

Boston College
Academic and Extracurricular Student Travel Policy

Purpose and Scope

In recognition of the many educational benefits of domestic and international travel, the University regularly supports a variety of academic and extracurricular travel programs for groups of students that are organized by academic departments, administrative units, and student organizations. This Policy establishes guidelines for these travel programs to ensure adequate University oversight, quality, consistency, and the ability of the University to respond appropriately in the event of a problem or emergency. The guidelines established by this Policy are considered the minimum required. Sponsoring Departments or Responsible Administrators may establish additional requirements to address the unique goals or circumstances of a particular travel program or individual trip.

This Policy applies to all overnight academic and extracurricular student group travel sponsored by the University including, without limitation, all volunteer, service, immersion, academic, and course-based trips, as defined more specifically below. It does not apply to day trips, study abroad programs made available by the Office of International Programs, individual student travel sponsored by offices or departments, or student travel managed by the Athletic Department.

Definitions

When used in this Policy, the following terms shall have the meanings ascribed to them below:

Travel Program is any academic or extracurricular student domestic or international group travel supported or organized by the University including, without limitation, all volunteer, service, immersion, academic, and course-based trips, as well as trips organized by or through registered student organizations, unless the travel is excluded from the scope of this Policy.

Sponsoring Department is the department or unit of the University that is organizing, administering, and/or financially supporting the Travel Program.

Responsible Administrator is, 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.

Coordinating Administrator is the person assigned by the Sponsoring Department to be responsible for planning and overseeing the Travel Program. The Director of the Office of Student Involvement serves as the Coordinating Administrator for all Travel Programs organized by or through registered student organizations.

Student Travel Advisory Committee is a standing committee comprised of the Dean of Students or other designee of the Vice President of Student Affairs, the Director of International Programs or other designee of the Provost, and the Director of the Volunteer and Service Learning Center or other designee of the Vice President for Mission and Ministry. The designee of the Vice President of Student Affairs chairs the committee and may invite other representatives to join the committee on an ad hoc basis.

Trip Leader is the full-time University faculty or staff person who is responsible for preparing the student group before the trip and accompanying them on the trip. Experienced graduate students or other non-undergraduate persons affiliated with the University may serve in this role if approved in advance by the Responsible Administrator. In the case of domestic travel, undergraduate students, serving in pairs, may serve as Trip Leaders if approved in advance by the Responsible Administrator.

University Oversight

Each Responsible Administrator is responsible for ensuring compliance with this Policy within his or her school or department and approving all Travel Programs that are sponsored, managed, or conducted under the auspices of that school or department.

All Travel Programs must be organized and overseen by a Coordinating Administrator, working under the auspices of a Sponsoring Department. The Coordinating Administrator must have the trip approved by the applicable Responsible Administrator prior to notifying any students about the availability of a Travel Program.

The Sponsoring Department is responsible for managing all financial arrangements and obligations for each Travel Program as well as for ensuring that any fundraising for the program complies with applicable University procedures.

The Student Travel Advisory Committee meets as needed to review Travel Programs, address any issues or concerns that may arise, and provide guidance to Responsible Administrators and Coordinating Administrators. The Committee approves the form of "Terms and Conditions of Participation" agreement for student travelers, as such form may be amended from time to time. Responsible Administrators may consult with the chair of the Committee to address any questions, concerns or assistance in addressing any particular issue or potential risk associated with a specific Travel Program. The Committee may establish additional procedures for the purpose of carrying out the Policy from time to time, and may recommend amendments to the Policy.

General Travel Program Requirements

Each Travel Program must have a Coordinating Administrator and a Trip Leader approved by the Responsible Administrator. 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. The Responsible Administrator must approve any exceptions to this requirement in advance of the trip.

Prior to selection for a Travel Program, all student participants must be screened by the Office of Student Conduct for a review of conduct history. The Coordinating Administrator will submit the names of the students to the Office of Student Conduct, which will clear the students for participation. If there are any questions about a student's conduct history, the Office of Student Conduct will consult with the Responsible Administrator to determine the student's ability to participate in the trip.

For any trip, the Coordinating Administrator must establish a relationship with an established local host organization or institution to coordinate the Travel Program's activities on-site.

Before departure, the Coordinating Administrator must register each trip with the Office of the Dean of Students by providing the Dean with a list of all student participants and the names and contact information for the Trip Leaders. The Coordinating Administrator or designee must also provide the Dean with the trip itinerary, contact information for the host organization, and for international trips, copies of passports for each participant. The Office of the Dean of Students will make this information available to the Boston College Police Department, as well as to other University administrators in the event of an emergency or other need for contact.

The Coordinating Administrator for each international Travel Program must work with the Office of Risk Management to secure international insurance coverage for all participants through the University-approved provider.

Pre-trip Procedures

Prior to departure, the Coordinating Administrator must provide all student trip participants with the following:

- a. The approved form of release agreement, (the “Terms and Conditions of Participation”) [*insert link*] , which must be signed by the student and returned to the Coordinating Administrator prior to departure;
- b. Information on itinerary, transportation, and lodging arrangements;
- c. Medical information including any recommended immunizations and, if applicable, any other recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;
- d. All applicable U.S Department of State Public Travel Advisories and Consular Information Sheet(s);
- e. Information regarding any visa and/or border-tax requirements;
- f. Information on registering with the U.S. Department of State or other appropriate entity for international participants; and
- g. An orientation program that includes, without limitation:
 - University conduct standards and any specific expectations based on the nature of the trip and any relevant cultural considerations;
 - cultural, economic and political background of the region or regions being visited;
 - relevant laws and customs of the region(s); and
 - health and personal safety information.

State Department Advisories and Warnings

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. If an Advisory or Warning exists, the Coordinating Administrator, in consultation with the Trip Leader, must seek the approval and guidance of the Responsible Administrator before proceeding with further planning or departure. A copy of the Advisory or Warning and the Consular Information Sheet must be provided to the Responsible Administrator in conjunction with any other information that the Trip Leader or Sponsoring Department determines relevant. The trip may not proceed without the approval of the Responsible Administrator, who shall consult with the University Office of Risk Management and the Director of International Programs in determining 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, and must comply with any other terms and conditions established by the Office of Risk Management or Responsible Administrator.

If the trip is approved, the Coordinating Administrator shall promptly provide any Travel Warnings or Advisories to all participants. The Responsible Administrator may require additional orientation for the student participants, and may require that any participants execute a waiver and release.

Standards and Conduct During Travel

All trip participants must abide by all the applicable University standards of conduct as well as local law. Student participants must adhere to the Student Code of Conduct and are expected to behave in a manner that is consistent with the University’s mission and values. Students must adhere to all directions of the Trip Leader.

The Trip Leader must promptly report to the Office of the Dean of Students any student conduct matter or other concern that arises on a trip. Serious matters that involve health, potential criminal activity, safety or well-being must be reported by the Trip Leader immediately. All other conduct issues must be reported to the Dean within 24 hours.

Any serious incident of misconduct may result in the trip participant being required to leave the trip and return home at the participant's expense. Without limiting the foregoing, the possession or use of controlled substances by any trip participant will be grounds for immediate dismissal from the Travel Program, and the offending person may be required to return home at his or her own expense.

The Trip Leader, acting under the guidance of the Sponsoring Department, may establish restrictions, or an absolute prohibition, concerning alcohol consumption during a trip.

Trip participants must assume primary responsibility for their own safety and well-being.

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.

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.

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.

No student is permitted to leave the group and no student should be left behind during a trip, unless required by the circumstances and approved by the Coordinating Administrator. In the event that illness detains a student, arrangements should be made to leave a second Trip Leader with the student.

If a student must return home early from the trip for any reason, the Trip Leader, in consultation with the Responsible Administrator, will determine whether the student needs to be accompanied by another trip participant.

Approved: William P. Leahy, S.J.

Date: February 10, 2016