

# THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA | OKANAGAN



## OKANAGAN SENATE SECRETARIAT

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**27 January 2010**

**To: Okanagan Senate**

**From: Academic Policy Committee**

**Subject: UBC Policy 69: Student Safety Abroad (approval)**

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In late 2009, both the Okanagan and the Vancouver Senate Academic Policy Committees received for a first reading *UBC Policy 69: Student Safety Abroad*. In parallel process Policy 69 was considered for information by the Board of Governors and posted for public comment. Feedback from all sources was incorporated into a final policy draft. The Okanagan Academic Policy Committee approved Policy 69 on 13 January 2009.


Because some sections of Policy 69 have academic implications for students, these sections require the approval of both Senates; the policy overall is approved by the Board of Governors. The Vancouver Senate will consider the academic sections of Policy 69 in early March 2010, and the Board of Governors will consider Policy 69 in February 2010.

The Academic Policy Committee recommends the following to Senate:

*Motion:* That Senate approve the following sections of UBC Policy 69: Student Safety Abroad:

- *Article 1 of the Policy – Definitions;*
- *The following articles in the Procedures:*
  - *Article 4 Travel to Level 1 “Exercise Normal Security Precautions” or Level 2 “Exercise High Degree of Caution” Travel Advisory Destinations;*
  - *Article 5 Authorization for Travel to Level 3 “Avoid non-essential travel” or Level 4 “Avoid all travel” Travel Advisory Destinations;*
  - *Article 6 Revocation of Authorization; and*
  - *Article 8 Unauthorized Travel.*



 The University of British Columbia	Policy No.:  69	Approval Date: DRAFT
	Responsible Executives: Vice President, Students Provost and Vice President Academic (UBC Vancouver) Deputy Vice Chancellor and Principal (UBC Okanagan)	
Title:  Student Safety Abroad		
Background & Purpose:  <u>Background</u> UBC is a global university with internationalization as one of the core elements of its mission, and an increasing number of students undertake international travel for the purpose of study, research, work, volunteer and service learning as part of the UBC experience. Such activities can expose students to certain health and safety risks.  <u>Purpose</u> The purpose of this Policy is to set standards to enable safer student experiences abroad. This will be done by providing a process for approving student international travel for University Activities; by providing tools to enable the assessment of any risks associated with individual locations students may travel to for a University Activity; to enable the University to better respond to emergency situations; and by establishing risk management resources to enable student travelers to be informed of and manage the risks associated with travelling abroad.		

## 1. **Definitions**

- 1.1. “**Activity Sponsor**” means with respect to a University Activity the UBC faculty or staff member who has actively organized or coordinated a University Activity, or if there is no such person, the Head of Unit.
- 1.2. “**Head of Unit**” is the head of the academic unit or the administrative unit that approves the University Activity, sponsors the University Activity or gives academic credit for the University Activity. Particular instances include:
  - 1.2.1. In the case of travel sponsored by the Go Global Office, the Director of Go Global.
  - 1.2.2. In the case of a Graduate Student enrolled in the Faculty of Graduate Studies (Vancouver Campus) or the College of Graduate Studies (Okanagan Campus):
    - 1.2.2.1. when the University Activity is related to a particular University course the Head of Unit is the Department Head of the Department offering the course, or the Dean of the Faculty offering the course if the Faculty does not have Departments.
    - 1.2.2.2. when the University Activity is non-course related the Head of Unit is the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies (Vancouver Campus) or Dean of the College of Graduate Studies (Okanagan Campus).
  - 1.2.3. In the case of a student enrolled in a Continuing Studies course the Head of Unit is the Executive Director, Continuing Studies.

- 1.3. **“Student”** means individuals enrolled in a program of study or registered in credit or non-credit courses at the University.
- 1.4. **“University Activity”** means any activity:
  - 1.4.1. undertaken by a student to fulfill a requirement for academic progress at the University; or
  - 1.4.2. officially organized by the University; or
  - 1.4.3. paid for in whole or in part from University funds, including without limitation, third party research or other funds administered by the University.

University Activities do not include:

- 1.4.3.1 activities sponsored or organized by student clubs or associations affiliated with the Alma Mater Society of UBC Vancouver, the Graduate Students Society or the Students’ Union of the University of British Columbia Okanagan; or
  - 1.4.3.2 activities organized solely by a student or group of students;
- unless they otherwise meet the definition of University Activities.

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1 This policy applies to any Student travel outside of Canada in connection with a University Activity.
- 2.2 Faculty and staff are frequently approached by individual Students or groups of Students for advice regarding planned international travel. Faculty or staff providing advice to such Students should clarify with the Students at the outset whether or not such travel is for a University Activity and if so, inform the Students of their obligations pursuant to this Policy.
- 2.3 If any person is uncertain whether or not contemplated travel is considered to be for a University Activity pursuant to this Policy, they should consult with the Go Global Office for a determination.
- 2.4 All Students planning to travel abroad for a purpose other than a University Activity do so as private citizens. Such Students are solely responsible for making their own travel arrangements and making their own decisions regarding personal safety. While they are not required to comply with this Policy, such Students are nonetheless permitted and encouraged to voluntarily contact Go Global for advice, support and/or registration of their travel arrangements with the Student Safety Abroad Registry.

## **3. Travel Planning and Responsibilities**

- 3.1. The University provides resources and support services aimed at facilitating safe travel experiences for Student travelers. The University maintains the Go Global Office to, among other functions, educate Student travelers about health and safety issues, facilitate Student travel in a safe manner, and act as a resource for Student travelers, Activity Sponsors and Heads of Units. However, the University cannot ensure that Student travel will be problem free or account for all the potential health and safety risks that Students might experience while out of country.
- 3.2. All Student travelers have the primary responsibility to prepare themselves in advance of international travel, to research and be aware of the risks involved in their planned trip, to ensure that they are physically and mentally prepared for the travel, to ensure they have appropriate medical and other insurance for the travel, to conduct themselves in a safe manner while travelling, and to bring any concerns they may have to the attention of the senior University official at the place of travel (if any) as well as the Go Global Office as soon as possible after the concern arises.
- 3.3. Prior to participating in University Activities outside of Canada Students must register their travel plans with the University through the Go Global Office and obtain any authorizations to travel that are required in the Procedures to this Policy.

- 3.4. Any Student planning to travel for a University Activity who has concerns about their personal safety during the upcoming travel should identify their concerns with the Activity Sponsor and/or their Head of Unit as well as the Go Global Office who will work with the student to address the issue.
- 3.5. Where required by the Procedures, Activity Sponsors must consult with the Go Global Office regarding University Activities outside of Canada and must comply with the directions of the Go Global Office.
- 3.6. Each Head of Unit must consider applications for authorization to travel for Students participating in University Activities in accordance with this Policy and any accompanying Procedures.
- 3.7. The University has no control over international events, and will not be responsible to refund any costs or losses, including the loss of timely academic progress, associated with Student travel or the cancellation of Student travel. This will be the case whether:
  - 3.7.1. the Student travel is not authorized pursuant to this Policy; or
  - 3.7.2. authorization for travel is revoked pursuant to this Policy; or
  - 3.7.3. the Student doesn't travel because of concerns for personal safety.

## **PROCEDURES**

*Pursuant to Policy #1: Administration of Policies, "Procedures may be amended by the President, provided the new procedures conform to the approved policy. Such amendments are reported at the next meeting of the Board of Governors and are incorporated in the next publication of the UBC Policy and Procedure Handbook."*

### **1. Definitions**

1.1. **"DFAIT"** means the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

### **2. Travel Support**

2.1. The Go Global Office provides support for the implementation of this Policy by:

- 2.1.1. Maintaining the UBC Student Safety Abroad Registry, including Student emergency contact information;
- 2.1.2. Staying informed of changing conditions as articulated in the DFAIT Travel Advisories and communicating these changes to affected University units and Students traveling abroad provided the Students are registered with Go Global in accordance with this Policy and these Procedures;
- 2.1.3. Working with Activity Sponsors, academic units and other programs to provide advice and assistance, particularly in cases where there is a Level 3 or 4 DFAIT Travel Advisory, and advising University authorities on decisions to restrict Student travel;
- 2.1.4. Working with academic units and other programs to assist when risk ratings change;
- 2.1.5. Offering pre-departure checklists, workshops and resource materials, and advising, to outgoing Student travelers.

### **3. Risk Rating System**

The University relies upon the Risk Rating System established by DFAIT to assess whether or not Students should engage in University Activities in various regions of the world. The table below lists the DFAIT Ratings and the recommendations of DFAIT associated with them as well the level assigned to them when referred to in this Policy. The Risk Rating System is generated and maintained by DFAIT and other outside agencies. The Go Global website (<http://www.students.ubc.ca/global/>) provides a link to the DFAIT Travel Advisories but the University is not responsible for the accuracy and content of the travel information provided by DFAIT.

<b>DFAIT Rating</b>	<b>Definitions</b>	<b>University Equivalent Travel Advisory Risk Level</b>
"Exercise Normal Security Precautions"	There are no significant security concerns. DFAIT advises to exercise normal security precautions in this country or region.	Level 1
"Exercise High Degree of Caution"	There are identifiable security concerns, and travelers should be alert and vigilant to their surroundings. DFAIT advises to exercise a high degree of caution in this country – or in specified regions of this country.	Level 2

“Avoid Non-Essential Travel.”	There is a specific security concern, and travelers should reconsider their need to travel at this time. DFAIT advises against non-essential travel to this country – or specified regions of this country. Travelers without essential reasons to be in this country or specified regions should leave.	Level 3
“Avoid all travel.”	There is an extreme risk to personal safety, and Canadians should not travel at this time. DFAIT advises against all travel to this country - or specified regions of this country. Canadians in this country or specified regions should leave.	Level 4

**4. Travel to Level 1 “Exercise Normal Security Precautions” or Level 2 “Exercise High Degree of Caution” Travel Advisory Destinations**

- 4.1. Students may travel for University Activities to locations with a DFAIT Travel Advisory of Level 1 or Level 2 provided that they comply with the conditions and requirements set out in the Policy and these Procedures (see for example the requirements in Article 10 of the Procedures). Provided they comply with the conditions and requirements set out in this Policy they are not required to seek authorization for such travel pursuant to this Policy.

**5. Authorization for Travel to Level 3 “Avoid non-essential travel” or Level 4 “Avoid all travel” Travel Advisory Destinations**

- 5.1. The University will not authorize Student travel to a country or region of a country with a Level 3 or a Level 4 Travel Advisory to engage in a University Activity unless exceptional circumstances exist. If a Student believes exceptional circumstances exist to justify the University giving the Student a special authorization, he or she may apply for special authorization as outlined in Article 5.2 of these Procedures.
- 5.2. A Student seeking special authorization to travel in a country or region of a country with a DFAIT Level 3 or Level 4 Travel Advisory must apply to their Head of Unit to seek authorization following the process provided by Go Global, within the timeframes stipulated by Go Global. The Go Global website at (<http://www.students.ubc.ca/global/>) outlines the process needed to apply to the Head of Unit, and the timelines for such application.
- 5.3. It is the responsibility of the Head of Unit to determine whether to grant or to decline to grant the authorization requested in Article 5.2 of these Procedures. Such determination must be made using the process outlined on the Go Global website which will include notification to the Student. Before approving this travel the Head of Unit must consult with the Go Global Office, and at a minimum, be satisfied that:
- 5.3.1. The travel has the written support of the Activity Sponsor;
  - 5.3.2. The travel has the written support of the Go Global Office;
  - 5.3.3. For a Student under the age of 19 years, the trip has the written support of the Student’s parents or legal guardians;

- 5.3.4. The travel is academically necessary for the Student and if not carried out at the proposed location and time there will be serious negative consequences for the Student's academic program;
- 5.3.5. The Activity Sponsor or Student has submitted a risk assessment and emergency planning document which has been developed in consultation with the Go Global Office and which is deemed by the Go Global Office as satisfactory;
- 5.3.6. The Activity Sponsor or Student can demonstrate that the Student has taken adequate steps to mitigate risks at the location and will have adequate support and guidance while in the region. In making this assessment the Head of Unit should consider the Student's experience and background in the region, whether a University employee is travelling with the Student and/or whether the Student is travelling with an established local organization with expertise in providing safe travel within the region;
- 5.3.7. If the travel is to a region of a country with a Level 4 Travel Advisory, the travel has written support of the Dean of the Student's Faculty;

Special authorizations of this nature will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. The fact that the conditions listed above have been met does not create any entitlement to a special authorization from the Head of Unit.

## **6. Revocation of Authorization**

- 6.1. Notwithstanding a decision made by the Head of Unit pursuant to Article 5.3 of these Procedures to authorize travel for a particular Student, the Academic Responsible Executive or his or her delegate (with respect to University Activities that that receive academic credit), or the Vice President Students or his or her delegate (for non-credit bearing University Activities), may review a Student's application for authorization and may decide to revoke such authorization for the Student to travel as a result of safety concerns. Such determination must be made in writing and sent to the Head of Unit, the Student and the Go Global Office. For the purposes of this Article the Academic Responsible Executive with respect to Students registered in courses at the University's Vancouver Campus is the Provost and Vice President Academic, and the Academic Responsible Executive with respect to students registered in courses at the University's Okanagan Campus is the Deputy Vice Chancellor and Principal UBC Okanagan.

## **7. Changes to Risk Ratings**

- 7.1. Should the DFAIT Travel Advisory Risk Rating of a country or region of a country be increased while Students are participating in University Activities, Go Global will advise Students registered in the Student Safety Abroad Registry and the appropriate Head of Unit. In this situation Students are required to follow the direction of the University, and leave the region or country if instructed by the University to do so. Students who refuse to follow the instructions of the University will be considered to be on unauthorized travel and will be subject to the provisions of Article 8 of the Procedures.
- 7.2. The Go Global Office may, when it is in receipt of compelling information that a country or region of a country presents a material increased risk to travelers, may determine that a country or region of a country has a higher risk Level for the purposes of this Policy, notwithstanding that DFAIT has not done so. In such cases this Policy will apply as if such country or region of country has such higher risk Level, and Go Global shall take steps to communicate this decision to appropriate persons in the University community. Nothing in this Article 7.2 shall act to create an obligation on the part of the University to independently assess risk levels in other countries in any particular case.



## **8. Unauthorized Travel**

- 8.1. Where the University has not authorized Student travel for a University Activity, or where such authorization has been revoked as a result of safety concerns, then if the Student undertakes the travel, he or she will be considered to be travelling as a private citizen and may not hold himself or herself out as travelling for a University Activity.
- 8.2. No University resources can be used, or University sponsorship provided, in support of unauthorized Student travel for a University Activity. In the event the University becomes aware of such unauthorized travel the Head of Unit may, at his or her discretion, take any of the following measures:
  - 8.2.1. suspend or cancel the University Activity or the Student's participation in the University Activity;
  - 8.2.2. suspend or cancel any funding to the Student from sources controlled by the University;
  - 8.2.3. subject to applicable laws, and with the approval of the University's Access and Privacy Manager,
    - 8.2.3.1 advise third parties of the Student's situation (for example government agencies, or the parents, guardians or next of kin of the Student);
    - 8.2.3.2 advise third parties that the Student is not travelling under the auspices of the University or with the authorization of the University;
  - 8.2.4. if the Head of Unit is the head of an academic unit;
    - 8.2.4.1 with the approval of the Dean of the relevant Faculty, withdraw the Student from registration in, or place the Student on leave from, any course or program related to the travel;
    - 8.2.4.2 with the approval of the Dean of the relevant Faculty, decline to award academic credit for activities undertaken while travelling;
    - 8.2.4.3 determine that any research conducted while traveling may not be used as a means of meeting a degree requirement at the University.
  - 8.2.5. impose such other restrictions as the Head of Unit feels are warranted by the situation.
- 8.3. When making a decision pursuant to Article 8.2, a Head of Unit must consider any information that has been received by the Head of Unit from the Student.
- 8.4. Decisions made pursuant to Article 8.2.4 may be subject to appeal within the Student's Faculty and can be ultimately appealed to the appropriate committee of Senate that has jurisdiction.

## **9. Requirements to Report Problems**

- 9.1. UBC staff and faculty must report significant problems related to the health and safety of Students abroad to the Head of Unit as soon as possible after learning of the problem. The Head of Unit is then required to consult with the Director of Go Global in determining how best to support the Student;
- 9.2. UBC Students should report any concerns or problems related to their own health and safety abroad to the senior University official in the place of travel (if any) and to the Go Global Office as soon as possible during their travel;
- 9.3. The Go Global Office will provide the Student with access to all relevant UBC resources, and where necessary, will coordinate a response to any problem and notify the appropriate University officials.

## **10. General Travel Procedures**

- 10.1. Any Student who travels for a University Activity abroad must register in the Student Safety Abroad Registry maintained by the Go Global Office and comply with any other requirements issued by the Go Global Office.
- 10.2. All Students with Canadian citizenship are required to register in the DFAIT “Registry of Canadians Abroad” system prior to undertaking travel outside of Canada for a University Activity. Students who hold other citizenships can still register in this system, and may also wish to register with the consulate of their home country.
- 10.3. Students traveling outside of Canada for a University Activity to destinations with a Level 1 Travel Advisory are required to complete the online pre-departure health and safety checklist offered through the Go Global Office.
- 10.4. Students traveling outside of Canada for a University Activity to locations with a Level 2 “Exercise High Degree of Caution” Travel Advisory are required to complete the online pre-departure health and safety workshop, offered through the Go Global Office and must sign the Level 2 Student Mobility Agreement.
- 10.5. Students who have been authorized to travel outside of Canada for a University Activity to locations with a DFAIT Level 3 “Avoid Non-Essential Travel” Travel Advisory or a DFAIT Level 4 “Avoid All Travel” Travel Advisory pursuant to this Policy must meet the conditions outlined in Article 5.3 of the Procedures, must work with Go Global to complete a Safety Planning Record and emergency plan, must complete an in-person pre-departure health and safety briefing, and must sign the Level 3 Student Mobility Agreement or Level 4 Student Mobility Agreements, as appropriate.
- 10.6. Go Global will keep a copy of all written authorizations granted by Head of Units, as well as refusals to authorize travel made by Head of Units, as well as the risk assessment and emergency plan developed for each Student traveler.