

International Travel Policy

Responsible Department: Office of Institutional Compliance & Risk Management (ICRM)

Responsible Administrator: Director of ICRM

Effective Date: April 1, 2014

Last Reviewed/Updated: April 2025

Next Scheduled Review: April 2029

I. Purpose

Abilene Christian University (ACU) encourages international travel to enhance student experience, academic research, cultural exchange, and institutional collaboration. This policy establishes approval procedures and risk management requirements for University-supported or University-related international travel to assure safety and compliance.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all **non-credit-related** international travel supported or related to ACU, including travel by faculty, staff, and students. **Credit-related** travel (e.g., Study Abroad, Rising Scholars) is governed by ACU Study Abroad policies under the Provost's oversight. For details, visit [ACU Study Abroad](#).

III. Definitions

University-Supported/Related International Travel

International travel undertaken for academic, research, administrative, or extracurricular purposes that is:

- Funded (fully or partially) by ACU,
- Organized by an ACU entity or individual acting in an official capacity, or
- Associated with ACU activities, research, teaching, or student programs

Travel Classifications

- **Credit-Related International Travel:** Travel for which academic credit is awarded (e.g., Study Abroad, Rising Scholars).
- **Non-Credit-Related International Travel:** Travel that does not grant academic credit but is still University-affiliated.
- **Mission or Service Travel:** Non-credit travel primarily focused on missions or Christian service.

Travel Advisories & Alerts

The U.S. State Department issues **Travel Advisories** on safety levels:

1. **Level 1:** Exercise Normal Precautions
2. **Level 2:** Exercise Increased Caution
3. **Level 3:** Reconsider Travel
4. **Level 4:** Do Not Travel

Travel approvals may also consider globally respected NGOs and international advisories. Travelers must monitor advisories at travel.state.gov.

Key Roles

- **Travel Approver:** An authorized individual who approves international trips (e.g., deans, VPs, Executive Director of International Education, Director of Halbert Center, Provost, Sr. VP of Operations).
- **Travel Organizer:** An individual planning non-credit-related international travel.

IV. Policy & Procedures

A. General Policy

- Applies to all **non-credit University-supported or related** international travel.
- Covers travel by **faculty, staff, students**, and **ACU-sponsored persons or groups**.
- Travel must be **registered and approved** 2 weeks before departure.

B. Pre-Travel Requirements

1. Registration & Approval

Travelers must complete the following requests **at least two weeks before departure**:

- [International Travel Registration](#) (Required for compliance, insurance, and risk management).
 - Among other required documents listed in the International Travel Registration form is a detailed itinerary. Please reference this [itinerary template](#) for assistance.
- **Travel Request in Concur** (Required for budget approval; Link available through myACU Quicklinks).

*Failure to comply with this policy may result in **denied expense reimbursements** and/or **personal liability** for all expenses.*

2. Travel Restrictions

- **Level 3 (Reconsider Travel) & Level 4 (Do Not Travel) locations are prohibited.**
- **Exceptions** require higher scrutiny of the proposal and approval from the **Travel Approver, Director of ICRM, and Sr. VP of Operations/Provost**. Level 2 countries containing areas with higher security risks (i.e., countries shaded with lines) require similar review and approval.

3. Export Control & Risk Management

Travelers must comply with **Export Control regulations** and consult the **Office of ICRM** for guidance on international security, research safety, and legal requirements (risk@acu.edu, 325-674-6142).

While most foreign travel does not require an export license, traveling to certain countries with export-controlled items, software, technology, or information may require an export license. ACU faculty, staff, and students are responsible for submitting an official notification to the Office of Institutional Compliance & Risk Management at risk@acu.edu (which includes the Export Control Office) before departure to obtain information on the requirements for the proposed travel.

C. Additional Requirements

1. International Travel Medical Insurance

- **ACU faculty, staff, and students** must obtain **GeoBlue international medical insurance** (including medical evacuation and repatriation). Contact **ACU Study Abroad** for coverage options at 325-674-2754, studyabroad@acu.edu, or Brown Library Suite 260.

2. Safety & Preparedness

- Register with **U.S. consular officials** via the **Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)** [here](#).
- Review **security, health, and travel** information before departure.

3. Travel & Expense Compliance

- Follow ACU policies, including [ACU's Travel, Entertainment, and Business Expense Reimbursement Policy](#). Violations may result in **loss of reimbursement, taxation, or disciplinary action**.

D. Responsibilities of Travel Organizers

1. **[International Travel Registration](#)** (Required for compliance, insurance, and risk management; Submit all necessary documentation as listed within the International Travel Registration to risk@acu.edu).
2. **Travel Request in Concur** (Required for budget approval; Link available through myACU Quicklinks).
3. **Attend a pre-travel safety orientation** organized by the **Office of Institutional Compliance & Risk Management (ICRM)** or the **Halbert Center**.
4. **Share with ICRM and carry emergency contacts** for travelers, relevant ACU offices, and local embassies. This includes:
 - ACU's 24-hour emergency contact: **ACU Police Department (325-674-2305)**.
 - Local destination's emergency services (police, ambulance, fire department, hospital, etc.).
5. **Register travelers** with the **U.S. State Department ([STEP Program](#))**.
6. **Obtain waivers** for ACU students, volunteers, spouses, and dependents ([ACU Sponsored Travel Form](#)). Risk Management can assist with tailoring waivers. Waivers should be sent to risk@acu.edu or stored for at least two years after the trip has concluded.

E. Responsibilities of Travel Approvers

1. **Assess travel risk and relevance** to [ACU's mission](#).
2. **Review official advisories** (U.S. State Department, CDC, and international agencies).
3. **Ensure compliance** with ACU's travel approval processes ahead of departure. **All** international travel requires approval from a Travel Approver (as defined earlier in this policy), the Office of ICRM, and the Provost or Sr. VP of Operations, as applicable.
4. **Consult ICRM** for high-risk travel approvals (risk@acu.edu, 325-674-6142).

For travel warnings and updates, visit:

- [U.S. Department of State](#)
- [CDC Travel Health Notices](#)
- [Government of Canada Travel Advisories](#)
- [UK Foreign Travel Advice](#)