

Approval Date: June 17, 2011

## Off-Campus Activity and Travel Policy

<b>Office of Accountability:</b>	Provost and Vice-President (Academic) Vice-President (Finance and Administration)
<b>Office of Administrative Responsibility:</b>	Insurance and Risk Assessment (Risk Management Services)
<b>Approver:</b>	Board of Governors (Board Safety, Health and Environment Committee)
<b>Scope:</b>	<p>This policy applies to all members of the University community involved in <b>off-campus activities and travel</b> related to the mandate of the University and to travel organized by registered Student Groups for curricular or non-curricular activities.</p> <p>This policy does not apply to activities within the same municipality as the campus (eg: meetings, conferences and other activities such as student group movie night within Edmonton or Camrose).</p> <p>If unsure whether the policy applies to specific off-campus activities and travel please contact the Office of Insurance &amp; Risk Assessment for clarification.</p>

### Overview

The University of Alberta strongly believes in the benefits of a national and international approach to learning, research, scholarship and citizenship. Off-campus activities and travel allows members of the University community to broaden their experiences, expand and share their knowledge and encourages innovation and collaboration in support of the University's mission. The University has cultivated a variety of national and international programs and partnerships that offer unique programs for faculty and students and enhances the research and teaching aspects of the University's mandate. Not only do these activities benefit the members of the University community by creating a vibrant learning and research environment, they also allow members of the University community to bring their knowledge and expertise to others and help the University build a strong international reputation.

As with on-campus activities off-campus activities and travel can incur some level of risk. The University is committed to supporting its travelers in planning and participating in safe and enjoyable travel experiences.

This policy does not address the procedure used for the reimbursement of business travel expenditures or expense reimbursement procedures for goods and services. These procedures can be accessed through the Related Links section below.

### Purpose

To state the University's position on off-campus activities and travel and to provide direction and tools for planning safe travel experiences in a way that:

- recognizes the importance of travel
- balances independence and academic freedom with managing risks

- recognizes the independence of faculty, staff and postdoctoral fellows
- reduces liability to organizers/leaders by assisting them in assessing and managing risks
- is consistent with existing practices across campus, including those of University of Alberta International, the Field Research Office, the Office of Insurance & Risk Assessment and those of individual Faculties, Departments and Units.

## **POLICY**

The University of Alberta will take reasonable steps to support and promote the health, safety and security of participants in off-campus activities and travel. Faculties, departments, units and individual travelers share responsibility with the University to assess and manage the risk of off-campus activities and travel, particularly when students are involved.

Should a significant incident such as a natural disaster, political uprising or terrorist activity that affects the safety of participants occur, the University will assist in arranging return travel and may assist in covering the associated costs. Any applicable insurance coverage will be used before any University funds are used. Given the unique and unpredictable nature of these types of situations, they will be dealt with on a case by case basis. The Provost has the final authority in determining appropriate actions and whether University funds will be used.

The University has an Off-Campus Incident Response Team that can be activated to assess the implications of significant incidents, provide advice on how to handle the situation and make recommendations for either managing the increased risks or assisting travelers in removing themselves from the situation.

Should individuals choose to return early for personal reasons, the University is not responsible for arranging return travel or any of the associated costs.

### 1. EMERGENCY HEALTH AND PERSONAL TRAVEL COVERAGE WHEN TRAVELING OUTSIDE CANADA

Any member of the University community who is engaged in off-campus activities and travel should have appropriate **emergency health coverage**. It is recommended that they also have appropriate **personal travel insurance**.

Faculty and staff have comprehensive emergency health coverage through their benefits plan.

Postdoctoral fellows and students are offered emergency health coverage through their respective benefits programs. This coverage may be subject to exclusions or limitations such as travel to locations where the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has issued a travel warning, the performance of certain activities or the presence of pre-existing medical conditions.

It is the responsibility of individual travelers to review their emergency health coverage to determine if there are exclusions that are applicable. Should a traveler choose to undertake off-campus activities and travel where an exclusion is present, they are doing so at their own risk and the University assumes no liability or responsibility for emergency health care or related costs should they arise. Further information and resources on emergency health insurance can be found on the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade website.

Personal travel insurance is not generally provided to faculty, postdoctoral fellows, staff or students through their respective benefits program.

### 2. TRAVEL INVOLVING ONLY FACULTY, POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS AND/OR STAFF

The University respects the independence of faculty, postdoctoral fellows and staff in planning and undertaking their own off-campus and travel activities. These individuals are responsible for informing themselves of the risks associated with their travel and managing them accordingly.

The University suggests that faculty, postdoctoral fellow and staff travelers review *Appendix A: Faculty, Postdoctoral Fellow and Staff Travel Guidelines* and complete the checklist that is included. This tool is designed to help them plan

a safe and enjoyable travel experience.

The appropriate Dean, Chair or Vice-President may recommend that faculty, postdoctoral fellow and staff travelers cancel any off-campus activity or travel if after careful consideration of the situation it is believed the risks are unacceptable or unwarranted and cannot be reasonably managed. The appropriate Vice-President may also recommend that faculty, postdoctoral fellow and staff travelers return from their off-campus activity or travel based on an assessment of the risk to their safety and health. Should a faculty, postdoctoral fellow or staff traveler choose not to cancel or return on the recommendation of an appropriate University official as outlined above, the University is under no obligation to provide assistance at a later date and assumes no liability. This does not apply to individuals who are unable to comply due to reasons beyond their control. The decision to recommend cancellation or recall is a serious one that is not taken lightly and should be made in consultation with Insurance & Risk Assessment. If appropriate the Off-Campus Incident Response Team may also be consulted with. The individual making the decision takes many factors into consideration such as federal travel warnings, the perspective of the traveler and implications on the traveler's work and/or research. Appeals regarding a recommendation to cancel or recall may be made to the appropriate supervisor, Chair, Dean or Administrative Unit head. The Provost has the final authority.

If faculty, postdoctoral fellows or staff are planning or leading an off-campus activity or travel that involves students the requirements outlined below and in the *Risk Assessment for Off-Campus Travel Involving Students Procedure* apply.

### 3. TRAVEL INVOLVING STUDENTS

The University owes a higher duty of care to its students and has a responsibility to address the health and safety of students who are traveling. All off-campus activities and travel involving students, including but not limited to faculty led programs, trips planned by registered Student Groups and individual student travel for University related purposes must follow the risk assessment process as outlined in the *Risk Assessment for Off-Campus Travel Involving Students Procedure*. If the off-campus activity and travel involves one individual, that individual is responsible for following the procedure. If the activity involves a group, the group leader is responsible for following the procedure taking into consideration the group as a whole. Approval must be obtained if required and the actions identified to manage risks must be followed.

When students are involved, the appropriate Dean, Chair or Vice President may cancel any off-campus activity or travel if they believe the risks are unacceptable or unwarranted and cannot be reasonably managed. The appropriate Vice President may also recall students from their off-campus activity or travel based on an assessment of the risk to their safety and health. Students who do not comply with a cancellation or recall of this nature will be considered to be on personal travel and will no longer have access to University assistance. This does not apply to students who are unable to comply due to reasons beyond their control.

The decision to cancel or recall is a serious one that is not taken lightly and should be made in consultation with Insurance & Risk Assessment and University of Alberta International. If appropriate the Off-Campus Incident Response Team may also be consulted with. The individual making the decision takes many factors into consideration such as federal travel warnings, the perspective of the group traveling and implications on the students' studies and/or research. A faculty member may appeal a decision to cancel to the appropriate supervisor, Chair, Dean or Administrative Unit head. The Provost has the final authority.

The University recognizes that there are many well established and recurring programs involving student travel. The history and importance of these programs is acknowledged in the *Risk Assessment for Off-Campus Travel Involving Students Procedure* and *Appendix B: Risk Assessment Matrix for Off-Campus Travel Involving Students*.

### 4. TRAVEL INVOLVING VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers of the University of Alberta participating in off-campus activities and travel are responsible for informing themselves of the risks and completing an appropriate waiver form as outlined in the *Waiver and Release of Liability and Informed Consent Procedure*.

### 5. COMPLIANCE EXPECTATIONS

While undertaking off-campus activities and travel the Code of Student Behaviour, collective agreements and other

University of Alberta policies and procedures continue to apply. Participants must also obey the laws of the country they are in.

Instances where students do not follow the requirements set out in this policy and its related procedure and appendices may be addressed through the Code of Student Behaviour. Instances where faculty, staff or postdoctoral fellows do not follow the requirements set out in this policy and its related procedure and appendices may be addressed by the appropriate supervisor, Chair, Dean or Administrative Unit head and, if necessary, through the processes outlined in the appropriate collective agreement or policy.

## **DEFINITIONS**

Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only with no implied or intended institution-wide use. <a href="#">[▲Top]</a>	
<b>Off-Campus Activities and Travel</b>	<p>Activities and travel undertaken by a member of the university community that takes place away from university owned, leased or rented property for reasons related to the mandate of the University. This includes, but is not limited to teaching programs, field schools, practicum placements, research and graduate studies, faculty or student exchanges, conferences and seminars, extra-curricular activities that involve the formal representation of the University by student ambassadors such as varsity athletics and discipline-based competitions, and trips organized by registered Student Groups.</p> <p>This does not include activities within the same municipality as the campus (eg: meetings, conferences and other activities such as student group movie night within Edmonton or Camrose).</p>
<b>Emergency Health Coverage</b>	Coverage for emergency health expenses while travelling such as hospital and physician services, prescription drugs, dental care; health related emergency transportation and evacuation; and trip interruption due to a medical emergency.
<b>Personal Travel Insurance</b>	Insurance not related to health or medical emergencies that covers aspects such as trip cancellation and trip interruption due to circumstances beyond your control (eg: the death of a family member, weather conditions, mechanical failure or act of terrorism) and loss or damage to luggage and personal effects.

## **RELATED LINKS**

Should a link fail, please contact [uappol@ualberta.ca](mailto:uappol@ualberta.ca). [\[▲Top\]](#)

[Alcohol at University Events Policy](#) (UAPPOL)

[Appendix B: Risk Assessment Matrix for Off-Campus Travel Involving Students](#) (University of Alberta)

[Code of Student Behaviour](#) (University of Alberta)

[Education Abroad](#) (University of Alberta)

[Expense Reimbursement Procedure - Goods and Services](#) (UAPPOL)

[Field Research Office](#) (University of Alberta)

[Graduate Students Association Health and Dental Plan](#) (University of Alberta)

[Human Resource Services – Travel Health Benefits](#) (University of Alberta)

[Human Resource Services - WCB Administration and Reporting](#) (University of Alberta)

[Office of Insurance & Risk Assessment](#) (University of Alberta)

[Office of the Dean of Students - Student Groups](#) (University of Alberta)

[The University Guide to Off Campus Activity and Travel](#)(University of Alberta)

[Postdoctoral Fellows Supplemental Health Plan](#) (University of Alberta)

[Protective Services](#) (University of Alberta)

[Students` Union - Health and Dental Plan](#) (University of Alberta)

[Students` Union - Student Group Services](#) (University of Alberta)

[Travel Expense Reimbursement Procedure](#) (UAPPOL)

[Waiver and Release of Liability and Informed Consent Procedure](#) (UAPPOL)

## **PUBLISHED PROCEDURES OF THIS POLICY**

[Off-Campus Activity and Travel Policy \(Appendix A\) Guidelines for Faculty, Postdoctoral Fellow & Staff Travel](#)

[Risk Assessment for Off-Campus Travel Involving Students Procedure](#)