

Boston College
Academic and Extracurricular Student Travel Policy

Purpose

In recognition of the many educational benefits of domestic and international travel, the University regularly supports a variety of academic and extracurricular travel programs for groups of students that are organized by academic departments, administrative units, and student organizations. This Policy establishes guidelines for these travel programs to ensure adequate University oversight, quality, consistency, and the ability of the University to respond appropriately in the event of a problem or emergency. The guidelines established by this Policy are considered the minimum required. Sponsoring Departments or a Responsible Dean or Vice President may establish additional requirements to address the unique goals or circumstances of a particular travel program or individual trip.

Scope

This Policy applies to all overnight academic and extracurricular undergraduate and graduate student group travel sponsored by the University including, without limitation, all volunteer, service, immersion, retreat, conferences, academic, and course-based trips, except as otherwise provided below. It does not apply to day trips, study abroad programs made available by the Office of Global Education, individual student travel sponsored by offices or departments, graduate student travel to academic or professional conferences, student travel managed by the Athletic Department, or travel to facilities or properties owned by Boston College in the United States unless otherwise required by the requisite Dean or Vice President. International travel must also comply with the University's International Travel Policy.

This Policy does not limit the administrative powers of officers of the University to establish requirements relating to the review, approval, and management of student travel within their area of administration, whether or not the travel is within the scope of this Policy. Questions concerning such procedures should be addressed to the requisite Dean or Vice President.

Definitions

When used in this Policy, the following terms shall have the meanings ascribed to them below:

Travel Program is any academic or extracurricular student domestic or international group travel supported or organized by the University including, without limitation, all volunteer, service, immersion, retreat, conference, academic, and course-based trips, as well as trips organized by or through registered student organizations, unless the travel is excluded from the scope of this Policy.

Sponsoring Department is the department or unit of the University that is organizing, administering, and/or financially supporting the Travel Program.

Responsible Dean or Vice President is the senior administrator responsible for a school or division of the University (e.g. in the case of a school, the dean of that school; in the case of a University division or department, the vice president responsible for that area; and in the case of Athletics, the Director of Athletics).

Departmental Contact is the person in the Sponsoring Department assigned by the Responsible Dean or Vice President to be responsible for planning, registering, and overseeing the Travel Program.

The ***Student Travel Advisory Committee (STAC)*** shall be chaired by a designee of the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs and include the Dean of Students, the Director of Global Education, the Director of the Volunteer and Service Learning Center, the Director of the Office of Student Involvement, the Director of Emergency Management, representation from the Office of Global Engagement, and such other individuals as may be designated by the Vice President of Student Affairs, the Provost, and the Vice President of Mission & Ministry, and the Athletics Department. The chair of the committee may invite other representatives to join the committee on an ad hoc basis.

Trip Leader is the University faculty or staff person who is responsible for preparing the student group before the trip and accompanying them on the trip; students are not permitted to serve as trip leaders except as provided below:

Trip Leaders for Undergraduate Student Travel: Experienced Boston College graduate students or other non-undergraduate persons affiliated with the University may serve in this role if approved in advance by the Responsible Dean or Vice President. In the case of domestic trips involving twenty or fewer undergraduate students, the trip leaders may be undergraduate students who serve in pairs, if approved in advance by the Responsible Dean or Vice President.

Trip Leaders for Graduate Student Travel: In the case of domestic travel, for trips that include twenty or fewer graduate students traveling, graduate student trip leaders serving in pairs may serve as Trip Leaders if approved in advance by the Responsible Dean or Vice President.

Trip Leaders for International Travel: All international trips must have a minimum of two Trip Leaders. Three Trip Leaders must be assigned for any trips involving more than twenty students unless the Responsible Dean or Vice President approves an exception to this requirement in advance of the trip.

University Oversight

Each Responsible Dean or Vice President is responsible for ensuring compliance with this Policy within his or her school or department and approving all Travel Programs that are sponsored, managed, or conducted under the auspices of that school or department. If the Travel Program involves travel to an international destination, the International Travel Policy will also apply and, depending on the risk profile of the destination, may require the further approval of the Provost or Executive Vice President.

All Travel Programs must be organized and overseen by a Department Contact working under the auspices of a Sponsoring Department. The Department Contact must see that the trip is approved by the applicable Responsible Dean or Vice President prior to collecting any financial contributions from students or authorizing any payments. Provided that the planning timeline is such that collecting financial contributions from students cannot wait for this approval, the Department Contacts, with the approval of the Responsible Dean or Vice President, must ensure that students understand the contingent nature of the travel approval and any financial risk they may be assuming.

The Sponsoring Department is responsible for managing all financial arrangements and obligations for each Travel Program as well as for ensuring that any fundraising for the program complies with applicable University procedures.

The Student Travel Advisory Committee meets as needed to review Travel Programs, address any issues or concerns that may arise, and provide guidance to Responsible Deans and Vice President and Department Contacts. The Committee recommends and approves agreements (including

amendments to these agreements,) the University may require of travelers, including release agreements. Responsible Deans or Vice Presidents may consult with the chair of the Committee to address any questions, concerns, or assistance in addressing any particular issue or potential risk associated with a specific Travel Program. The Committee may from time to time establish additional procedures to carry out this Policy and may recommend amendments to the Policy.

General Travel Program Requirements

Each Travel Program must have a Department Contact and a Trip Leader approved by the Responsible Dean or Vice President.

Before departure, the Department Contact must register each trip with the University using the University's Travel Registry (available at travelregistry.bc.edu) or as otherwise requested by the Student Travel Advisory Committee.

For any trip, the Department Contact must ensure a relationship with an established local host organization or institution exists to coordinate the Travel Program's activities on-site, if applicable.

Any student who is permitted to serve as a Trip Leader under this policy must be screened and cleared by the Office of the Dean of Students, which will review the student's conduct record. If there are any questions about a student's conduct history or status, the Office of the Dean of Students will consult with the Responsible Dean or Vice President to determine the student's eligibility to participate in the trip and serve as a Trip Leader.

Sponsoring Departments planning travel outside the United States must also comply with the requirements set forth in the University's International Travel Policy.

Pre-trip Procedures

Prior to departure, the Department Contact must provide all student trip participants with the following:

- a. The approved form of release agreement, (the "Terms and Conditions of Participation") [*insert link*], which must be signed by the student and returned to the Department Contact prior to departure;
- b. Information on itinerary, transportation, and lodging arrangements;
- c. A pre-trip safety meeting that includes, without limitation:
 - University conduct standards and any specific expectations based on the nature of the trip and any relevant cultural considerations;
 - cultural, economic, and political background of the region or regions being visited;
 - relevant laws and customs of the region(s); and
 - health and personal safety information.

Additional pre-trip procedures may be required at the discretion of the Responsible Dean or Vice President.

Standards and Conduct During Travel

All trip participants must abide by all the applicable University standards of conduct as well as local law. Student participants must adhere to the Student Code of Conduct and are expected to behave in a manner that is consistent with the University's mission and values. Students must adhere to all directions of the Trip Leader.

The Trip Leader must promptly report to the Office of the Dean of Students any student conduct matter or other concern that arises on a trip. Serious matters that involve health, potential criminal activity, safety or well-being must be reported by the Trip Leader immediately. All other conduct issues must be reported to the Dean within 24 hours.

Any serious incident of misconduct may result in the trip participant being required to leave the trip and return home at the participant's expense. Without limiting the foregoing, the possession or use of controlled substances by any trip participant will be grounds for immediate dismissal from the Travel Program, and the offending person may be required to return home at his or her own expense. Any conduct matters may also be addressed by the Office of the Dean of Students.

The Trip Leader, acting under the guidance of the Sponsoring Department, may establish restrictions, or an absolute prohibition, concerning alcohol consumption during a trip.

Trip participants must assume primary responsibility for their own safety and well-being.

In case of emergencies, to the extent feasible, at least one Trip Leader should remain with the group for the entirety of the experience to help ensure the safety and well-being of the trip participants and to assist in the coordination of the emergency response.

Trip Leaders, together with the Sponsoring Department, should establish and communicate to the student participants expectations regarding independent student activities during any free time on the trip. Students must follow the Trip Leaders' instructions regarding independent activities.

Trip Leaders are expected to stay in close proximity and be readily available to student participants. In the case of homestays, Trip Leaders and students are expected to stay in the same community.

No student is permitted to leave the group and no student should be left behind during a trip, unless required by the circumstances and approved by the Department Contact. In the event that illness detains a student, arrangements should be made to leave a second Trip Leader with the student.

If a student must return home early from the trip for any reason, the Trip Leader, in consultation with the Responsible Dean or Vice President, will determine whether the student needs to be accompanied by another trip participant.

Approved: William P. Leahy, S.J.

Date: February 10, 2016

March 20, 2024 rev