



International Guidelines for Student Travel

Students traveling internationally for a university-related purpose, regardless of whether they are receiving academic credit or institutional funding should complete a Request for Authorization for Student Travel and obtain approval.

Examples of university-related travel:

- Class field trips, internships, practicum, service learning opportunities, research, field studies;
- Attendance at scholarly or professional conferences;
- Volunteer, experiential, or work programs organized, endorsed, or promoted by UTRGV;
- Registered student organization sponsored regardless of whether or not the organization requires its members to attend;
- Athletic, student publication, dramatic, music, or forensic competition or performances, and
- Study Abroad or student exchange programs.

As of June 5, 2018 UTRGV adopted UT Austin's International Oversight Committee procedures regarding travel to Mexico, which include:

- **All student travel** requests to Mexico requires review and approval by the IOC regardless of the location within Mexico.
- Employee travel requests to Mexico will be referred to the Chair of the IOC or other IOC designee for initial review. If employee requests include only locations in Mexico under a "Level 2- Exercise Caution" advisory, travel may proceed without additional IOC review and approval.
- If travel requests include locations within Mexico under U.S. Department of State "Level 3- Reconsider Travel" or "Level 4- Do Not Travel", full IOC review and approval is required for travel.

Students engaging in university-related international travel are required to:

Step 1: Identify the Trip Coordinator (must be a full-time faculty or staff member at UTRGV)

The Trip Coordinator is responsible for submitting travel documentation to ensure all necessary information on the Travel Forms is complete. In case of an accident or crime occurring on the trip, the Trip Coordinator is responsible for contacting the University Police Department Ph# (956) 882-7777 who will notify the appropriate personnel. It is also recommended that the Trip Coordinator attend the trip.

Step 2: Complete the following forms.

1. *Authorization for Student Travel Form*
2. *A Release and Indemnification Agreement Form* for each student attending.
 - If more than ten (10) students are in attendance, submit the Group Travel List, which includes the names, student identification numbers, emergency contact name and phone number for each participant.

Step 3: Submit your Student International Travel forms at least **20** days in advance of departure to International Programs & Partnerships (IPP) to be registered with:

1. The UT System's On Call International program, which is a 24/7 medical and security assistance provider and
2. Student International Travel Accident and Sickness Insurance.

If there are any question on registering, IPP can help. Office: (956) 665-3572 or (956) 882-8955.

Step 4: (If applicable) Obtain review and approval from the [International Oversight Committee](#) (IOC).

The IOC is responsible for reviewing and approving all University-sponsored travel to areas of High Risk. Some areas of the world present heightened health and safety risks that may be of concern for travelers. Therefore, the International Oversight Committee is responsible for recommending protocols and overseeing institutional efforts to facilitate registration of University-sponsored travel with UT System's emergency assistance provider prior to departure.

This includes all student travel to locations where:

- A. The U.S. State Department has issued a Travel Advisory of Level 2 or higher or
- B. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a Warning Level 3: Avoid Nonessential Travel Health Notice; or
- C. The IOC has deemed significant health, safety, or security risks are present; this could include:
 - i. any region with a U.S. State Department Travel Advisory recommendation of "do not travel" or "reconsider travel" within a country rated as Travel Advisory Level 2: Exercise increased caution or Level 1: Exercise normal precautions.
 - ii. any region with a high or extreme risk rating from a contracted security assistance provider.

U.S. State Department Travel advisories can be viewed at: <https://travel.state.gov>.

Step 5: Submit the completed *Authorization for Student Travel* form, IPP approval, IOC approval (if applicable) and the *Release and Indemnification* Form(s) to the Office of the Dean of Students (DOS).

The Dean of Students or designee will review for final approval. Approved forms will be signed and notification of approval sent to the Trip Coordinator.

Step 6: The Trip Coordinator should conduct a Pre-trip orientation with travelers.

Sample Agenda for Orientation:

1. Expectations for conduct

For example: Applicable rules of conduct as per the University Student Conduct Code and the Student Travel Policy. All students participating in University sponsored programs, are required to follow the [STU 02-100 Student Conduct and Discipline](#) policy and observe the standards of

conduct appropriate for an academic institution. Conduct considered unacceptable for members of the University community include, but are not limited to:

- Illegal Use, Possession and sale of drugs
 - Computer usage violations, use of alcoholic beverages, and dishonesty
 - Conduct endangers, and verbal or written threats
 - Inappropriate behavior of members of an academic institution
2. Review Itinerary and contact information: It is crucial that the Travel Coordinator has verified all traveler contact information. This information is used for the purpose of safety.
 3. Provide a copy of the itinerary for participants to keep track of travel and daily activities. The Trip Coordinator is responsible for approving any deviations from the itinerary and communicating changes to travelers.
 4. Provide safety tips while traveling.

For example:

- Advise participants to keep forms of identification on them at all times such as Passport, Drivers License, and Student ID.
 - Instruct them to be cautious and aware of their surroundings.
 - If possible, avoid areas in which there are demonstrations and be careful if traveling within close proximity of demonstrations.
 - Even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and possibly escalate to violence. Stay current with local media coverage.
 - Be vigilant, as pickpocketing, mugging and “snatch and grab” theft of mobile phones, watches and jewelry can occur.
 - Do not leave bags unattended in restaurants, pubs, hotel lobbies, and parked cars.
 - Be alert of any criminal activity or criminal schemes, such as impostors posing as undercover police officers and “fining” tourists for bogus minor offenses.
 - A legitimate Metropolitan Police Services officer will never demand an immediate cash payment.
 - All participants are subject to local laws. If they violate local laws, even unknowingly, he/she may be expelled, arrested, or imprisoned. A U.S. passport will not protect any violators from being arrested, prosecuted, or jailed.
 - **If a traveler is arrested or detained, ask police or prison officials to notify the U.S. Embassy immediately and the Travel Coordinator.**
5. Provide cultural context and tips to travelers.

Resources:

International Programs and Partnerships is dedicated to providing leadership in support of campus internationalization through study abroad programming, agreements of cooperation with partner institutions abroad, and providing support to schools and departments hosting visiting scholars.

The Student Travel policy (STU 01-300) which sets forth University rules and procedures regarding student and pre-college University program participant travel and to comply with [The University of Texas System policy](#) and state law (Texas Education Code §51.950) relating to student travel. University students may travel off campus when representing a student organization, University department, or engaging in intercollegiate competition or academic activities.

The International Travel Policy ([UTS 190](#)) provides a framework of institutional oversight that promotes the health, safety, and security of UT System travelers and initiatives abroad. This policy applies to The University of Texas System academic and health institutions and to all students, faculty, staff, and official guests/volunteers participating in University-sponsored international travel.

UTS [Regents Rule 20801](#) Sec 2. Authorization for foreign travel shall be transmitted through proper administrative channels to the Chancellor or the president of the institution, as applicable, or the respective officer's designee, for advance written approval. Authorization for foreign travel by Chief Administrators must be obtained as required by Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, [Rule 20205](#), Expenditures for Travel and Entertainment by Chief Administrators and for the Maintenance of University Residences.

Student Accessibility Services. Students with a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects academic performance) who would like to receive academic accommodations should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) as soon as possible to schedule an appointment to initiate services. Accommodations can be arranged through SAS at any time, however, they are not retroactive. Students who suffer a broken bone, severe injury or undergo surgery during the semester are eligible for temporary services.

Location and Contact Information:

- BMSLC Room 1.107 (956) 882-7861 (Voice)
- EUCTR 108 (956) 665-7005 (Voice)
- Department email: ability@utrgv.edu
- Fax: (956) 665-3840

Office of the Dean of Students
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