University Guidelines for Academic and Extracurricular Student Group Travel
Spring, 2014

I. General

In addition to the many international study programs undertaken for academic credit by Boston College students through the Office of International Programs, many domestic and international travel programs are sponsored by the University. Boston College recognizes the benefits of these co-curricular and academic travel programs, and acknowledges the need for policies and procedures to maximize educational value, manage risk, and enable appropriate responses to emergencies that may occur in connection with these group travel programs.

This policy applies to all academic and extracurricular student group travel programs sponsored by Boston College including, without limitation, all volunteer, service, immersion, academic, and course-based programs. It does not apply to study abroad programs made available by the Office of International Programs, individual student travel sponsored by offices or departments, or team travel sponsored by the Boston College Athletic Department.

The terms and conditions of this policy are considered the minimum required. Sponsoring Departments may mandate additional standards they deem necessary to address the unique goals or requirements associated with a particular travel program.

II. Definitions

University refers to Boston College.

Sponsoring Department refers to the school division or department within the University that is organizing, administering, and/or financially supporting the program.

Appropriate Administrator refers to, in the case of a school, the dean of that school, and in the case of a university division or department, the vice president responsible for that area. The university president is also an appropriate administrator. All Boston College academic travel and extracurricular
service/immersion travel programs must be approved by an appropriate administrator.

*Coordinating Administrator* refers to the person assigned by the Sponsoring Department to be responsible for planning and overseeing the program.

*Designated University Office (DUO)* is the office charged by the University to oversee and coordinate compliance with the logistical requirements of these guidelines. For purposes of this policy, the DUO will be the Office of the Dean of Students.

*Student Travel Approval Committee* refers to the group, chaired by the Dean of Students, which reviews all trip proposals. This committee will consist of representatives of the Volunteer and Service Learning Center, Campus Ministry, the Provost’s Office and the faculty members.

*Trip Leader* refers to the full-time University faculty or staff person(s) who will prepare the student delegation before the trip, accompany them on the trip, and follow up with them after the trip. Experienced graduate students or other non-undergraduate persons affiliated with the University may serve in this role if approved by the Appropriate Administrator. In the case of domestic travel, undergraduate students, serving in pairs, may serve as trip leaders if approved in advance by the Appropriate Administrator.

For the purpose of these policies, *student travel* refers to University-sponsored domestic and international trips for student groups but excludes athletic team travel and study abroad programs made available by the Office of International Programs.

**III. Pre-travel requirements for ALL student travel:**

1. All trips must have a Sponsoring Department, a Coordinating Administrator, a Trip Leader, and approval from the Appropriate Administrator.

2. All new proposals for student group travel must be reviewed and approved by the *Student Travel Approval Committee*. This group, chaired by the
Dean of Students, reviews and approves all trip proposals on an annual basis. This committee consists of representatives of the Volunteer and Service Learning Center, Campus Ministry, the Provost’s Office and the faculty.

3. All trips must register with the Designated University Office on an annual basis. Such registration involves providing the office with: the names and contact information of all trip participants and Trip Leaders; a detailed itinerary including flight information; hotel or other lodging name, location and telephone number; and the name and contact information of the on-site coordinator.

4. The Designated University Office will be authorized to monitor compliance with the logistical requirements of this policy.

5. All international trips must have a minimum of two Trip Leaders. In cases of trips with more than 20 students, three Trip Leaders must be assigned. Exemptions to this must be approved, in advance of the trip, by the Appropriate Administrator.

6. All domestic trips must have a Trip Leader, preferably a graduate student, faculty or staff member. Trained undergraduate students may serve as Trip Leaders for domestic trips if approved in advance by the Appropriate Administrator.

7. If possible, at least one of the Trip Leaders should have a BC corporate credit card in their possession.

8. Prior to the trip, all Trip Leaders must participate in a training and orientation program (in person or on line) that will focus on issues such as:
   a. Trip Leader responsibilities
   b. Health and safety
   c. Emergency response protocols
   d. HTH Worldwide insurance and Global Axis coverage
e. University policy
f. Personal behavior, decorum and dress

Appropriate personal boundaries
h. Fund raising regulations (if applicable)

i. Financial accountability (if applicable)
j. Relationship of the trip to the University’s educational program or mission as a Catholic and Jesuit University.
k. Information on how to report any questionable conduct on the part of adult or student leaders as well as staff of host organizations.

9. Prior to departure, the Coordinating Administrator must provide all student trip participants with the following:
   a. University policies relating to student travel
   b. Terms and Conditions of Participation (see VSCLC website)
   c. Information on planned itinerary, travel and lodging arrangements
   d. Medical information including recommended immunizations and any other recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
   e. Expectations regarding conduct, behavior and decorum
   f. All applicable U.S Department of State Public Travel Advisories and Consular Information Sheet(s)
   g. Potential risks associated with the trip, and any other special conditions or circumstances that apply to the trip. This includes an “informed consent form”
   h. Information regarding visa and/or border-tax requirements for the country or countries being visited
   i. Information on registering with the U.S. Department of State or other appropriate entity for international participants.

10. Sponsoring Departments planning travel outside the United States must determine both before the trip is organized and prior to departure, whether a U.S. State Department Travel Advisory or Warning exists for the destination country or countries. Should such a warning exist, the
Coordinating Administrator in consultation with the Trip Leader must seek the approval and guidance of the Appropriate Administrator.

Indication of the Warning and the Consular Information Sheet must be provided to the Appropriate Administrator in conjunction with any other information that the Trip Leader or department determines relevant. The trip may not proceed without the approval of the Appropriate Administrator, who shall consult with the University Office of Risk Management in deciding whether to grant approval and under what terms and conditions. The Sponsoring Department must ensure that any specific precautions recommended in the Warning, such as avoiding particular areas or registering with the applicable embassy, are followed.

In addition, indication of any travel warnings or advisories must be provided, in advance of the trip, to all participants. In instances where such a State Department Travel Warning exists for a country being visited, all undergraduate student participants must be provided with and complete a Boston College travel waiver form. This form must also be signed by the students’ parent or legal guardian prior to departure.

11. All travel programs are expected to coordinate their activities with an appropriate and established on-site host organization or institution.

12. All international travel programs are required to secure insurance coverage for all participants through HTH Worldwide or other University-approved providers.

13. Prior to departure, the Coordinating Administrator or designee must provide the Designated University Office with the trip itinerary, the names and cell phone numbers of all trip participants, emergency contact names and contact information and relations for all participants, copies of passports for all participants, required health forms, and contact information for the host organization. The Designated University Office will then provide necessary information to appropriate departments (e.g., BC Police).
14. The Sponsoring Department is responsible for all financial arrangements and obligations as well as for compliance with all regulations pertaining to fundraising.

IV. Standards & Conduct during Travel:

1. All trip participants must abide by all the applicable standards of personal and professional conduct set forth by the University including the Boston College Code of Conduct as well as local laws.

2. The Trip Leader must report any student conduct matter that arises on a trip to the Dean of Students Office for disciplinary review. Serious matters that involve health, criminal activity, safety or well-being should be reported by the Trip Leader immediately. Such behavior could result in the student being required to leave the trip and return home at the student’s expense. All other conduct issues should be reported to the Coordinating Administrator within 24 hours.

3. Student participants must adhere to all reasonable requests and directions of the Trip Leader(s).

4. All trip participants must respect personal boundaries and behave in a manner that is consistent with Boston College’s mission and values.

5. The unauthorized possession and/or use of drugs by any member of a traveling delegation will be grounds for immediate dismissal from the program, and, if warranted, the offending person will be sent home at his or her own expense.

6. Trip Leaders acting under the guidance of the Sponsoring Department may establish restrictions, or an absolute prohibition, concerning alcohol consumption during a trip.
7. Trip participants must assume primary responsibility for their safety and well-being.

8. In case of emergencies, to the extent feasible, at least one Trip Leader should remain with the group for the entirety of the experience to help ensure the safety and well-being of the trip participants.

9. Trip Leaders, together with the Sponsoring Department, should establish and communicate to the student participants expectations regarding independent student activities during any free time on the trip. Students must follow the Trip Leaders’ instructions regarding independent activities.

10. Trip Leaders are expected to stay in close proximity and be readily available to student participants. In the case of home stays Trip Leaders and students are expected to stay in the same community.

11. No student is permitted to leave the group, and no student should be left behind during the trip unless circumstances require. In the case of illness, arrangements should be made to leave a second Trip Leader with the ill student.

12. In the event that a student must return home early from the trip for whatever reason, the Trip Leaders, in consultation with the Appropriate Administrator, will determine whether the student needs to be accompanied by one of the trip participants.

Additional pre-travel requirements for non-credit trips:

1. Prior to selection, all student trip participants must be subjected to a conduct review through the Office of the Dean of Students.

2. Prior to the trip, the Sponsoring Department must provide an orientation program for all service and immersion trip participants. This program should focus on the following topics:
   a. Cultural awareness and sensitivity
b. Cultural, economic and political background of the region or regions being visited

c. Relevant laws and customs of the region(s)

d. Issues of health and personal safety

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