

**University of Hartford Policy  
Related to State Department Travel Warnings  
and University-Sponsored Travel Abroad**

**(revised by ISMT 12/10/08)**

**Introduction**

The University of Hartford 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, students, faculty, 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 the University of Hartford does not prohibit travel to countries for which “Public Announcements” have been issued by the State Department, we urge all travelers to consider seriously 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 appropriate “Assumption of Risk and Release of Liability” form. All individuals participating in University-sponsored programs or approved affiliated programs abroad must also obtain MEDEX coverage from the Study Abroad Office of the International Center (Gengras Student Union 328) before departure.

Nothing in this policy shall serve to extend to any University of Hartford student, faculty, or staff the right to engage in University-sponsored travel abroad, and the University reserves the right to cancel any University-sponsored travel at any time, regardless of whether prior approval has been granted.

## **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, the **University of Hartford restricts University-sponsored travel in 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 restricted in those regions identified by the Travel Warning specified in 1.0 above. For example, a University of Hartford program or an affiliated program in Madrid would not be affected by a Travel Warning (1.0) that applied to the Basque region of Spain. A faculty member’s participation in a conference in Manchester, England would not be affected by a Travel Warning (1.0) that applied to London only.

## **2.0 Student Travel**

**2.1** No University of Hartford student is permitted to embark on study abroad in the country/region under a Travel Warning (1.0 above), 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. This restriction applies to the University’s own study abroad programs, 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).

**2.2** 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 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 University of Hartford student is participating in a University or an affiliated program already in progress, the University's International Situation Management Team (ISMT) will do all that it reasonably can to facilitate actions that will improve the safety of the individuals in the program.

**2.4** If a University of Hartford student chooses on his or her own to apply for "active status" and 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 prior to or during the process of applying for study abroad, the student will not receive:

- support or advice from any University of Hartford office or department,
- University of Hartford grants, stipends, or financial aid to support research or travel in the affected areas,
- MEDEX coverage issued through the University of Hartford, 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.

### **3.0 Faculty and Staff Organizing Group Travel Experiences in Countries on the State Department's "Current Travel Warnings" List**

No University of Hartford sponsored travel programs may embark for affected areas while the Travel Warning (1.0 above) is in effect. This restriction applies to the University's own study abroad programs, 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).

A Travel Warning must be lifted before a University-sponsored trip may depart. In the case of University of Hartford programs already underway when a Travel Warning for the country/region is issued or a critical situation arises, the University's International Situation Management Team (ISMT), in consultation with the faculty member on site and other knowledgeable sources, will do all that it reasonably can to facilitate actions that will improve the safety of the individuals in the program.

## **4.0 Staff Travel**

- 4.1.** Before traveling to a region of the world on university-related business, staff are required to 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, staff may not use any monies paid from a University of Hartford administered account to support travel to countries/regions that have been designated by the State Department “Travel Warning” specified in 1.0 above.
- 4.3** If staff make the personal decision to travel to countries/regions that have been designated by State Department “Travel Warning” specified in 1.0 above and to use their own funds to support this travel, they do so as private individuals with no connection to the University of Hartford.
- 4.4** An exception to the policy articulated for staff (4.2; travel to high-risk regions) may be granted under extraordinary circumstances. Staff who seek personal exceptions to this policy should submit in writing a rationale for travel that contains the following:
  - a. Details about the geographic environment of the work and its relation to security issues;
  - b. Information about travel advisories or warnings of other countries (e.g., Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Canada) about the country under the U.S. State Department Warning;
  - c. The local support structure available to the individual and evacuation plans in case of an emergency;
  - d. The individual’s familiarity with and experience of the locale, its language, and culture prior to this trip;
  - e. The importance and significance to the University of the staff member’s travel and the necessity of doing the work in that particular locale;
  - f. Documentation that the staff member has appropriate health insurance coverage in the locale in question;
  - g. Documentation about whether the location is covered under the University’s MEDEX assistance program (travel to some high risk regions may involve additional payment beyond what is included in the premium);
  - h. A signed copy of the “Assumption of Risk and Release of Liability, High-risk Regions” form should be included with the request for an exception.

**4.5** This rationale (5.2.1) must be submitted to the individuals who supervise the program, department, and college/school that are funding the trip. Each of these supervisors must review the submitted materials and provide a written assessment of the proposed travel based on its feasibility, importance, and necessity. Each assessment should also contain a recommendation about whether the travel should be permitted to proceed with University support. The staff member's rationale and the supervisors' assessments must be submitted to the International Situation Management Team, who will review the documents and decide whether to allow the travel to proceed with University support. The decision of the International Situation Management Team is final and not subject to appeal.

## **5.0 Faculty Consulting, Travel, and Research**

**5.1** The University of Hartford 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 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. A faculty member traveling for professional reasons must check the State Department's "Current Travel Warnings."

**5.2** A faculty member who for professional reasons (e.g. research, teaching at an international university, attending a conference) wishes to travel to a region which falls under the State Department "Travel Warning" specified in 1.0 above and whose travel/research costs are paid from a University-administered account (whether its own monies or those received through external granting agencies) may undertake such travel only after completing the steps outlined below and receiving the appropriate approvals.

**5.2.1** A rationale for the proposed professional activities must be filed with each program, department, or school that is funding the trip. It must contain the following:

- a. Details about the geographic environment of the work and its relation to security issues;
- b. Information about travel advisories or warnings of other countries (e.g., Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Canada) about the country under the U.S. State Department Warning;
- c. The local support structure available to the individual and evacuation plans in case of an emergency;
- d. The individual's familiarity with and experience of the locale, its language, and culture prior to this trip;

- e. The academic importance and significance of the program/research to the faculty member and the necessity of doing the work in that particular locale;
- f. Documentation that the faculty has appropriate health insurance coverage in the locale in question;
- g. Documentation about whether the location is covered under the University's MEDEX assistance program (travel to some high risk regions may involve additional payment beyond what is included in the premium);
- h. A signed copy of the "Assumption of Risk and Release of Liability, High-risk Regions" form should be included.

**5.2.2** This rationale (5.2.1) must be submitted to the individuals who supervise the program, department, and college/school that is funding the trip. Each of these supervisors must review the submitted materials and provide a written assessment of the proposed travel based on its feasibility, importance and necessity. Each assessment should also contain a recommendation about whether the travel should be permitted to proceed with university support. The faculty member's rationale and the supervisors' assessments must be submitted to the International Situation Management Team, who will review the documents and decide whether to allow the travel to proceed with university support. The decision of ISMT is final and not subject to appeal.

**5.3** If faculty make the personal decision to travel to countries/regions that have been designated by State Department "Travel Warning" specified in 1.0 above and use their own funds to support this travel, they do so as private individuals with no connection to the University of Hartford.