

# University of Guelph

## Safe International Travel Policy for Students

October 10, 2006

### 1.0 Introduction

As a leader in education and research the University of Guelph (the “University”) encourages students to pursue academic opportunities beyond the Guelph and regional campuses. Internationalization is a strategic direction of the University and scholarly international activity is one of the essential elements of a truly world-class institution. The University also recognizes that such activities can expose participants to certain risks and that reasonable precautions must be taken with respect to the health and safety of students involved in research and scholarly activities undertaken abroad under the auspices of the University.

### 2.0 Scope and Application

#### Types of Activities

This policy applies to any activity undertaken outside of Canada by the University’s students in connection with their academic work or any other activity officially organized under the auspices of the University (“University Activities”). These University Activities include but are not limited to:

- Field trips
- Credit Courses
- Research projects
- Exchange programs
- Semesters abroad
- Letters of Permission
- Practica
- Internships
- Co-op placements
- Scholarly Conferences
- Organized sport competitions or other extracurricular activities

[Activities organized by student associations (ie. GSA, CSA) or student clubs are not addressed by this policy.]

## 3.0 Risk Rating System

### 3.1. Risk Rating System

The University has established a Risk Rating System as outlined in Table 1 (below) to be used in deciding whether University Activities will be undertaken when such activities involve travel to particular destinations (countries or region of a country). The Risk Rating System is based on or refers to information provided by Foreign Affairs Canada and is made available through the Centre for International Programs (CIP).

#### Disclaimer

Travel information is generated and maintained by the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) and other outside agencies. The University is in no way responsible for the accuracy or content of the travel information provided.

**Table 1: Risk Ratings for Countries and Regions of Countries**

<b>Foreign Affairs Canada Rating</b>	<b>University Risk Rating</b>
A) Foreign Affairs Canada advises against all travel to these countries. Canadians in these countries should leave.	Extreme Risk
B) Foreign Affairs Canada advises against all travel to these countries. Canadians in the specified region(s) of these countries should leave.	Extreme Risk
C) Foreign Affairs Canada advises against all travel to these countries.	Extreme Risk
D) Foreign Affairs Canada advises against all travel to the specified region(s) of these countries. Canadians in the specified region(s) of these countries should leave.	Region: Extreme risk
E) Foreign Affairs Canada advises against all travel to the specified region(s) of these countries.	Region: Extreme risk
F) Foreign Affairs Canada advises against non-essential travel to these countries. Canadians without essential reasons to be in these countries should leave.	Region: Extreme risk Country: High Risk
G) Foreign Affairs Canada advises against non-essential travel to these countries.	High Risk
H) Foreign Affairs Canada advises against non-essential travel to the specified region(s) of these countries. Canadians without essential reasons to be in the specified region(s) of these countries should leave.	Region: High Risk
I) Foreign Affairs Canada advises against non-essential travel to the specified region(s) of these countries.	Region: High Risk
No DFAIT travel Advisory	Moderate Risk

### **3.2 Travel to Extreme or High Risk Destinations**

The University will not authorize student travel for University Activities to locations rated as Extreme or High Risk.

Travel to locations designated as Extreme or High Risk is strongly discouraged, and no student may be penalized academically or in any other way by making a decision NOT to travel to such a location. Students who choose to travel to Extreme or High Risk locations do so at their own risk.

No undergraduate or diploma academic credit will be provided to students who choose to travel to a location rated as Extreme or High Risk. Under exceptional circumstances, graduate academic credit may be given to students who choose to complete individual research projects or academic work in a location rated as Extreme or High Risk despite the fact that the University does not recommend travel to such locations.

### **3.3 Travel to Moderate Risk Destinations**

The University will normally authorize students' travel for University Activities to locations rated as Moderate Risk, provided students participating in the University Activities have completed the Pre-Departure Orientation (on-line or in person) offered by CIP. Students who do not complete the Pre-Departure Orientation will not be permitted to participate in the relevant University Activities. Students may appeal such decisions in writing to the Associate Vice-President (Academic).

### **3.4 Changes to Risk Ratings While Students Are In the Field**

Should the Risk Rating of a location change while students are participating in University Activities, CIP will advise students of the changes to the risk level by way of the Safe Travel Advisory System (see section 4) and will notify the appropriate University administrator as outlined in Section 5.

## **4.0 Safe Travel Advisory Service (STAS)**

The Safe Travel Advisory Service (STAS) is a web site maintained by CIP where members of the University community can register their travel details and automatically receive travel information and updates provided by DFAIT.. STAS also provides a mechanism for the University to contact STAS users should health, safety or security concerns arise regarding international travel. STAS is available for both personal and University related travel.

## **5.0 Authorizations for University Activities**

### **5.1 University Activities administered by Academic Departments (e.g. course field trips, independent study courses)**

University Activities which are carried out and administered by academic departments must comply with the Risk Ratings System as outlined in Section 3.

Department Chairs' Responsibilities:

- a) Department Chairs must consult with CIP for Risk Ratings and other relevant information before giving approval for department administered University Activities requiring international travel.
- b) Should the Risk Rating of a location change while students are participating in department administered University Activities, CIP will advise the Chair of the department. The Chair shall advise the Dean of any Risk Ratings change. Any decision made to alter or otherwise cancel or suspend the relevant University Activity will be made by the Dean, with such consultation as is appropriate.
- c) Should circumstances arise which change the Risk Rating of a location to Extreme or High Risk while the students are on location, and such circumstances make it impossible for on-site University personnel to consult with the Dean as in subsection 5.1 (b), the on-site University personnel may take all reasonable steps they believe necessary to protect the safety of the students and University personnel.

### **5.2 University Activities administered by a College (e.g., Semester Abroad activities):**

University Activities which are carried out and administered by a college must comply with the Risk Ratings System as outlined in Section 3.

Deans' Responsibilities:

- a) The Dean of the College must consult with CIP for Risk Ratings and other relevant information before giving approval for such college-administered University Activities.
- b) Should the Risk Rating of a location change while students are participating in college administered University Activities, CIP will advise the Dean. The Dean shall advise the Associate Vice-President Academic (AVPA) and the Chair of the Semester Abroad Committee, if applicable of any Risk Ratings change. Any decision made to alter or otherwise cancel or suspend the

University Activities will be made by the AVPA in consultation with the Provost.

- c) Should circumstances arise which change the Risk Rating of a location to Extreme or High Risk while the students are on location, and such circumstances make it impossible for on-site University personnel to consult with the AVPA as in subsection 5.2 (b), the on-site University personnel may take all reasonable steps they believe to protect the safety of the students and University personnel..

### **5.3 University Activities administered by CIP (e.g. Exchange programs, etc.):**

University Activities which are carried out and administered by CIP must comply with the Risk Rating System as outlined in Section 3.

Director of CIP's Responsibilities:

- a) The Director of CIP must consider Risk Ratings and other relevant information before giving approval for CIP administered University Activities.
- b) Should the Risk Rating of a location change while students are participating in CIP administered University Activities, the Director of CIP shall advise the AVPA of any Risk Ratings change. Any decision made to alter or otherwise cancel or suspend the University Activities will be made by the AVPA in consultation with the Provost.
- c) Should circumstances arise which change the Risk Rating of a location to Extreme or High Risk while the students are on location, and such circumstances make it impossible for on-site University personnel to consult with the AVPA as in subsection 5.3(b), the on-site University personnel may take all reasonable steps they believe to be necessary to protect the safety of the students and University personnel

### **5.4 Other University Activities (e.g. Co-op work placements, non-academic University Activities):**

University Activities which are carried out and administered by any other unit not otherwise included in this Section 5 ("Unit") must comply with the Risk Ratings System as outlined in Section 3.

Unit Head's Responsibilities:

- a) The head of the Unit must consult with CIP for Risk Ratings and other relevant information before giving approval for the Unit administered University Activities.

- b) Should the Risk Rating of a location change while students are participating in Unit administered University Activities, CIP will advise the head of the Unit. The head of the Unit shall advise the appropriate Associate Vice-President of any Risk Ratings change. Any decision made to alter or otherwise cancel or suspend the University Activities will be made by the relevant Associate Vice-President in consultation with the Provost.
- c) Should circumstances arise which change the Risk Rating of a location to Extreme or High Risk while the students are on location, and such circumstances make it impossible for on-site University personnel to consult with the relevant Associate Vice-President as in subsection 5.4 (b), the on-site University personnel may take all reasonable steps they believe to be necessary to protect the safety of the students and University personnel

Endorsed by Senate International Committee on 20 March 2006  
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