University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Procedure
Related to State Department Travel Warnings
and University-Sponsored Travel Abroad

Introduction

UW-Eau Claire is committed to providing a broad spectrum of international experiences for our students, faculty, and staff. We strongly encourage study abroad in University-approved programs, participation in other credit and non-credit international experiences, and faculty international research. At the same time, in the face of the safety risks in the world today, we are also committed to protecting the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff when they journey outside the borders of the United States.

We strongly recommend that before traveling to any part of the world, faculty, students, staff, and other members of the University community (hereinafter referred to as “others”) familiarize themselves with the U.S. Department of State website (http://travel.state.gov), paying particular attention to the “Current Travel Warnings” section, which lists countries and regions about which the U.S. Government has serious concerns for American travelers, and the “Public Announcements” section, which articulates health and safety issues in various countries or regions. Although UW-Eau Claire does not prohibit travel to countries for which “Public Announcements” have been issued by the State Department, we urge all travelers to seriously consider the risks in visiting such locales. It is the responsibility of the individual traveler to consult the State Department website to obtain current information about the health and safety conditions of the proposed destination. In addition, all individuals traveling or studying abroad on a University program or an affiliated program must sign the “UW-System Uniform Statement of Release” form. All individuals participating in University-sponsored programs or approved affiliated programs abroad must also obtain CISI insurance from the Center for International Education before departure.

1.0 Policy Governing Travel to Countries on the State Department’s “Current Travel Warnings” List

In order to protect the health and safety of its undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, staff, and others, UW-Eau Claire prohibits University-sponsored travel to those countries or regions of countries for which the State Department has issued a Travel Warning that includes any of the following phrases:

- orders departure of U.S. dependents and non-emergency personnel;
- recommends that any U.S. citizens remaining in the country should depart;
- (strongly) warns U.S. citizens against (all) travel to the country (region); or
- warns (urges) U.S. citizens to defer (all) (non-essential) travel to the country (region).

Click here to view current Travel Warnings on the State Department’s website (http://travel.state.gov).

Any reference to “Travel Warning” in this document refers to the specific kinds of warnings referenced above in 1.0.

When the State Department Warning (1.0) targets a specific region(s) of a country, but not the country as a whole, travel is only prohibited to those regions identified by the Travel Warning specified in 1.0 above. This restriction applies to the University’s own study abroad programs,
University-approved faculty international research activities, University-sponsored travel programs (e.g., sports teams, performing groups, volunteer activities, organized tours for community members or alumni, etc.), and study-away experiences sponsored by affiliated programs. Approval for University-sponsored study abroad or travel in these locations is suspended for the duration of the Travel Warning (1.0 above).

2.0 Student Travel

2.1 No UW-Eau Claire student is permitted to embark on study abroad in the affected country/region nor are any short-term programs led by University faculty permitted to depart as long as the Travel Warning (1.0 above) is in effect.

2.2 If a student receives formal approval to participate in a program location prior to the issuance of a Travel Warning (1.0 above) or to the development of a critical situation, the University’s approval will be suspended until such time as the Travel Warning (1.0 above) has been lifted or the critical situation is no longer a concern.

2.3 In the event that a Travel Warning (1.0 above) is issued or a critical situation arises while a UW-Eau Claire student is participating in a University or an affiliated program already in progress, the University will do all that it reasonably can to facilitate actions to address the safety and security concerns of the individuals in the program.

2.4 If a UW-Eau Claire student chooses on his or her own to enroll in a study abroad program or pursue any academic work in a country/region where a Travel Warning (1.0 above) has been issued, the student will not receive:

- support from any UW-Eau Claire office or department,
- any financial assistance from UW-Eau Claire,
- CISI insurance coverage issued through UW-Eau Claire or the UW System, or
- pre-approved credit for the work undertaken in that location.

An exception to this provision of pre-approved credit may be made in cases in which students return to their home countries (they must possess the passport of that country) and are under their parent(s)’s or guardian’s care. With special permission, these students can receive prior approval for courses taken in their home countries. However, such students will not receive support from any UW-Eau Claire office or department, any financial assistance from UW-Eau Claire, or CISI insurance coverage through UW-Eau Claire or the UW System.

3.0 Faculty and Staff Organizing Group Travel Experiences in Countries on the State Department’s “Current Travel Warnings” List

No UW-Eau Claire sponsored travel programs may embark for affected areas while the Travel Warning (1.0 above) is in effect. A Travel Warning must be lifted before a University-sponsored trip may depart. In the case of UW-Eau Claire programs already underway when a Travel Warning for the country/region is issued or a critical situation arises, the University, in consultation with the faculty member on site and other knowledgeable sources, will do all that it reasonably can to facilitate actions to address the safety and security concerns of the individuals in the program.
4.0 Faculty and Staff Consulting, Travel, and Research

4.1 UW-Eau Claire encourages faculty to develop international connections and to pursue international research. We do, however, strongly recommend that before traveling to a region of the world, faculty and staff familiarize themselves with the U.S. Department of State website (http://travel.state.gov) and carefully assess the health and safety risks posed by travel to a particular area.

4.2 Normally, faculty or staff may not use any UW-Eau Claire administered funds, whether its own monies or those received through external granting agencies, to support travel to or research activities in countries/regions that have been designated by the State Department “Travel Warning” specified in 1.0 above. Furthermore, UW-Eau Claire will not permit faculty or staff members to travel to these areas on university-related business.

4.3 If faculty or staff make the personal decision to travel to countries/regions that have been designated by State Department “Travel Warning” specified in 1.0 above, they do so as private individuals with no connection to UW-Eau Claire.

4.4 An exception to the policy articulated for faculty and staff (4.2) may be granted under extraordinary circumstances (i.e., travel to high-risk regions) by the chancellor of the University or his/her designee. Faculty and staff who seek personal exceptions to this policy must complete a “UW-Eau Claire International Travel Waiver Request Form – Employee Travel” along with a signed copy of the “Employee Acknowledgement of Risks in Traveling to Countries on the State Department’s Travel Warning List”.