

Travel Advisory Policy

Introduction

Union College encourages its students to participate in the wide variety of International Programs offered by the International Programs Office as well as credit or non-credit study abroad experiences directed by Faculty or Athletic Coaches. To minimize health and safety risk, Union College has approved policies to govern all international Travel opportunities based on the recently enacted U.S. Department of State (U.S. DOS) Travel Advisory. These policies replace the Travel Warning Policy.

Warning Policy

In January 2018, the U.S. DOS created a new process to inform citizens of health and safety risks called “Travel Advisories” at:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html>

The advisories provide clear, timely, and reliable safety and security information for every country. To read more about how to interpret the U.S. DOS advisories, see document entitled “Evaluating the U.S. Department of State Travel Advisory System.”

Union College policy prohibits travel to countries designated by the U.S. DOS as a Level 3 (Reconsider Travel) country or Level 4 (Do Not Travel) country.

Union College reserves the right to preclude travel to a country designated by U.S. DOS as a Level 2 if, after a risk assessment is completed (as outlined below), it is the judgment of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty, with input from the Director of International Programs or the Dean of Academic Departments & Programs (for off-campus travel not sponsored by the International Programs Office), travel to the country is deemed too risky.

EXCEPTIONS: a student may petition the Dean of Academic Departments & Programs to enroll in a program in a country designated a Level 3 country by the U.S. DOS or a Level 2 country to which Union College has prohibited travel: (i) at a fully accredited university conducting a program, (ii) to conduct an independent study program, or (iii) at a NY6 collaborative program.

I. Risk Monitoring and Assessment — Union College Faculty Led International Programs Sponsored by the International Programs Office.

The Director of International Programs (Lara Atkins), with input from the International Programs Risk Management Committee¹, is charged with monitoring world events and will, when applicable, work with Faculty Leaders to communicate risks and mitigation strategies. A variety of open-source news reports and U.S. DOS travel information, such as Emergency Messages, Travel Alerts, and Travel Warnings, as well as information provided by our evacuation assistance provider Drum Cussac, are regularly reviewed to conduct risk monitoring and assessment.

Faculty Leaders, with assistance from the Director of International Programs, are charged with the duty to regularly and responsibly monitor safety issues in the Union College Study Abroad Program

¹ Membership of the IP Risk Management Committee: Director of International Programs, Director of Budgets & Risk Management, Dean of Studies, an at-large Faculty Member, College Counsel

that the Faculty Leader is facilitating and, as part of this process, the Faculty Leaders are encouraged to follow the steps in the attached document entitled “International Travel Risk Assessment Guidelines” including the completion of an International Travel Questionnaire. The information provided by the Faculty Leader will be provided to the Director of International Programs. The Director of International Programs, with input from the International Risk Management Committee, is charged with evaluating the safety of programs and sites in areas of potential heightened risk in countries designated as Level 2. The Director of International Programs may do one or more of the following in its effort to gather information and assess the situation:

- Talk with a regional security analyst at the Overseas Security Advisory Council or a Regional Security Officer in the applicable U.S. embassy or consulate abroad.
- Review analysis provided by other security assessment providers.
- Read open source consular documents produced by other governments, such as Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.
- Confer with health and safety experts at our peer institutions operating in the same location.
- Contact the U.S. offices of the study abroad programs or providers located in the affected countries as well as our partner and affiliate universities abroad in addition to any Union College faculty or staff involved in the experience (here or abroad).
- Discuss the situation with Union College (or other institution’s) faculty experts on this location.

The Director of International Programs has the ability to recommend to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty program revisions or cancellation in order to address safety and security concerns.

Additionally, when conditions warrant programmatic changes while an International Program is in session, including the possible modification or suspension of the experience, steps will be taken as outlined in Emergency Procedures and Evacuation Guidelines found in the Faculty Leader Handbook.

II. Risk Monitoring and Assessment — Non-Union College Faculty Led International Programs Conducted by Sponsoring Organizations, Host Institutions, or Program Providers

Sponsoring Organizations, Host Institutions, and Program Providers are charged with the duty to regularly and responsibly monitor safety issues in each of Union College’s study abroad program locations and are required to complete a risk assessment prior to departure as outlined in the attached Letter to the Sponsoring Organization, Host Institution, or Program Provider. The Director of International Programs, with input from the International Risk Management Committee, is charged with evaluating the safety of programs and sites in areas of potential heightened risk in countries designated as Level 2. The Director of International Programs may do one or more of the following in its effort to gather information and assess the situation:

- Talk with a regional security analyst at the Overseas Security Advisory Council or a Regional Security Officer in the applicable U.S. embassy or consulate abroad.

- Review analysis provided by other security assessment providers.
- Read open source consular documents produced by other governments, such as Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.
- Confer with health and safety experts at our peer institutions operating in the same location.
- Contact the U.S. offices of the study abroad programs or providers located in the affected countries as well as our partner and affiliate universities abroad in addition to any Union College faculty or staff involved in the experience (here or abroad).
- Discuss the situation with Union College (or other institution's) faculty experts on this location.

III. Risk Monitoring and Assessment — Union College Faculty or Athletic Coach Led Off-Campus Travel with Students Not Sponsored by the International Programs Office

As noted above, **it is Union College's policy that travel to countries designated by the U.S. DOS as a Level 3 (Reconsider Travel) country or Level 4 (Do Not Travel) country will not be permitted.**

The Dean of Academic Departments and Programs reserves the right to restrict travel to a country with a U.S. DOS rating of Level 2. If a Faculty member or an Athletic Coach is planning travel with students to a country with a U.S. DOS rating of Level 2, contact the Dean of Academic Departments & Programs at least sixty (60) days prior to offering / publicizing this travel experience in the event the Dean of Academic Departments and Programs requires the Faculty Leader or Athletic Coach to conduct risk analysis. This analysis consists of the steps outlined in the attached International Travel Risk Assessment Guidelines, including the completion of the International Travel Questionnaire. Based upon the Dan of Academic Departments and Programs and, at his / her discretion, the Dean may deny the travel request or request a modification to the itinerary.

For additional information and requirements for International Travel, please see the Traveling Off-Campus with Students Policy, Section III.

IV. Risk Monitoring and Assessment

Risk Mitigation

All Union College sponsored travelers, such as study abroad participants and non-credit, non-study abroad travelers, are required to participate in some type of pre-departure orientation or educational program that discusses health and safety. Faculty Leaders and host institutions also provide a country-specific orientation in which health and safety precautions are outlined.

Furthermore, all students are required to obtain an accident and sickness health insurance policy, which includes coverage for medical treatment, evacuation, repatriation, and security assistance, unless an exception applies.