
Subject: Global Travel Policy

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1. Purpose

Virginia Tech is committed to fostering a community that values all cultures, languages, lands, and people. We seek to enrich our global competence and to enhance the quality of life throughout the world with scholarly engagement in education, research, and outreach. Our faculty, students, staff, and alumni have a responsibility for engagement with the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world. That engagement is reflected in who we are, who we aspire to be, and our impact on the global community.

The university’s commitment to responsible global engagement informs its Global Travel Policy, which is designed to promote the health, safety and security of members of the university community (faculty, staff, and students) traveling outside of the United States of America for university-related purposes, including but not limited to: study, research, internships, service, conferences, presentations, teaching, performances, athletic competitions, etc. This policy applies to employees and students. In addition, a portion of Section 3.3 applies to visitors. The university’s schools, colleges, or business units may have additional policies and procedures that support this overall policy.

2. Policy

The Global Travel Policy is comprised of the following university resources and requirements:

1. The Global Travel Registry;
2. Global Travel Insurance and Emergency Assistance;
3. Global Travel Warnings and Restrictions; and
4. Additional Requirements for Student Global Travel.

Further, international travel is also subject to applicable sections of Policy 13045: Export and Sanctions Compliance Policy, (<http://www.policies.vt.edu/13045.pdf>).

3. Procedures

3.1 Global Travel Registry

The Global Travel Registry is a confidential and secure database for maintaining key travel information for faculty, staff, and students traveling outside the United States of America for university-related purposes. The Global Travel Registry is the official and authoritative source of traveler information that forms the basis for the university's emergency response protocols and communication strategy (e.g., alerts, warnings, evacuation notices) when responding to an emergency or critical incident abroad. The Global Travel Registry is to be managed within StudioAbroad, the enrollment and risk management system administered by the Global Education Office. The Global Travel Office reports directly to the Vice President for Outreach and International Affairs.

All faculty, staff, and students traveling outside the United States of America for university-related purposes must register their travel in the Global Travel Registry before their expected departure date and should update the Global Travel Registry as additional information becomes available or changes occur during the trip, including travel to additional countries.

3.2 Global Travel Insurance and Emergency Assistance

Per the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors' Resolution on International Travel Insurance, (http://www.bov.vt.edu/minutes/11-08-29minutes/attach_1_08-29-11.pdf) all Virginia Tech students participating in university-sponsored global education experiences (for credit or not for credit) are required to carry international travel insurance administered through the Global Education Office. To meet this requirement, the university has contracted with an insurance provider to provide low-cost comprehensive travel medical insurance that covers health/accident, emergency security evacuation, repatriation of remains, prescription drugs, lost baggage and personal property, trip interruption and trip delay, among others.

All participants in university-sponsored student group travel (including students and university employees) are required to purchase international travel insurance from the university-approved vendor regardless of any alternative coverage they might have. This allows the university to respond to the needs of an entire group in the same way in the event of an evacuation or other crisis.

Students traveling on any other type of university-sponsored (for credit or not for credit) or non-university sponsored (for credit) global education activity are also required to purchase insurance from the university-approved vendor, or demonstrate alternative coverage that meets the minimum coverage requirements contained in policy provided by the university-approved vendor.

University employees (students, staff or faculty) traveling internationally on university business not related to global education are required to purchase emergency medical evacuation and assistance through Frontier, Inc. (MEDEX), which provides an outlet for questions related to medical treatment, provides emergency medical evacuation to a location suitable for providing emergency treatment, and provides an interpreter and other services, as needed.

3.3 Global Travel Warnings and Restrictions

3.3.1 U.S. State Department Travel Warnings

Owing to concerns for student and faculty safety, security and wellbeing, Virginia Tech does not support student participation in global education activities in locations where a U.S. State Department Travel Warning has been issued. Undergraduate 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 countries currently appearing on the list, which is updated regularly, can be accessed at the U.S. State Department (<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en.html>) website.

The Global Travel Oversight Committee (GTOC) is a committee of faculty and administrative personnel from key units across the university, appointed by the Vice President for Outreach and International Affairs, which meets as necessary to consider proposals for travel to countries where U.S. State Department Travel Alerts and/or Warnings have been issued. In cases of global emergency or crisis, the GTOC is responsible for making recommendations to the President, who will make the final decision on the university's course of action; however, the President retains the authority to act prior to receiving a recommendation from the GTOC. GTOC, in coordination with the Global Education Office, is responsible for coordinating global emergency and crisis responses using the information available in the Global Travel Registry.

In unique circumstances, exceptions to the restrictions in this section will be considered by petition to the GTOC. Approval by GTOC will only be granted following a full review of the proposed international program, a detailed assessment of student/faculty risk based on the program proposal and destination country, and a finding of compelling reasons to permit the proposed program to operate. Information on the petition process is available through the Global Education Office.

All students interested in pursuing global education activities in a location where a U.S. State Department Travel Warning has been issued are required to meet with a Global Education Office staff member prior to beginning the petition process.

3.3.2 U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Travel Warnings

Refer to Presidential Policy Memorandum No. 288, University Travel Policy Regarding Countries with CDC Travel Warnings (<http://www.policies.vt.edu/policymemos/ppm288>).

Employees and students on university business are prohibited from traveling to or from countries where the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a Warning Level 3 travel health notice. This applies across the board to all aspects of university programming whether it be educational, research, or outreach. Special exceptions for essential travel may be considered under extraordinary circumstances; contact the Office of the Vice President for Outreach and International Affairs for information on the process for requesting a special exception.

Further, university departments that anticipate receiving anyone (students, guests, or visiting scholars) from a country for which the CDC has issued a Warning Level 3 travel health notice must inform the Office of the Vice President for Outreach and International Affairs in writing no less than 30 days prior to arrival.

Additionally, travel for personal reasons to countries under a CDC Warning Level 3 travel health notice is strongly discouraged.

For further guidance regarding this policy provision, contact the Office of the Vice President for Outreach and International Affairs.

3.4 Additional Requirements for Student Global Travel

Virginia Tech students may engage in a variety of educational experiences abroad, either for credit or not for credit. Such experiences include but are not limited to: classroom study, research, cultural exchange, intern- or externships and service learning, as well as participation in less formal activities, such as international conferences, symposia, competitions, and the like. These experiences may or may not be sponsored by the university, a distinction which determines their level of university coverage and support.

A. University-Sponsored:

University-sponsored international programs for Virginia Tech students include programs designed for student groups (typically led by VT employees) and programs designed for individual students (which might include faculty-directed programs, like summer undergraduate research experiences or internships, and

programs governed by a student exchange agreement or a contract with a third-party provider). All university-sponsored global education programming must be approved by the Global Education Approval Committee (GEAC), an approval body appointed by the Vice President for International Affairs (or designee) with representation from all colleges and key administrative units across campus.

Student Group Travel—Responsibilities of Program Organizers and Participants

Organizers of and/or participants in university-sponsored (for credit or not for credit) global travel designed for student group participation (with group defined as more than one student) are subject to the following requirements:

1. Virginia Tech employees organizing and/or leading individual students or groups of students overseas on university-sponsored global educational experiences must have their program proposal reviewed and approved in advance by the dean or designated administrator of the academic or business unit in which the program is based and by the GEAC. Newly approved programs will be reviewed after three years and thereafter every six years.
2. Program organizers are responsible for entering all trip itinerary, lodging, and overseas contact information into the Global Travel Registry.
3. Program organizers are responsible for ensuring that all group participants (students and employees) have obtained global travel and emergency assistance insurance through the university's authorized vendor.
4. Program organizers are responsible for following university policies and guidance, including Presidential Policy Memorandum No. 225 (<http://www.policies.vt.edu/policymemos/ppm225.pdf>) regarding administrative responsibilities for Education Abroad programming, and Presidential Policy Memorandum No. 281 (<http://www.policies.vt.edu/policymemos/ppm281.pdf>) regarding university-affiliated international travel for student groups.
5. Student participants are responsible for following the Resolution Regarding Student Responsibilities for Education Abroad Programs, (https://www.globaleducation.vt.edu/customtags/ct_FileRetrieve.cfm?File_ID=117) passed by the University Council on International Affairs on November 2, 2006.
6. Additionally, program organizers and student participants are responsible for complying with Presidential Policy Memorandum No. 288 (<http://www.policies.vt.edu/policymemos/ppm288>) regarding travel warnings from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Section 3.3 of this Policy No. 1070. Further, they must adhere to best practices for managing health, safety and security abroad as advised by the Global Education Office.
7. Student participants are responsible for paying the appropriate tuition and comprehensive fees (if relevant), program fee and Global Education administrative fee.

Individual Student Travel—Responsibilities of Participants

Students participating on any program affiliated with the university (i.e., governed by a student exchange agreement or contract with a third-party provider and pre-approved by the Global Education Approval Committee) or any non-university sponsored program for which academic credit has been approved for transfer back to their Virginia Tech degree, are responsible for:

1. Entering all trip itinerary, lodging, and overseas contact information into the Global Travel Registry;

2. Obtaining global travel and emergency assistance insurance through the university's authorized vendor, or demonstrating equivalent alternative coverage (note this requirement is waived for students returning to their home country, as determined by nationality or permanent residency);
3. Following university policies and guidance, including the Resolution Regarding Student Responsibilities for Education Abroad Programs (https://www.globaleducation.vt.edu/customtags/ct_FileRetrieve.cfm?File_ID=117) passed by the University Council on International Affairs on November 2, 2006, Presidential Policy Memorandum No. 288 (<http://www.policies.vt.edu/policymemos/ppm288>), and Section 3.3 of this Policy 1070.
4. Complying with best practices for managing health, safety and security abroad as advised by the Global Education Office;
5. Paying the appropriate tuition and comprehensive fees (if relevant), program fee and Global Education administrative fee.

Note that credit-bearing global education programs sponsored by the university may not be audited. All such programs must be taken for credit. Students enrolled in degree programs at other universities may participate in any of Virginia Tech's global education programs, as long as they gain admission to the university as non-degree seeking students and meet all the criteria for admission to the program. Non-students who wish to participate in global education programs designed for student participation must do the same.

B. Non-University-Sponsored Student Global Travel

Virginia Tech students or groups of students with special interests or needs (including Registered Student Organizations, which have no direct relationship with the university) can opt to participate in a non-university sponsored global education program, either through another university or a third-party provider; however, the university can guarantee neither these programs' quality nor safety.

Virginia Tech students participating in a non-university-sponsored global education program who intend to transfer academic credit back to Virginia Tech are subject to the same requirements as students participating on university-sponsored programs (see above). Such students must meet all of the host institution's normal admissions requirements, including language proficiency, if relevant; are responsible for all aspects of their academic and residential life, just as they are here at Virginia Tech; and pay tuition and all fees directly to the host university. They are responsible for paying Virginia Tech the appropriate Global Education fee. Students must take particular care to ensure that credits will transfer properly, so they are encouraged to work closely with their academic advisor and Global Education Office staff during their application and course selection process.

Virginia Tech students or groups of students participating in a global education program that is neither university sponsored nor credit bearing may do so independently, by taking a leave of absence from the university. During their leave, students will not receive any university support or coverage. The university encourages independent travelers to obtain global travel and emergency assistance insurance and, if they are U.S. citizens, to register their trip with the U.S. Department of State prior to departure.

4. Definitions

5. References

BOV Resolution on International Travel Insurance

http://www.bov.vt.edu/minutes/11-08-29minutes/attach_1_08-29-11.pdf

U.S. State Department

<http://travel.state.gov/content/travel/english.html>

Presidential Policy Memorandum No. 225: Administrative Responsibilities for Education Abroad Programming

<http://www.policies.vt.edu/policymemos/ppm225.pdf>

Presidential Policy Memorandum No. 281: University-Affiliated International Travel for Student Groups

<http://www.policies.vt.edu/policymemos/ppm281.pdf>

Presidential Policy Memorandum No. 288: University Travel Policy Regarding Countries with CDC Travel Warnings

<http://www.policies.vt.edu/policymemos/ppm288>

UCOIA Resolution Regarding Student Responsibilities for Education Abroad Programs

https://www.globaleducation.vt.edu/_customtags/ct_FileRetrieve.cfm?File_ID=117

Virginia Tech Global Education Office

<http://www.educationabroad.vt.edu/>

University Policy13045: Export and Sanctions Compliance Policy

<http://www.policies.vt.edu/13045.pdf>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>

6. Approval

Approved by the University Safety & Security Policy Committee, September 18, 2014.

Approved September 18, 2014 by University President, Timothy D. Sands.

- Revision 1

Revised November 4, 2014, to incorporate into Section 3.3.2 the provisions of Presidential Policy Memorandum No. 288 regarding travel to countries for which the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued travel warnings.

Approved November 4, 2014 by University President, Timothy D. Sands.

- Revision 2

Added language in Section 3.3.1 to clarify the respective roles of the Global Travel Oversight Committee (GTOC) and the President of the university in cases of global emergency or crisis.

Approved by the University Safety & Security Policy Committee, April 13, 2016.

Approved April 13, 2016 by University President, Timothy D. Sands.