

**A. Background and rationale:**

There are several circumstances under which faculty members travel off-campus with students, with the faculty member serving as the “Group Leader”. These trips may range from day trips to New York City or the Adirondacks, to week-long research trips over break, or full-term (or mini-term) experiences under the auspices of the International Programs (IP) office. When faculty members travel off-campus with students on trips organized under the auspices of IP (full-terms and mini-terms, both international and domestic), faculty members undergo required training sponsored by that office and are made aware of their responsibilities in that context. Participating faculty members are also briefed on the responsibilities that students have agreed to in the Student and Parent Participant’s Agreement, the IP Code of Conduct, and IP Alcohol and Drug Policy. However, faculty members may also travel with students outside the context of the International Programs office on class-related field trips, travel to conferences, research trips, or participation in academic competitions (as examples). This document is intended to help faculty members who travel off-campus with students understand their responsibilities when serving as a Group Leader for off-campus activities. The Policy is designed to inform the College when a faculty member plans an event that involves travel with students at some distance from campus. It is also intended to establish reasonable protocols for student behavior and provide both students and faculty with an understanding of the risks and liabilities associated with extended duration travel and students’ responsibilities to abide by College policies on such trips.

**B. Authority:**

Group Leaders have within the scope of their duties the authority to separate a disruptive student from the program, to enter into contracts with external service providers on an “as needed” basis, to implement emergency or evacuation plans, to delay and/or alter a planned event, etc. Group Leaders are obligated to inform the Dean of Students or designee in a timely fashion on student conduct code issues, alcohol or drug incidents, or any other behavior that may violate appropriate standards of conduct imposed by the Group Leader. In such circumstances, the Group Leader will be requested to complete an incident report, which initiates an investigation into a possible conduct code violation. Group Leaders are required to report sexual misconduct incidents in accordance with [College Policy](#). Group Leaders should consult with the Dean of Academic Departments and Programs with respect to emergency evacuation plans or major alterations to a scheduled itinerary (excluding routine travel delays or minor alterations to scheduled activities) during extended periods of travel.

**C. Applicability:**

There are some policies that apply to all off-campus outings with students, including day trips that involve travel at some distance from the College (but excluding other activities—see exclusions below). These policies are included in the first section, below. Other policies apply to all extended trips (defined here as **trips of 3 nights or more**), whether domestic or international. A final set of policies applies to international trips only. Faculty members may exercise their judgment to ask students to adhere to more restrictive policies than are required for the type of travel, to strive to ensure student safety and minimize risk.

**EXCLUSIONS:** Please note that this policy does not apply to every off-campus experience shared by students and faculty. Local trips of less than a day's duration (e.g., events that occur in within the city of Schenectady or its immediate surroundings) are excluded from the policy. Other exclusions include: local meals off campus with students, informal gatherings at faculty members' homes, and off-campus events in which both faculty and students participate but that the faculty member did not organize as a "Group Leader".

Note that this document does not replace the requirements imposed by the International Programs Office for programs under their jurisdiction.

**NOTE:** For all international travel and extended domestic travel with students, students should be directed to the International Programs website to complete all participant paperwork at least one month prior to scheduled departure.

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## **TRAVELING OFF CAMPUS WITH STUDENTS POLICY:**

### **SECTION I. FOR ALL OFF-CAMPUS TRAVEL WITH STUDENTS NOT SPONSORED BY THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS OFFICE**

1. The Group Leader should provide a trip itinerary and contact information while away to the Department Chair and Department administrative assistant. This information should also be provided to the Dean of Academic Departments and Programs. The purpose of this step is to ensure that the faculty member and students can be reached in case of an emergency.
2. The Group Leader should have available contact information for all students participating in the trip and College representatives to facilitate communication among trip participants and, if necessary, the College.
3. The Group Leader must have a budget and adequate financial resources to accomplish the goals of the trip safely.
4. The Group Leader must arrange safe transportation for the group, as outlined in the [Union College Motor Vehicle and Driver Policy](#).
5. Students should be made aware that it is highly recommended that they provide essential medical information to the Group Leader, including medications and ongoing health concerns that may require the Group Leader's intervention while off-campus.
6. The Group Leader should have an adequate emergency action plan, which at the very least should include a call chain to provide information to the proper individuals on campus in case of an emergency. (See chart below for appropriate campus contacts)
7. The Group Leader should review the [FAQ](#) regarding faculty responsibilities in the event of Sexual Misconduct, so that they are aware of their responsibilities if an incident occurs while they are supervising students off-campus.

## **SECTION II. ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EXTENDED OVERNIGHT TRAVEL**

When traveling for an extended period (more than 3 nights) away from campus with students (whether domestic or international), students should complete the following forms using the International Programs online form submission system:

- Union Participant Agreement
- Conduct Code
- Alcohol and Drug Policy
- Medical Information Form (optional)
- Self Identification Form (optional; for requesting disability accommodations)
- Sexual and Other Forms of Unlawful Harassment Policy

The Group Leader should become familiar with the material in these forms to be adequately informed about students' responsibilities while traveling away. Forms may be accessed by logging onto the IP website using the link below (log in to the site as if you are a participant using the link below—you will be directed to the forms that students should fill out).

Procedure:

Ask your students to complete the forms designated above through the International Programs website well in advance of departure:

[http://international.union.edu/index.cfm?FuseAction=Programs.ViewProgram&Program\\_ID=10074](http://international.union.edu/index.cfm?FuseAction=Programs.ViewProgram&Program_ID=10074)

You and your Department administrative assistant will be given administrative access to the International Programs online system so that you or your designee can ensure that your students have turned in the required paperwork. NOTE: Failure to complete and submit the forms will mean the student cannot participate. Please be in touch with Ginny Casper in the International Programs office for access.

## **SECTION III. ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL (including Canada)**

1. In advance of traveling abroad, students must enroll in HTH Worldwide for insurance coverage (through the International Programs website referenced above). Faculty members should contact HR for information on international coverage for their own emergency medical needs.
2. In addition to the on-line forms specified in the previous section, each student should also submit a copy of the Passport Biographic Page (the page with photo and expiration date) and should ensure that all passports are valid for 6 months AFTER RETURN DATE from the trip. A copy of the Passport page should be kept with the Department administrative assistant for the duration of the trip.
3. The Group Leader and students should review relevant health and safety information for the country or countries that they plan on visiting. Research what vaccinations are required and/or recommended for the trip and inform students that they will need to get any required vaccinations for entry into the region and that they need speak to their doctor about any recommended vaccinations. For more information consult:
  - WHO <http://www.who.int/en/>
  - CDC <http://www.cdc.gov/>

It is also recommended that the Group Leader review the Health and Safety Protocol for International Travel.

4. The Group Leader should secure reliable in-country language assistance, if necessary.
5. Ensure that visas are not required for travel to your destination and obtain them if they are required.
6. Determine if any students are non-US Citizens and if so, if there are any special visa requirements for them to go to your country of destination (there are different agreements between nations and not all are treated in the same way)
7. Emergency procedures: In addition to providing immediate phone contact back to campus in the event of an emergency (see phone contact chart, below), Group Leaders are advised to review the International Programs Emergency Protocols to ensure that they are prepared to take the necessary steps to respond to an emergency that may occur while traveling internationally. Please consult with the Dean of Academic Departments and Programs if you have questions.

#### **SECTION IV. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Individual faculty members or academic departments may develop other criteria for travel with students in order to ensure adequate preparation and attention to safety. Group Leaders may also wish to attend an orientation session for faculty sponsored by the International Programs Office prior to departure.

#### **Confidentiality**

Timely notification of parents in the event their son or daughter has encountered a health or safety issue is not only permissible, but necessary. Notification should also include officials at the College with a legitimate educational interest. This would include the Director of the Counseling Services and the Dean of Students and may include other College officials. FERPA is not a bar here, and the Group Leader is not obligated to follow the student's request that his/her parents not be notified. All Group Leaders should read and understand the nuances of the Student Records Policy prior to going abroad.

<b>Contact Information</b>			<b>Reason</b>
<b>Wendy Sternberg</b>	Dean of Academic Departments and Programs	Office:518.388.6233 Cell: 610-416-0263 Home:518-280-1764 sternbew@union.edu	Emergency evacuation plans Major changes in schedule (excluding routine travel delays) Post-return report of experiences including unusual incidents
<b>Steve Leavitt</b>	VP for Student Affairs and Dean of Students	518.388.6116 leavitts@union.edu	Reporting disciplinary issues, including drug and alcohol violations, student harassment complaints
<b>Trish</b>	Sr. Associate Dean of	518.388.6116	Reporting disciplinary issues

<b>Williams</b>	Students and Director of Student Conduct	518.388.6061 williamt@union.edu	and student sexual misconduct incidents
<b>John Skumurski</b>	Director of Budgets, and Risk Management	518.388.6104 skumursj@union.edu	Questions regarding notification of potential legal claims
<b>Marcus Hotaling</b>	Director of Counseling Center	518.388.6161 hotalinm@union.edu	Mental health related questions and issues
<b>Lara Atkins</b>	Director of International Programs	518.388.6002 atkinsl@union.edu	“As needed”