

STUDENT TRAVEL POLICY

UNIVERSITY DECISION

The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio sponsors numerous off-campus activities involving students. In order to effectively manage these activities while minimizing institutional liability risks, this student travel policy must be followed.

STUDENT TRAVEL

In accordance with Texas Education Code Section 51.950 (<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.51.htm#51950>), student travel is defined as follows:

The trip is undertaken by one or more currently enrolled students to reach an activity or event that meets all of the following criteria:

1. An activity or event organized and sponsored by the health science center. The event shall be planned and funded by the institution and approved by a designated administrator.
2. The activity or event is located more than 25 miles from health science center campuses.
3. Travel to the activity or event is funded and undertaken using a vehicle owned or leased by the health science center, or attendance at the activity or event is required by a student organization registered at the institution who has prior written approval by the appropriate institutional officer.

DESIGNATED ADMINISTRATOR (DA)

The designated administrator shall be the respective Associate Dean of Student Affairs of each school.

APPROPRIATE INSTITUTIONAL OFFICER (AIO)

For purposes of this policy, any health science center employee overseeing the off campus activity shall be identified as the Appropriate Institutional Officer (AIO). The AIO is responsible for compliance of this policy.

UNIVERSITY PROCEDURE

Appropriate Institutional Officer (AIO)

At least one AIO must accompany students on any off-campus activity. The AIO is responsible for knowing the university standard of conduct and policies as outlined in this document. The AIO must make clear to all participants the consequences or non-compliance, and the AIO must take appropriate action when aware that participants are in violation. All AIOs are trained regarding the sexual harassment policy and ADA guidelines.

Assessment

AIOs shall assess all health and safety conditions for each activity and all information shall be provided for prospective participants so the participants can make informed decisions concerning preparation, participation and behavior while on the trip.

Trip Participation Forms

Each participant or the participant's parent/guardian in the case of a minor must complete, sign and return the Student Travel Information and Release (https://students.uthscsa.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/210/2024/01/student_release-for-travel.pdf) form to the AIO prior to the trip. The AIO is responsible for maintaining these records

in a manner that ensures timely access to the medical information for each participant in case of an accident or health-related emergency. The AIO shall also complete a Student Travel Authorization (https://students.uthscsa.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/210/2024/01/student_travel-Authorization_Deans-and-Faculty-Advisor-Approval.pdf) form and submit copies to the respective Associate Dean of Student Affairs and university police prior to each trip.

Medical Insurance

All enrolled health science center students are required by State Law to have continuous medical insurance coverage, including international students. A copy of the student's proof of insurance shall be attached to the Student Travel Information and Release (https://students.uthscsa.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/210/2024/01/student_release-for-travel.pdf) form.

Weapons, Illegal Substances and Alcohol

Use, possession or transporting of weapons, illegal substances and/or alcohol is forbidden while on a university sponsored trip.

University Owned Vehicles/Rental Vehicles/Commercial Carriers

Only university employees who are trained as required by law and possess a valid and appropriate license may operate university-owned or leased vehicles.

All operators of motor vehicles must comply with all laws, regulations, and posted signs regarding speed and traffic control. They must not operate the vehicle continuously for a period longer than the maximum allowed by federal or state law, regulations, or guidelines established by the health science center, whichever is lower, without scheduled rest stops or overnight stays.

When rental cars are used, the same policy applies and all applicable requirements of the state contracts for rental cars and the University of Texas System Business Procedure Memoranda apply.

All health science center owned or leased motor vehicles must have current proofs of liability insurance coverage and state inspection certification, be equipped with all safety devices or equipment required by federal or state law or regulation, and comply with all other applicable requirements of federal or state law or regulations.

In addition, all health science center owned or leased vehicles must have scheduled periodic service and maintenance by qualified persons and comply with all applicable requirements of the University of Texas System Business Procedure Memoranda.

All occupants or motor vehicles shall use seat belts or other approved safety restraint devices required by law or regulation at all times when the vehicle is in operation.

The total number of passengers in any vehicle at any time it is in operation shall not exceed the manufacturer's recommended capacity or the number specified in applicable federal or state law or regulations, whichever is lower. In addition, when the luggage load is excessive, it is highly recommended the passenger load be reduced accordingly. The weight of the passengers and luggage should be distributed evenly throughout the vehicle.

When commercial carriers are used, the same policies apply and all participants shall observe the carrier's safety guidelines.

Emergency Procedures

All AIOs are to follow the predetermined emergency notification procedures while on trips.

Monitoring

When any incident relating to students occurs on the trip, the AIOs are to notify the supervisors as soon as possible, and the supervisors shall notify the respective DA (Associate Dean of Student Affairs). Following the trip a report shall be submitted by the AIO's to the respective DA (Associate Dean of Student Affairs) documenting the incident so appropriate actions could be taken.

Side Trips/Early and Late Departures

Students traveling on institutionally-approved trips must arrive at and depart from the site at the same time as the AIOs unless prior approvals are given by the AIOs for special circumstances. Side trips from the predetermined itineraries are at the discretion of the AIOs.

Student Organization Travel

If a proposed trip is organized solely for a student organization, an officer of the student organization will need to submit the Student Travel Authorization (https://students.uthscsa.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/210/2024/01/student_travel-Authorization_Dean-and-Faculty-Advisor-Approval.pdf) form to the Office of Student Life (OSL) no less than one month prior to the scheduled trip.

If the trip is approved by the OSL and the student organization's faculty advisor, the student organization will also need to complete the following steps:

Due at least 2 weeks prior to departure:

- Student Travel Authorization Form (https://students.uthscsa.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/210/2024/01/student_travel-Authorization_Dean-and-Faculty-Advisor-Approval.pdf)
- Student Travel Information and Release Form (https://students.uthscsa.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/210/2024/01/student_release-for-travel.pdf)
- Provide the OSL with emergency contact information.
- Provide the OSL with a full travel itinerary.

Due 1 week prior to departure:

- Register with the State Department through the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (<https://step.state.gov/step/>).

International Travel

Global Health Education (aka Education Abroad) Students participating in a global health education program (aka education abroad and are credit-bearing, experiential/training related, or "Service Learning" Programs) that is delivered by, in association with, or under the auspices of the university, must review and adhere to the Education Abroad Policy (<https://public.powerdms.com/UTHSA/documents/1590204/>). Consultation with the Office of International Services (<https://wp.uthscsa.edu/ois/education-abroad/>) (OIS) is recommended for guidance on the online application process to participate. Permission from a faculty lead and the respective school dean is mandatory.

Other International Travelers

All international travelers (students, faculty, and staff) traveling to destinations or regions within countries with a U.S. Department of State Travel Advisory Level of 3 or 4, OR where the International Oversight Committee (IOC) has deemed significant health, safety, or security risks to be present, require approval by the IOC prior to travel. An International Travel to High-Risk Areas Waiver form and a Memo of Support must be submitted to the OIS at least 30 days before the departure date for IOC consideration. Please contact OIS for more information.