

International Travel Policy

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

Responsible Administrator: Director of ICRM

Effective Date: April 1, 2014

Reviewed/Updated Date: December 2025

Date of Scheduled Review: December 2029

I. PURPOSE

A global perspective is essential to ACU's academic mission, and the University has long supported international travel to conduct research, study cultures and languages, promote collaboration with peer institutions, represent the University, and for other academic, administrative, and sanctioned student activities. The purpose of this policy is to outline the approval process for University-supported or University-related international travel, and related requirements, thereby promoting such travel while mitigating associated risks.

II. SCOPE

Any student, faculty, or staff member proposing to undertake University-supported or University-related international travel must follow the appropriate approval, insurance, and travel security and risk management requirements outlined in this policy.

**All credit-related international travel (i.e., study abroad, rising scholars) is overseen by ACU Study Abroad and is subject to the policies and procedures set forth by ACU Study Abroad (under the supervision of the Provost). Credit-related international travel is not addressed by this policy. Please see the ACU Study Abroad website (<https://www.acustudyabroad.com/home>) for more information on credit-related international travel.*

III. DEFINITIONS

Credit-related International Travel

Any international travel that is connected to a course for which an ACU student is receiving academic credit (i.e., Study Abroad).

International Travel

Any University-supported or University-related international travel, with or without students, by employees or students, including but not limited to:

- International research, teaching, and administrative travel,
- Internships,
- Exchange programs, and
- Non-credit-related student travel of any duration

For this policy, international travel is *University-related* when:

- The travel is undertaken because an individual is acting in an academic or professional capacity relevant to the person's areas of responsibility, activities (including co-curricular and extracurricular ones), course of research, teaching, administrative duties, or
- It is undertaken with or organized by any ACU organization, division, department, or office, even if not for an academic or professional purpose.

For this policy, *university-supported* international travel is any international travel funded to any degree by or through the University. Travel with non-ACU organizations may still qualify as University-supported or University-related international travel. Personal travel is not required to be approved, but it is highly recommended that personal international travel be submitted for appropriate import and export control review ahead of departure.

If unsure as to whether international travel is University-supported or University-related please contact the Office of Institutional Compliance & Risk Management for determination at 325-674-6142 or risk@acu.edu.

Non-Credit Related International Travel

All international travel that is not credit-related (as defined above).

Mission or Service International Travel

Any non-credit bearing trip in which a significant purpose is missions or Christian service.

Travel Advisories are issued by the [U.S. State Department](https://www.state.gov) regarding the general safety of every country, both for a country as a whole and for specific regions within a country. Advisories are issued based on four levels and may include the number of the level and/or the associated words in an advisory:

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

Given the sometimes political nature of U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories, in certain situations, the University will also consider the actions of globally respected NGOs, other U.S. universities, and other reliable sources when determining travel risks, such as the advisories and warnings of other governments.

Travel Alerts are [emergency alerts and security messages](https://travel.state.gov/alerts) from the U.S. State Department that are transmitted by U.S. Embassies and Consulates to U.S. citizens in particular cities or countries. Before you travel, check their Travel Advisory and Alerts for your destination(s) at travel.state.gov/destination. Be sure to read further country-specific details that could affect

your travel, such as entry/exit requirements, local laws and customs, health conditions, transportation, and other relevant topics.

Travel Approver

A Travel Approver is an individual who is authorized to approve international trips for University-supported or University-related travel for travelers who are either employees or students of ACU. Examples of Travel Approvers are deans, vice presidents, Executive Director of International Education and Study Abroad, Director of Halbert Center, Senior VP of Operations, and Provost; each of whom has this authority under specified circumstances.

Travel Organizer

A Travel Organizer is anyone who arranges University-related or University-supported non-credit-related international travel. Travel Organizers may or may not be a participant in the travel.

IV. POLICY & PROCEDURES

A. Policy

This policy applies to all non-credit bearing University-supported or University-related international travel, including but not limited to international travel for research, educational, or administrative purposes (with or without a student or students), exchange programs, mission and service trips or internships, and student group travel of any duration.

Furthermore, this policy applies regardless of whether the international travel is undertaken by faculty, staff, or students, and regardless of whether organized by schools, departments, faculty, staff, student organizations, or students. This policy also applies to all ACU employees and students who, as defined by this policy, organize international travel ("Travel Organizers") or approve it ("Travel Approvers").

All ACU faculty and staff going abroad for University-supported or University-related purposes must register and request approval for their travel from the appropriate Travel Approver, the Office of Institutional Compliance and Risk Management, and the Sr. VP of Operations or Provost ahead of departure. There are two pre-departure required processes:

1. Complete the [International Travel Registration](#). This registration is required by ACU Risk Management and captures details about the travel that allows ACU to confirm the traveler's international insurance and travel assistance program, manage safety and compliance risks, provide resources and information before the trip, and provide timely response and support during travel.
2. Complete the [Travel Request in Concur](#). Submitting a trip request in Concur is required by the ACU Travel Office and provides budget approval for projected expenses and details regarding the travel dates and destination.

Please note: Failure to complete both registrations at least 2 weeks before departure may result in all expense requests being denied or personal responsibility for covering trip expenses.

B. Pre-travel Requirements for Individual Faculty and Staff Travelers and for Travel Organizers

The [U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories](#) are often used as guidelines for the permissibility of University travel, and travel alerts may affect travel approval for as long as the concern persists or until the alert expires.

All international travel requires the approval of the Travel Approver, the Director of Institutional Compliance & Risk Management (risk@acu.edu), and the Sr. VP of Operations or Provost. Any mission or service-oriented trips should coordinate with the Halbert Center for Missions and Global Service to obtain these travel approvals.

It is the ultimate responsibility of the traveler(s) and travel organizer to provide notification and to be trained on applicable Export Control regulations and appropriate travel risk management. Contact the Office of Institutional Compliance & Risk Management with questions or concerns related to export controls, research security, training, and risk mitigation planning (325-674-6142 or risk@acu.edu).

Please note: Travel to a country or region with a **Level 3** (Reconsider Travel) or **Level 4** (Do Not Travel) advisory is prohibited. Exceptions may be granted by following the international travel approval process and require the approval of the Travel Approver, the Director of Institutional Compliance & Risk Management (risk@acu.edu), and the Sr. VP of Operations or Provost.

In rare instances where travel to higher-risk destinations is deemed to be of great importance to the University, the appropriate Travel Approver may consider allowing the travel proposal to go forward. The traveler or Travel Organizer should expect a much greater level of scrutiny of the proposal than would be applied to a proposal for travel to lower-level risk destinations.

It is the ultimate responsibility of the traveler and Travel Organizer to be informed of the risks associated with all University-related and supported travel. The [International Travel Checklist](#) should be used for planning international travel.

C. Additional Requirements Applicable to all International Travelers

i. International Travel Medical Insurance Requirement

Travelers engaged in international travel associated with an official ACU activity or program will either: (1) be provided with travel health insurance coverage as organized by the Travel Organizer, or (2) will be required to obtain a travel medical insurance policy, which must provide sufficient coverage (including medical evacuation and repatriation) for the duration of the International Travel.

Standard domestic ACU-employee health insurance policies do not cover international accidents or medical treatment. Therefore, all travelers including ACU faculty and staff are required to purchase international medical insurance for themselves and their spouse and/or dependents through Geoblue, ACU's global travel medical insurance provider. Geoblue is the same provider for Study Abroad, Halbert, and Rising Scholars. [You may purchase a Geoblue insurance policy at this link.](#)

ii. Preparedness and Review of Pertinent Information

Before departure, all international travel organizers and travelers should review security warnings, alerts, travel planning resources, and other pertinent information provided by the U.S. Department of State, and register with U.S. consular officials (see Appendix A) in the destination country (if not already registered by a Travel Organizer).

iii. Travel and Related Expenses

International travelers who will incur expenses to be paid or reimbursed by the University must follow the [Travel, Entertainment and Business Expense Reimbursement Policy](#), and are responsible for familiarizing themselves with this policy in advance of incurring expenses.

Violation of this policy may result in taxation or loss of reimbursement, disciplinary action including termination, or legal action.

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APPENDIX A

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRAVEL ORGANIZERS (for non-credit related travel)

- A. Orientation for Faculty and Other Group Travel Organizers.** Before traveling with an ACU student or students to an international destination, Travel Organizers **must** attend an orientation session organized by ACU Study Abroad or the Halbert Center (as appropriate to the individual or group proposing the travel) to assist in covering safety, health, legal, and financial responsibilities, policies, and procedures.
- B. Contact Information.** For the duration of travel, Travel Organizers and team leaders (if applicable) must carry with them at all times the following information:
- Emergency contact information for all travelers;
 - Telephone and email contacts for appropriate ACU offices (Travel Approver, dean, supervisor, Office of International Education and Study Abroad, and Risk Management as appropriate);
 - For 24-hour emergency contact at ACU: ***ACU Police Department at 325-674-2305***;
 - Telephone and other contact information of the local U.S. Embassy or Consulate; and
 - Telephone numbers for the local emergency personnel (police, ambulance, fire dept.)
 - Travel Organizers must provide domestic emergency contact information for all travelers to the Travel Approver before commencing travel.
 - Travel Organizers should encourage all international travelers to carry the above contact and emergency information for the duration of travel.
- C. Registration with Consular Officials.** Travel Organizers must register all travelers with U.S. consular officials in the destination country (the U.S. Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Process - STEP). Organizers should go to <https://mytravel.state.gov/s/step> to register travelers.
- D. Waiver/Indemnification.** For all travel involving ACU students or non-ACU employees (i.e., volunteers, spouses, and dependents), a signed waiver and/or indemnification form must be obtained for each traveler. Please see the [ACU Sponsored Travel form here](#). Risk Management can assist with creating waivers. For trips that include volunteers, travel organizers must contact ACU's Office of Human Resources (humanresources@acu.edu) for access to ACU's current version of the Volunteer Agreement which must be signed before commencing travel.

APPENDIX B

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRAVEL APPROVERS

Travel Approvers are responsible for following the requirements set forth below when determining whether to allow or disallow University-sponsored or University-related international travel.

Assessing and Approving International Travel

A. Resources to Consider: Travel Approvers must consider, among other possible factors:

- The [mission](#) of ACU;
- Specific goals and activities of the anticipated travel program, and the strategic fit with the University's international activities;
- Adequacy of planning and preparation of the Travel Organizer(s) or Traveler(s), and general risk management variables;
- General conditions travelers can expect to encounter.

Travel Approvers should consult available information on travel, health, and security risks, including resources such as:

- U.S. Department of State website for any travel warnings or advisories in effect, and general information on safety and health issues (<http://travel.state.gov/>);
- The Center for Disease Control and Prevention website for information on health risks for the destination (<http://www.cdc.gov/>);
- Travel notices, advisories, and warnings issued by other governments, such as Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (<https://travel.gc.ca/>) or British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad>);
- International news organizations (e.g., BBC, Reuters, CNN, etc.)

B. Travel to Level 3 or 4 Destinations

- In rare instances where travel to higher-risk destinations (Level 3 or 4 as declared by the U.S. Department of State) is deemed to be of great importance to the University, the appropriate Travel Approver may consider allowing the travel proposal to go forward.
- The traveler or Travel Organizer should expect a much greater level of scrutiny of the proposal than would be applied to a proposal for travel to lower-level risk destinations (Level 1 or 2).

Travel Approvers seeking guidance on these requirements should consult the Office of Institutional Compliance & Risk Management at 325-674-6142 or risk@acu.edu.