately.

Non-UTM programs in countries with Travel Warnings or Travel Health Warnings

If the U.S. Department of State issues a Travel Warning or the CDC issues a Travel Health Warning for a country in which a UTM student wishes to study on a non-UT program, the student is required to complete a petition for a policy waiver before UTM funds may be used or academic credit received. The petition will be reviewed by the IRMC, and the student will be notified of the decision. If the IRMC approves the petition, the student may participate in the program and will receive access to all regular study-abroad services offered by UTM. If the IRMC denies the petition, the student may not use any UTM funds for his/her travel-study/study-abroad program or receive academic credit. Petition denials may be appealed to the Provost/VCAA.

If a student elects to travel as part of a non-UT program to a location under Travel or Travel Health warnings after having his/her petition denied by UTM, the University is not responsible for the decision of the student to travel. In addition, the Center for International Education will not provide any support to such a student and will not maintain the student's enrollment at UTM during the study-abroad term.

UTM students conducting independent travel in countries with Travel Warnings or Travel Health Warnings

If the U.S. Department of State issues a Travel Warning or the CDC issues a Travel Health Warning for a country in which a UTM student wishes to conduct independent travel, the student may not use UTM funds or receive academic credit. This policy applies to all UTM students (undergraduate and graduate) who are receiving funds from UTM to pay for a portion or all of their expenses for independent travel (independent study, research, conference attendance, etc.). The student may complete a petition for a policy waiver, which will be reviewed by the IRMC.

If the committee grants an exception to the policy, the student must complete the normal international travel registration process; such registration, however, does not mean that the University is responsible for the decision of the student to travel to locations under Travel or Travel Health warnings. If the committee does not approve the petition, the student may not use UTM funds or receive academic credit for work completed in the country. Petition denials may be appealed to the Provost/VCAA.

International Risk Management Committee

The IRMC is appointed by the Provost/VCAA to review safety and security conditions associated with UTM travel-study and study-abroad programs and independent international travel undertaken by students, faculty and staff. The committee is responsible for deciding when students may use UTM funds and receive academic credit for travel to international destinations. In addition to the U.S. Department of State Travel Warnings and CDC Travel Health Warnings discussed hereinabove, the committee will consider the ramifications of U.S. Department of

State Travel Alerts, which are issued for short-term events the Department believes travelers should know about when planning travel to a country, and CDC Alert Level 2 admonitions to “Practice Enhanced Precautions.” In all cases, the committee will consider a variety of factors, the most important of which are the safety and health of the students.

The IRMC consists of the following permanent members:

- Executive Director, Center for International Education (convening chair)
- Director, University Risk Management
- Director, Student Life
- Director, Student Health and Counseling
- Coordinator, Travel-Study programs
- Faculty Senate representative

Should circumstances warrant, the IRMC may also invite the following individuals to provide additional information:

- Additional UTM faculty member(s) with significant expertise in the affected country or region
- Dean of the college sponsoring the study-abroad program or independent travel
- Appropriate attorney from UT General Counsel’s office
- Other individuals as needed

International travel registration

The following categories of faculty, staff, undergraduate and graduate students traveling abroad are required to complete the international travel registration process—through the Center for International Education—10 business days before commencement of the international trip:

1. All faculty, staff and students traveling abroad using University funds
2. All faculty, staff and students traveling abroad on University business without using University funds (e.g., a faculty member is invited to give a keynote address at a conference and his/her costs are fully paid by the conference)
3. All students traveling abroad and receiving academic credit
4. All students traveling abroad on non-credit programs sponsored by academic programs/departments

International travel registration is critical to the University’s risk management program and will allow the University to communicate with faculty, staff and students in the event of an emergency. Registration is also required for faculty, staff and students to receive emergency assistance from International SOS, the medical and travel security services company with which the University has contracted. Students traveling on a faculty/staff member’s travel authorization request must also complete the international travel registration process.

Together with not having access to the services provided by International SOS, travelers who do not complete the registration process in a timely manner will not receive travel authorization

from UTM. Travelers who are not authorized in accordance with University policies will not be reimbursed for any expenses.