



Policy Number: V.05
Policy Level: Operating Policy
Originally Issued: November 19, 2021
Revised: August 30, 2022
Revised: June 4, 2024
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Policy Owner: Vice President of Financial Affairs
Policy Implementation: Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services

STUDENT TRAVEL

I. Policy Statement and Purpose

Athens State University seeks to promote safe travel to events and activities occurring beyond the boundaries of the University by students and recognized student organizations.

This policy applies to enrolled undergraduate and graduate student domestic and international travel organized and/or sponsored by the University, whether required for academic credit or not. Examples of activities and events that fall under this policy include, but are not limited to, academic related field-trips, conferences, and travel by recognized student organizations. This policy does not apply to students engaging in student teaching, internships, practicums, observations or research.

All travel must be consistent with the mission of the University, as well as the mission and goals of the sponsoring department or recognized student organization. Students are expected to behave as ambassadors of the University no matter the location of the travel. Students must comply with the standards set forth in the *Student Code of Conduct and Discipline* and the trip leader(s) or Program Leader(s) must comply with the *Employee Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibilities*. Further, individuals acting in their official capacity as University employees shall not share overnight accommodations with student participants while traveling and are strongly discouraged from consuming alcohol while traveling with student participants. In addition, all travelers are subject to all Athens State University policies and procedures.

II. Definitions

Domestic Travel - any trip or travel within any of the 50 states of the United States, the District of Columbia, as well as US Territories and possessions and Puerto Rico.



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International Travel - any trip or travel outside the 50 states of the United States, the District of Columbia, as well as US Territories and possessions and Puerto Rico.

Student - any person who is currently enrolled, or otherwise entered into any other contractual relationship with the University to take instruction either in person or through distance learning whether on a part-time or full-time basis.

Trip Leader(s)- the employee or employees serving as trip sponsor, advisor, or chaperone (Domestic Travel) FOR DOMESTIC TRAVEL ONLY: In certain circumstances, a virtual trip leader may be approved by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services. This approval must be obtained PRIOR to travel. The virtual trip leader will still be responsible for requirements outlined in Section III and Section V.

Program Leader – Faculty member(s) leading the academic aspects of the program and providing student support throughout the program cycle. The faculty member must have academic credibility and appropriate credentials for leading a study abroad course. The faculty member should have relevant first-hand experience in the study abroad country/destination. (International Travel)

Program Partner - A third-party provider, contracted by the University, to handle the majority of travel logistics for study abroad. A program partner is required for international travel.

Recognized Student Organization – any student organization whose registration has been approved by the Assistant Vice President for Enrollment and Student Affairs.

Organized Event - an activity initiated or arranged by a University employee or recognized student organization and that is approved by an appropriate supervisor.

Sponsored Event - an activity endorsed by the University through financial support or by sending students to participate as official representatives of the University.



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Student Travel Release and Assumption of Risk (Domestic) – The agreement between the University and the student that must be completed prior to leaving campus for a domestic trip or a field trip.

Student Travel Release and Assumption of Risk (International) – the agreement between the University and the traveler that must be completed prior to international travel.

Campus Security Authority (CSA) - The Trip or Program Leader who has the authority and the duty to take action or respond to particular security-safety related issues on behalf of the University.

III. Health and Safety

The health and well-being of Athens State University students traveling domestically and internationally is the responsibility of the Trip Leader or Program Leader. The Trip Leader or Program Leader will serve as a campus security authority and must be familiar with the [Student Travel Incident Procedures](#). The Trip Leader or Program Leader is required to complete the [Student Travel Accident/Incident Report](#) to report any accident, crime or other situation while on an Athens State University sponsored or organized trip. Additionally, the Trip Leader or Program Leader must:

- maintain emergency contact information for student travelers, especially if on an extended overnight stay trip
- handle behavioral problems according to established University policies and procedures
- prepare for and respond to emergencies according to established University policies and procedures.

For international travel, a crisis response plan will be developed by the Program Leader in conjunction with the Program Partner prior to travel. Travel is not permitted to areas with a level 3 or level 4 travel warning from the US Department of State or a level 3 travel advisory



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from the Centers for Disease Control. Travelers who are studying abroad must register for the US Department of State Smart Traveler Registration Program (STEP) prior to traveling.

IV. Unaffiliated Travelers

Requests to travel from minors or other individuals (including volunteers) who are not enrolled students or current employees should be discussed fully with the Office of Financial Affairs prior to granting participation.

V. Domestic Travel

Approval and Procedures

Domestic travel requests must be made in writing, by the trip sponsor, **PRIOR** to travel and include a trip itinerary and [Student Travel Funding and Approval](#) form. The President is authorized to approve all in-state and out-of-state travel for institutional employees and students traveling on institutional business and institutional -related activities. Prior to traveling, approval to be away from campus must be obtained in accordance with established procedures.

Faculty should plan academic field trips that require no more than one class day away from the University in any given week. In all cases, students' obligations to other courses meeting at their regularly-scheduled times must have priority over academic field trips. A faculty member or other authorized staff member must accompany students on all Athens State University academic field trips, unless prior arrangements have been made with the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services for a virtual trip leader.

Reimbursement for authorized travel shall be made in accordance with applicable state laws and University guidelines. The [Student Travel Funding](#) form must indicate the specifics of how student funding for the trip will be arranged such as:

- Will students be personally funding 100% of their individual trip costs



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- Will students be personally funding part of their trip cost along with a reimbursement of expenses from the registered student organization account or will students be participating in fundraising, with proceeds being deposited in the organization account for later reimbursement to the student to include providing travel “scholarships” to students? If organization funds will be utilized for individual student travel, documented procedures must be in place to govern the distribution of funds to students.
- Will the trip leader be making the arrangements for all travelers and receive reimbursement from the organization account? The trip leader must follow procedures to keep clear financial records, including keeping track of expenses and saving receipts.

All students who are traveling on any of the types of domestic trips outlined below are required to complete a [Student Travel Release and Assumption of Risk \(Domestic\)](#) before traveling. Students are required to attend all activities that are part of the trip itinerary.

Non-Overnight Stay – examples include local field trips, business/industry visits, etc.

Overnight Stay – any trip where participants stay at least one night in accommodations that are not owned/operated by the University. Examples include trips to other regional colleges and universities, local conferences, competitions, etc.

Extended Overnight Stay - any trip where participants stay more than one night in accommodations that are not owned/operated by the University. Examples include non-local conferences, educational trips to museums or historic sites, etc.

VI. International Travel

Approval and Procedures



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The University offers faculty-led study abroad programs that allows individuals to expand the classroom beyond University borders. Students are given the opportunity to travel and learn alongside fellow students to expand on what has been learned in the classroom to a global level. Study Abroad programs are linked to specific courses and course credits. In general, student participants must be in good standing and enrolled in at least one class at Athens State University at the time of travel. If travel occurs during the semester, students must be enrolled for at least one class during the following semester.

Program leader(s) must complete the [Student Travel Funding Form](#) indicating the Program Partner.

Education abroad credit-bearing international travel must have prior approval from the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services.

Recognized student organizations international non-credit travel must have prior approval from the Assistant Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services.

In addition to being responsible for serving as the academic and administrative representative of the program, Program Leaders are also responsible for, including but not limited to, the following:

- Assuring the stated learning outcomes for the course and/or experience are identified and aligned with learning activities.
- Developing the program and coordinating on-site delivery of the course(s) including engaging teachers and guides, and arranging adequate transportation.
- Organizing and participating in cultural visits and excursions during orientation and throughout the program.
- Maintaining clear financial records, including keeping track of expenses and saving receipts for all costs, expenses, and other financial issues relating to the Study Abroad experience.
- Documenting events and activities.



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Courses for Study Abroad

Courses generally begin with instruction on campus at Athens State University and conclude with a study abroad component. However, a course offered on-campus may be offered entirely in the international setting. In this case, the course content and requirements are the same off-campus as they are on campus (meeting the same number of classroom hours). All Study Abroad courses must meet the same standards as other courses offered by the University and are subject to all University policies and regulations.

Minimum (break-even point) and maximum course enrollment is determined by the program leader, appropriate Dean, and the Provost/ Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services in consultation with the Program Partner.

Athens State University reserves the right to discontinue any study abroad program at any time before or after departure. Among the reasons for cancellation or discontinuation include but are not limited to travel warnings and advisories from the U.S. Department of State and insufficient enrollment.

Participant Orientations

Travelers need to be provided with an orientation for cultural and logistical aspects of the program before departure and upon arrival. Therefore, the Program Leader is responsible for conducting a mandatory pre-departure orientation and the Program Partner is responsible for conducting the mandatory on-site orientation upon arrival.

Insurance

Travelers are required to purchase the insurance offered by the Program Partner which includes medical and security evacuation and repatriation coverage.

Expectations for Participants



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Each study abroad traveler is required to complete the University's [Student Travel Release and Assumption of Risk \(International\)](#) agreement prior to travel.

Students are required to attend all classes and all excursions that are part of the program itinerary, unless otherwise noted as optional. Program Leaders should document attendance at all classes and excursions.

Payments/Withdrawals/Refunds

Current tuition rates apply for faculty-led study abroad courses. Course withdrawals and refunds are subject to the University's [Withdrawal from Courses](#) policy and the [Refunds of Tuition and Fees](#) policy. Travel payments are subject to Program Partner guidelines. Unless otherwise indicated in writing, each traveler is personally responsible for all international travel related expenses.

VII. Responsibility for this Operating Policy

Policy Owner

As part of the initial approval of this policy by the President and subsequent to the original dissemination of the policy, the Vice President for Financial Affairs is the policy owner for the ongoing evaluation, review, and approval of this policy. Subsequent reviews and revisions to this policy must be in accordance with approved operating policy procedures and processes.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or more frequently as needed by the Policy Owner. Revisions will be reviewed/affirmed by the Cabinet and approved by the University President. This policy will be updated/published in the University's Policy Library.

Responsibility for Policy Implementation



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The President has assigned the responsibility of implementing this policy to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services and the Assistant Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services.