

International Programs and Academic Department and Programs Office Off-Campus Driving Practices and Safety Policy for International and Domestic Travel

Scope of the Policy

The programs subject to this Policy include: (1) international programs sponsored by the International Programs Office and (2) academic programs approved by the Dean of Academic Departments & Programs which are long term trips involving College-sponsored, faculty led, student research programs.

General Policy

The Risk Management Office, International Programs Office, and the Academic Department and Programs Office (collectively “College Administrators”) strongly discourages faculty directors, faculty leaders, and individual students from renting or driving private vehicles while participating in off-campus programs either internationally or domestically unless, as noted below, exceptions are made. Whenever possible, faculty and students are encouraged to use public transportation. When private transportation is required, faculty directors or faculty leaders should hire vehicles and drivers from licensed vendors with proven safety records. If a faculty director or faculty leader rents a car for their own private (non-program related) use, the faculty director or faculty leader is advised to NEVER give students a ride.

Exceptions

The College Administrators recognize that there may be situations when it is not feasible to use hired vehicles. Whenever possible, any vehicles should be rented only from reliable companies that conduct regular maintenance and meet or exceed the standard level of safety compliance for that country and locality and meet the car rental insurance requirements outlined below. These exceptions to using hired vehicles include the need to:

(1) Accommodate or respond to a student-participant’s health needs and/or a medical emergency. When practicable, the appropriate College Administrator should be notified. In the event of an emergency evacuation, transportation arrangements may be made by a College-approved vendor specializing in emergency evacuations through contacting the International Programs Office or the Vice President for Administration & Finance or designee.

(2) Provide transportation to remote areas as part of the program or program activity. Should a faculty director or faculty leader wish to rent cars or vans under this exception, faculty directors or faculty leaders should notify the College Administrator overseeing the program to seek prior approval. The college Administration, if approval is granted, reserves the right to impose conditions and / or restrictions in order to address driving safety related issues. Rented vehicles may be driven ONLY by faculty, staff and/or students who have met the following requirement for safe driving — have a valid U.S. driver’s license for a minimum of two (2) years.

Guidelines

If driving in a tight convoy, drivers must agree in advance how to best maintain contact with one another (e.g., cell phone, intermediate checkpoint, etc.). In addition, all drivers and passengers must receive and following written safety rules:

- Occupants must use seat belts at all times.
- Occupants shall not consume alcohol or illegal substances nor possess or transport illegal substances.
- Occupants must always remain seated and should not be engaged in any activities that may distract the driver.
- Drivers cannot drive after midnight unless they have rested for several hours during the day and feel alert.
- Drivers may not drive for more than two hours without a 15 minute “safety break” with total time behind the wheel not exceeding 10 hours per day.
- Drivers must have at least 6 hours off between one day of driving and the next.

Car Rental Insurance Recommendations

Union College recommends using, both domestically and internationally, Enterprise as the preferred auto rental company.

When renting domestically outside of New York State, Union College requires that faculty directors and faculty leaders purchase the following liability insurance through the rental car company:

- Personal Accident Insurance / Personal Effects Coverage
- Supplemental Liability Coverage

Due to the limitations of insurance coverage, significant legal exposure occurs when there is someone in the vehicle/van who is not related to the College when renting out of state.

The College’s New York State Auto policy covers injuries to the driver and all occupants of a vehicle owned, leased or rented by College employees or others with College permission, if involved in an accident, regardless of which party is at fault.

When renting overseas, Union College also requires that faculty directors and faculty leaders purchase the following liability insurance through the rental car company:

- Personal Accident Insurance / Personal Effects Coverage
- Supplemental Liability Coverage

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