

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE VICE CHANCELLOR AND PROVOST

Policy Concerning Global Study, Travel, and Research

Introduction

As the daily lives of North Carolinians are affected more and more by events around the world, and in order to better serve the State and its citizens, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has developed a global focus. Its students take advantage of opportunities for international education and research through organized study-abroad programs, more informal educational trips, and independent study and research. Its faculty and staff participate in international educational and research opportunities, both to attain additional knowledge themselves and to share their expertise with other countries. The University is committed to being a leading global public research institution.

As the University's contacts with the rest of the world expand, certain associated risks may exist. In an effort to enable communication with all University parties abroad, UNC maintains the [Global Travel Registry](#). **All University affiliates—students, faculty, staff, and others—are required to record any and all university-related travel abroad in the [Global Travel Registry](#).** The Global Travel Registry may be accessed at <http://globaltravel.unc.edu>. The information travelers provide is used for communication purposes in an international or personal crisis situation.

Additionally, **all University affiliates—students, faculty, staff, and others—are required to enroll in the UNC-System subscribed international travel health and evacuation insurance offered by HTH Worldwide.** Travelers should contact the [Office of Risk Management](#) to enroll.

Conditions such as war, terrorism, political unrest, and natural catastrophes can elevate the level of risk present in foreign countries. In addition, a disease outbreak in a foreign country poses both a risk of infection for the student or employee traveling to the affected area and a risk that the student or employee may transmit the disease or health condition to others on returning to the United States. The University endeavors to balance the value of participation in international educational activities against the potential risk to its students and employees of such participation.

In balancing these factors, the University relies on information from the U.S. Department of State (“State Department”), most particularly Travel Warnings and Alerts issued periodically by the State Department, as well as those (hereafter, collectively with the above, referred to as “notices”) issued by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

About U.S. Department of State and Centers for Disease Control Travel Notices:

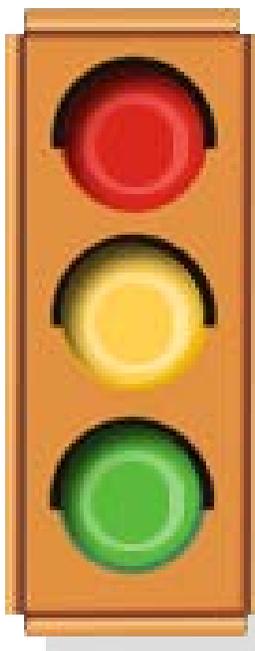
State Department travel notices are broken down into two major categories: (I) *Travel Alerts* and (II) *Travel Warnings*. *Travel Alerts* usually indicate a lower-level risk condition—the potential for social unrest following an election or the potential for flooding during a rainy season, for example. *Travel*

Warnings usually indicate more significant risks in travelling to a country and are further broken down into two subcategories: (a) those that identify conditions that have created heightened risks for a particular country and that warn U.S. citizens of those risks, and (b) those that forbid, restrict, or otherwise urge U.S. citizens to defer all travel to a particular country due to significant risk conditions.

Travel notices issued by the CDC fall into one of three categories: *Watch Level 1* (green), issued when travelers should “practice usual precautions,” *Alert Level 2* (yellow), issued when travelers should “practice enhanced precautions,” and *Warning Level 3* (red), issued when travelers should “avoid nonessential travel.” CDC travel notices are often reiterated in a State Department notice for that country that will fall into one of the categories outlined in the paragraph above. CDC notices, however, may contain more details concerning the conditions and risks posed by a disease than the associated State Department notice.

The Office of the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer closely monitors State Department and CDC travel notices in addition to world news briefings. In accordance with respective travel notices, an appropriate risk level of travel to such countries will be assigned by the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer in consultation with the UNC Global Risk Response Team. This team includes the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer, the Director of Global Relations, the Associate Dean for Study Abroad and International Programs, the Senior Associate Dean for Global Programs in the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Global Travel Registry campus administrator, or their designee(s). Though University-assigned risk levels will not be less restrictive than a State Department or CDC notice, the above noted administrators may place additional restrictions on a country or world area to those defined in a State Department or CDC notice.

There are three levels under which the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill categorizes travel to a foreign country:



Level 3 (Red) – High Risk:

Countries in which conditions have prompted the State Department and/or CDC to forbid, restrict, or otherwise urge U.S. citizens to defer all travel

- **No Student Travel** (except in extraordinary circumstances with approval and waiver)
- **Faculty/Staff – Approval and Release and Hold Harmless Agreement Required**

Level 2 (Yellow) – Heightened Risk:

Countries in which the ordinary risk of travel is heightened due to certain conditions

- **Student Release and Hold Harmless Agreement Required**
- **Some Destinations May Require Additional Approval for Student Travel**

Level 1 (Green) – Routine Travel:

Countries to which travel is routine and without significantly heightened risks

- **General Student Waiver Required**

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Level 1 Risk Condition (Green):

Travel to countries categorized as Level 1 or “Green” risk condition should be considered as routine foreign travel for most travelers. These countries may have a low-risk travel notice assigned to them by either the State Department or CDC or may have no associated travel notice at all. UNC may maintain a Level 1 Condition for countries that are designated by the State Department or the CDC to be of higher alert levels when notices are limited to specific groups of people within a population or under other limited circumstances decided by the UNC Global Risk Response Team on a case-by-case basis.

Because some degree of risk is inherent in any foreign travel, students traveling to countries in the Green category are required to sign a general Release and Hold Harmless Agreement when registering their trip in the Global Travel Registry.

Students must register all University-affiliated foreign travel in the Global Travel Registry, including travel to countries on the Green list. Students on approved programs offered through the Office of Study Abroad website or through their professional school administrator may be pre-registered and, in such instances, would not need to complete their registration independently.

Students must be enrolled in the international travel health and evacuation insurance program established by General Administration for the UNC System. This insurance is administered by HTH Worldwide. Travelers should contact the Office of Risk Management to enroll. Students on approved programs offered through the Office of Study Abroad website or through their professional school administrator may be pre-enrolled and, in such instances, would not need to complete their enrollment independently.

Level 2 Risk Condition (Yellow):

Countries in the Level 2 or “Yellow” category have State Department and/or CDC travel notices identifying conditions that heighten the ordinary risk of travel to that particular country. UNC may maintain a Level 1 Condition for countries that are designated by the State Department or the CDC to be of higher alert levels when notices are limited to specific groups of people within a population or under other limited circumstances decided by the UNC Global Risk Response Team on a case-by-case basis.

No student shall be required to participate in an educational activity under University auspices in a country in the Yellow category. A student who wishes to travel, under University auspices, to a country in the Yellow category may do so under the following conditions:

- (1) The student must register any and all University-affiliated foreign travel in the Global Travel Registry. Upon registration, the student must sign a Release and Hold Harmless Agreement. If a student is under age 18, a hardcopy release must also be signed by a parent or guardian.

- (2) The student must be enrolled in the international travel health, evacuation, and repatriation insurance program established by General Administration for the UNC System. This insurance is administered by HTH Worldwide. Travelers should contact the Office of Risk Management to enroll.
- (3) The student must review the State Department Travel and/or CDC travel notice(s) and the Consular Information Sheet for the country in question. This information may be accessed on the web at <http://www.state.gov> and <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>.
- (4) The student must carefully consider the risks described in the travel notice and, weighing those risks against the value of the educational opportunity to the student, make his or her own determination about whether to continue with the planned research or study activity. In balancing these factors, the student should take into consideration the possibility that the existing conditions could change, causing the risk level to increase from Yellow to Red, triggering the “Level 3 Risk Condition (Red)” section of this policy and thus possibly affecting the student’s ability to receive a refund of monies already expended for the research or study activity. The student should also take into consideration the possibility that, if he or she encounters difficulties abroad, the University and even the U.S. Department of State may be unable to assist and that he or she may be obliged to “shelter in place” in the event that commercial airlines drastically curtail or even cease operations and/or travel restrictions prevent people from returning to the United States or leaving the affected country. “Shelter-in-Place” information can be found at the Centers for Disease Control website (<http://emergency.cdc.gov/preparedness/shelter/>).
- (5) Students who travel to a country for which the CDC has issued a travel notice may be requested to monitor their health upon return, or be subject to screening at the port of entry, a process that may include voluntary or involuntary isolation or quarantine of the traveler.

Countries in the Level 2 Risk category with elevated travel safety risks or with no-travel regions may be flagged, requiring additional review and approval from the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer. If necessary, travelers will be contacted in regard to these travel plans.

Additionally, the University reserves the right, at any time, to recategorize a nation from Level 2 (Yellow) to Level 3 (Red), independent of U.S. State Department and/or CDC notices, triggering the “Level 3 Risk Condition (Red)” section of this policy. In such cases, the UNC Global Risk Response Team will make decisions based on circumstances and available information. Should circumstances or risk levels change in the time period between when the travel waiver for a Level 2 (Yellow) country is signed and the trip begins, the University reserves the right to withdraw approval.

Level 3 Risk Condition (Red):

Countries in the Level 3 or “Red” category typically have State Department and/or CDC travel notices that forbid, restrict, or otherwise urge U.S. citizens to defer travel to a certain country. For countries in the Red category, the following rules apply:

- (1) No student shall be permitted to travel to that country under University auspices except with specific and unique permission from the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer.
- (2) Any university study abroad programs in that country shall be suspended.
- (3) No student shall be given University funding for any activity in that country except with specific and unique permission from the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer. If the student has already received such funding prior to the imposition of the travel notice, he or she will be required to return the funding to the University. Where a portion of the funds have already been expended in furtherance of the activity before the travel notice was imposed, the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer, after consultation with the relevant department, shall decide the amount to be returned to the University.
- (4) If the student is already in the country for which the travel warning has been issued, the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer shall decide, in consultation with others having knowledge of the situation, whether the student shall be required to return to the U.S. Where the student is required to return to the U.S. or where the student desires to return to the U.S. under these circumstances, the University will, at the student's request, endeavor to help the student make arrangements for his/her return. However, students should be aware that the University, and even the U.S. Department of State, may be unable to assist and that they may be obliged to "shelter in place" in the event that commercial airlines drastically curtail or even cease operations and/or travel restrictions prevent people from returning to the U.S. or leaving the affected country. "Shelter-in-Place" information can be found at the Centers for Disease Control website (<http://emergency.cdc.gov/preparedness/shelter/>).
- (5) Where the student has pre-paid the costs of a University-sponsored study abroad program, the student may be eligible for a refund of all or a portion of the payment. The availability of a refund is not guaranteed, however, and will depend on the circumstances of each case.
- (6) **If a student elects to travel and participate in an activity despite the Level 3 Red Risk Level and the University rules set out above, he or she will not receive any academic credit from the University for that research or educational activity** except with specific and unique permission from the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer. He or she must also recognize that the University, and even the U.S. Department of State, may be unable to help in the event he or she encounters difficulties abroad. For students returning from countries under CDC travel notices, he or she may be subject to screening at the port of entry, a process that may include voluntary or involuntary isolation or quarantine of the traveler. Further, the student may not be permitted to return to campus until he or she has completed appropriate health monitoring and/or screening to determine that he or she is not infected with the disease in question. The monitoring and screening required will be decided on a case by case basis by the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer in consultation with appropriate public health officials.

INFORMATION FOR FACULTY AND STAFF

The University recognizes that, in times of international crisis, its faculty and staff members (employees) may possess valuable expertise that is needed to assist with the resolution of the crisis. Consequently the University does not prohibit its employees from traveling to countries falling into the Level 2 (Yellow) or Level 3 (Red) categories above, despite State Department or CDC travel notices. However, the following rules and conditions apply to such travel:

- (1) All faculty and staff must register any and all University-affiliated foreign travel in the Global Travel Registry. Prior to University-related travel to Level 3 (Red) destinations, faculty members and staff are required in-advance to notify the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer and execute a Release and Hold Harmless Agreement. The Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer retains the right to prohibit University travel to any destination in which the risk level outweighs the value of the proposed travel.
- (2) Faculty and staff must be enrolled in the international travel health, evacuation, and repatriation insurance program established by General Administration for the UNC System. This insurance is administered by HTH Worldwide. Travelers should contact the Office of Risk Management to enroll.
- (3) No employee shall be required to travel to a country for which a State Department or CDC travel notice has been issued.
- (4) Employees who wish to travel to such a country are urged to review the State Department and/or CDC travel notice and the Consular Information Sheet at <http://www.state.gov> and <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>. When applicable, it is recommended that the employee review any other available material about the conditions in the country in question. Employees should consider carefully whether the value of the travel to them outweighs the risks they will face if they choose to travel.
- (5) Employees shall take precautions with respect to his or her personal safety. An employee must recognize that the University, and even the U.S. Department of State, may be unable to help in the event the employee encounters difficulties abroad. Employees who travel to a country for which there is a State Department and/or CDC travel notice are urged to prepare to “Shelter-in-Place” in the event that commercial airlines drastically curtail or even cease operations and/or travel restrictions impede people from returning to the United States or leaving the affected country. “Shelter-in-Place” information can be found at the Centers for Disease Control website (<http://emergency.cdc.gov/preparedness/shelter/>).
- (6) In cases where the CDC has issued a *Warning Level 3* (red), the employee may be requested to monitor their health upon return, or be subject to screening at the port of entry, a process that may include voluntary or involuntary isolation or quarantine of the traveler. Further, an employee may not be permitted to return to campus until he or she has completed appropriate

health monitoring and/or screening to determine that he or she is not infected with the disease in question. The monitoring and screening required will be decided on a case by case basis by the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer in consultation with appropriate public health officials.

IV. AUTHORITY OF THE EXECUTIVE VICE PROVOST AND CHIEF INTERNATIONAL OFFICER; COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA RELATIONS.

Where it is not clear from its wording whether a State Department or CDC travel notice falls under the Level 2 (Yellow) or the Level 3 (Red) category as set out above, the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer shall, in consultation with the UNC Global Risk Response Team, have the discretion to decide the issue. The Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer retains the right to prohibit University travel to any destination in which the risk level outweighs the value of the proposed travel.

In any situation involving a State Department and/or a CDC travel notice, the special conditions that caused the warning or notice to be issued may result in further rules and responses by the University. The Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer shall, in consultation with other campus officials, have the authority to establish such rules and responses as are deemed appropriate under the circumstances.

Information in the UNC Global Travel Registry will be used to communicate with the traveler and to inform University decisions. In press and media communications, the University will release information from the UNC Global Travel Registry only as provided for under University Policy and applicable law. Such press and media communications will be managed by the Vice Chancellor for Communications and Public Affairs and the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer, or their delegate(s). Staff in schools, centers and institutes should direct press and media inquiries to the Vice Chancellor for Communications and Public Affairs and the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer, or their delegate(s). University faculty and staff who become aware of important issues affecting University travelers are encouraged to share that information with their Dean and the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer.

As worldwide events occur and conditions change, so may the University's risk level. In instances when the University's risk level for a country rises to a higher level, the Office of Study Abroad and the Office of the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer will account for all University-affiliated travelers registered in the Global Travel Registry and will attempt to contact them regarding the change in conditions and risk level. In cases of a Yellow-level country rising to a Red-level country, the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer will determine the course of action required for students, faculty and staff, and will make recommendations based on the information available. In any instance of elevating risk levels, relevant stakeholders—including deans, associate deans, international activities offices and Global Travel Registry Administrators—will be identified and contacted with pertinent information.

For areas under a CDC travel notice, the rules and procedures issued by the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer may differ for employees traveling to the area on business not connected with the disease outbreak than for employees traveling to the area to assist and/or study the disease outbreak.

Notices similar in effect to State Department and CDC notices may be issued by other organizations such as the World Health Organization. In such situations the University as a whole may impose additional or different rules and procedures affecting international travel and study. In these cases the Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer will collaborate with other University officials in developing such rules and procedures.