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Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual - Policy 2710: Education Abroad Health and Safety

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Process Owners: Provost/Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Chancellor for Health Sciences

1. General

The University recognizes the need to promote global awareness in today's interdependent world. To that end, it encourages students and faculty to participate in educational activities abroad. To promote the health and safety of people traveling abroad on University-sponsored or organized trips, the University's [Global Education Office \(GEO\)](#) and its Health and Safety Advisory Committee provide helpful support services before and after departure.

This policy applies to student education abroad activities sponsored or organized by any department or organization at UNM, including group travel organized by UNM departments and units (see Section 5), programs organized by UNM's chartered student organizations (see Section 6), and individual student travel (see Section 7).

2. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

"Program" means any group or individual trip or activity abroad involving one or more UNM students.

"Program Leader" means a person designated by a UNM department or chartered student organization to lead an education abroad group.

"Participant" means any person going abroad on a Program, including UNM students, faculty, staff, and others who accompany an education abroad group.

"Accompanying Individuals" means persons not affiliated with UNM, such as family or community members. Accompanying Individuals are subject to this policy.



“Elevated Travel Advisory” means a US Department of State Level 3 or 4 travel advisory or Center for Disease Control Warning Level 3.

3. Health and Safety Advisory Committee

The Health and Safety Advisory Committee (“Committee”) consists of a Chair or Co-Chair(s) appointed by the Provost or designee, generally to include one faculty member and one administrator; one undergraduate student; one graduate student; two or more faculty members appointed by the Chair; a Health Sciences Center faculty member with training and expertise in travel health; the HSC Executive Director of Health Policy and International Health or designee; the Director of GEO or designee; the Director of the Latin American and Iberian Institute or designee; the Director of Safety and Risk Services or designee; an Industrial Security Department representative; the University Counsel or designee as legal advisor; a Student Health and Counseling representative as an advisor; and such additional members with relevant experience or expertise as the Chair may see fit to appoint.

The Committee is responsible for:

- advising the Provost/Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Chancellor for Health Sciences, or their designee, as appropriate, concerning modifications to or cancellations of Programs before or after departure when warranted by emergencies, crises, or health and safety concerns raised by an Elevated Travel Advisory, or other extraordinary conditions that pose serious risks to health or safety;
- evaluating Elevated Travel Advisories and requests for exemptions pursuant to Section 4 in order to advise the Provost or Chancellor;
- collaborating, as needed, with GEO on the creation and modification of Program Leader training materials;
- providing such advice as may be requested to help UNM manage emergencies and crises abroad that affect Program Leaders and Participants; and
- creating and updating protocol and procedures for the Committee’s implementation and application of this policy.

4. Serious Risks to Health and Safety; Exemptions

Programs whose dates and destinations are or become subject to an Elevated Travel Advisory or other extraordinary conditions that pose serious risks to health or safety, shall be modified or cancelled, unless special circumstances justify an exemption. The Provost or Chancellor will decide whether to grant an exemption, including a conditional exemption, based on the Committee’s recommendation, if any, and the following factors as deemed appropriate:

- nature of the Elevated Travel Advisory or extraordinary conditions, including the locations most affected;
- feasibility of postponing the Program until the Elevated Travel Advisory is lifted or the extraordinary conditions resolve;

- feasibility of moving the Program to an alternate destination;
- experience and training of Program organizers and any local support staff;
- importance and academic relevance of student involvement;
- whether the Program can minimize risk to Participants;
- safety and security orientation sessions provided by UNM;
- Participants' informed consent on the "Acknowledgement of Risk" and "Conditions of Participation" forms and any appendix to the form that describes Program-specific risks or conditions; and
- such other information, if any, that the Provost, Chancellor, or the Committee reasonably deem relevant.

To request an exemption: (1) submit a written request to GEO that addresses all of the factors listed above in detail, (2) provide any additional information requested by the Committee to inform its deliberations, and (3) meet with the Committee as needed to discuss the request. The Provost or Chancellor will decide whether a Program is modified, cancelled, exempted, or conditionally exempted based on the Committee's recommendation. The Provost or Chancellor's decision may be appealed to the University President within ten (10) calendar days of the date of the denial notice.

4.1. Modified or Cancelled Programs

If an Elevated Travel Advisory covering Program dates and destinations is issued:

- after departure, the Program Leader shall provide the Elevated Travel Advisory promptly to all Participants and give them an opportunity to withdraw, unless the University otherwise mandates the withdraw of all Participants.
- before departure, and no exemption is granted, the Program shall be modified or cancelled. If the Program is modified and exempted, all Participants shall be notified and given an opportunity to withdraw.

If a Program in progress is cancelled or a Participant withdraws at any time because of an Elevated Travel Advisory, modification, or an exemption, the dean or department chair will arrange for affected Participants to complete their coursework to the extent possible. Applicable refunds will be determined on a Program-specific basis when funds can be recovered from the vendors and service providers.

5. Group Travel Programs Sponsored by UNM

Group travel sponsored by UNM departments or units includes the following activities abroad:

- Programs led by one or more UNM faculty members or others who are officially appointed by UNM;
- Health Sciences Center group activities; and

- Other UNM education-related group activities.

Each sponsoring department or unit shall designate one or more Program Leaders, who have the responsibilities listed in Section 5.1 below. Program Participants have the responsibilities listed in Section 5.2 below.

5.1. Responsibilities of Program Leaders

Program Leaders must:

- obtain approval for their Program from the chartered student organization's faculty advisor or, for academic units, from the department chair, director, or dean;
- register their Program on the GEO website, studyabroad.unm.edu;
- obtain UNM-prescribed health and accident [insurance](#) (including medical evacuation and repatriation of remains) or equivalent that covers all Program dates, including travel days from and back to the U.S. Exceptions may be granted by GEO on a case-by-case basis.
- complete GEO training annually, to stay current on changing health and safety issues and best practices in Program management;
- to the extent possible, stay current on any pertinent U.S. Department of State Travel Alerts, Travel Advisories, and CDC Travel Health Warnings before and during the Program, and share pertinent updates with Participants on a timely basis;
- fill out the Program Leader "[Program Proposal](#)" and "[Conditions of Participation](#)" forms available on the GEO website;
- review the "[Acknowledgement of Risk](#)" and "[Conditions of Participation](#)" forms for Participants and add an appendix, as needed, that describes any Program-specific risks or conditions;
- organize and provide, with assistance as needed from [GEO](#), one or more orientation sessions that provide health and safety information and address other issues and concerns of Participants;
- protect the confidentiality of any health information disclosed by a Participant;
- comply with the requirements and consider best practices for Program Leaders as detailed in GEO's "Guide for Program Leaders."

5.2. Participants

Participants must:

- attend all mandatory Program orientation sessions required by the Program Leader;
- [register](#) their participation in the Program on the GEO website and pay the applicable GEO fee;
- complete the "[Acknowledgment of Risk](#)" and "[Conditions of Participation](#)" forms as part of GEO registration. All Participants are encouraged (and may be required by their Program Leaders) to make an appointment with the [UNM](#)

[Travel Clinic](#) or their health care provider before departure for a travel health evaluation and consideration of required and recommended immunizations;

- obtain UNM-prescribed health and accident [insurance](#) (including medical evacuation and repatriation of remains) or equivalent that covers all Program dates, including travel days from and back to the U.S. Exceptions may be granted by GEO on a case-by-case basis. If a Program is approved and registered as described in the first and second bullets of Section 5.1 above, UNM funds may be used to reimburse Participants for the cost of this insurance, including the Accompanying Individuals who have a UNM business purpose for traveling, as provided in Section 6 of [UAP 4030 \("Travel"\)](#);
- comply with any additional requirements set by the Program Leader. Non-compliance may result in failure of the course, expulsion from UNM, or immediate return home at the Participant's expense and at the discretion of the Program Leader.

5.2.1. Smart Traveler Enrollment Program

UNM strongly recommends that all Participants who are U.S. citizens register with the U.S. Department of State (DOS) "[Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#)" (STEP) before departure. STEP is a free service for U.S. citizens that enables the DOS to provide travel updates and information and to assist in an emergency.

5.3. Group Travel Sponsored by UNM Continuing Education

Group travel sponsored by UNM Continuing Education (UNMCE) is excluded from the requirement of registering its program through the GEO website because UNMCE maintains an internal registration process and database. UNMCE shall adhere to all other guidelines in this Policy and best practices as described on the [Global Education Office](#) website.

6. Travel Sponsored by UNM-Chartered Student Organizations

UNM-chartered student organizations shall designate one or more individuals as a Program Leader and register their Program on the GEO website when planning begins. Program Leaders and Participants, respectively, have the responsibilities listed above in Sections 5.1 and 5.2.

7. Individual Student Travel

UNM recognizes and values the academic freedom of its students engaging in individual research, service learning, and other activities abroad that fulfill educational requirements or are organized by a UNM chartered student organization. For purposes of this policy and individual student travel, GEO will be considered the individual student's Program Leader. In order to protect their health and safety while abroad, individual students must:

- [register](#) their travel on the GEO website and pay the applicable GEO fee;
- obtain UNM-prescribed health and accident [insurance](#) (including medical evacuation and repatriation of remains) or equivalent that covers all travel dates. Exceptions may be granted by GEO on a case-by-case basis (such as travel to a student's home country);

- to the extent possible, stay current on any pertinent Elevated Travel Advisory before and during travel. The Global Education Office will contact students whose travel dates and destinations are covered by an Advisory;
- if an Elevated Travel Advisory is in effect for travel dates and destinations:
 - Undergraduate students must follow the steps in Section 4 to request an exemption.
 - Graduate researchers and other graduate students must follow the steps set forth in Section 4 if the country or location of travel is under a “Do Not Travel” Advisory (or its equivalent successor advisory term) from the US Department of State. If the graduate student is not granted an exemption, the graduate student may still choose study abroad without the University’s approval. To do so, the graduate student must read, sign, and submit to GEO the [“Travel Advisory Acknowledgement”](#) form.”

7.1. Smart Traveler Enrollment Program

Individual student travelers who are U.S. citizens are strongly encouraged to register with the U.S. Department of State (DOS) [“Smart Traveler Enrollment Program”](#) (STEP) before departure. STEP is a free service for U.S. citizens that enables the DOS to provide travel updates and information and to assist in an emergency.

8. Extended Travel Before or After Program Dates

UNM strongly recommends that Program Leaders and Participants who travel independently before or after Program dates (1) purchase supplemental health and accident [insurance](#) coverage at their own expense, including medical evacuation and repatriation of remains, to cover the full duration of their independent travel given the unpredictable, random, and potentially catastrophic cost of illness and accidents weighed against the relatively minor costs and major benefits of such insurance, and (2) register their independent travel in the [“Smart Traveler Enrollment Program.”](#)

9. Export Control

[UNM’s Export Control](#) can determine whether any items, biological agents, or technical data that travelers plan to take abroad are subject to export-control restrictions under federal law. The office can help to acquire an export license for controlled items. License cost and processing time vary by destination and often take several months. For non-controlled items the office can issue an official letter on behalf of UNM (generally within one or two business days) certifying that export control restrictions are not applicable. Criminal penalties for violating export control laws may include lengthy incarceration and substantial monetary fines. For assistance call 505-277-2968 or e-mail export@unm.edu.

10. Sexual Misconduct and Other Crimes

10.1. Incidents of Sexual Violence

Participants who experience sexual misconduct while abroad may report the incident(s) to their Program Leader, GEO, or the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO). Individuals may refer to [UAP 2740 \("Sexual Misconduct"\)](#) and the OEO [website](#) for assistance and guidance.

Program Leaders must take appropriate measures to prevent further incidents and promptly report the incidents to the [University's Title IX Coordinator](#), and to the GEO Associate Director for Education Abroad.

10.2. Required Clery Act Reporting

Certain crimes that occur within UNM's Clery geography must be disclosed in the University's Annual Clery Report, as described in UAP 2745 ("Clery Act Compliance"). These crimes include murder, sex offenses, aggravated assault, burglary, robbery, motor vehicle theft, arson, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, alcohol, drug, and weapons law violations, and hate crimes.

If UNM sponsors short-stay "away" trips of more than one night for its students, all locations used by students during the trip, controlled by UNM during the trip, and used to support educational purposes should be treated as non-campus property for Clery Act reporting purposes. Non-campus property is considered part of UNM's "Clery geography" under federal law.

More specifically, if UNM has entered into a written agreement with a third-party contractor to arrange housing and/or classroom space for a school-sponsored trip or study away program (either domestic or foreign), it is assumed that the contractor is operating on behalf of UNM as the school's agent, putting UNM in control of this space.

When UNM sends students to study away from UNM at a location or facility (either domestically or foreign) that UNM does not own or control, UNM does not have to include statistics for crimes that occur in those facilities. Host family situations do not normally qualify as non-campus locations unless a written agreement with the family gives UNM some significant control over space in the family home.

Leaders of Programs that occur within UNM's Clery geography are considered Campus Security Authorities (CSAs) under the Clery Act. As CSAs, these Program Leaders must report crimes that occur in their programs abroad to the Clery Compliance Officer so they can be included with the crime statistics in the Annual Clery Report. To report, log on at <https://police.unm.edu/default.aspx/MenuItemID/222/MenuGroup/Public+Home.htm>.

11. Exceptions

Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Provost or Chancellor (as applicable) in advance and in writing. Violations of this policy may lead to cancellation of a Program.

12. References

UAP 2740 ("Sexual Misconduct")

UAP 2745 ("Clery Act Compliance")

UAP 4030 ("Travel")

Global Education Office