Appendix B: Travel Permission Application Detailed Requirements (Individual Experiences or Unaffiliated Programs) (revised February 2015)

It is the responsibility of the student to identify a Northwestern University staff or faculty member sponsor to complete and submit a permission request for an individual educational experience in a location subject to a U.S. Department of State (DOS) Travel Warning or a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) Travel Notice Warning Level 3: Avoid Nonessential Travel. Applicants must communicate their intent to submit a permission application to the Director of Global Safety and Security at least one quarter prior to departure.

Students seeking credit for participation in an unaffiliated study abroad program located in a country with a Travel Warning must first contact the Associate Director of the Study Abroad Office to determine if credit transfer from the proposed institution is possible. They will need to provide the name of the staff or faculty sponsor, a link to the program’s website, and possibly a sample transcript.

It is the responsibility of the sponsoring faculty or staff member to work with the student to prepare the documentation with all necessary information. The International Risk Assessment Committee (IRAC) will only recommend approval of applications when there is a compelling justification for the program or experience.

The Chair of the IRAC will assist in the development of a travel permission application. Applicants should make every effort to avail themselves of this assistance.

Applications should include the follow materials:

1) Proposal
   The proposal summarizes the rationale for participating in an educational experience or unaffiliated study abroad program in the specific site. It should be written in essay or letter form, not exceeding four pages single-spaced, and include the following:
   a. Policies and measures the program will take for ameliorating the specific health or security risks identified by the U.S. DOS Travel Warning, U.S. DOS Country Information Sheet or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Travelers’ Health Resources.
      i. Examples of safety or security measures are avoiding travel to certain neighborhoods in a city or regions within a country, using only specific means of transportation, not traveling alone after dark, avoiding public protests, avoiding crowded public entertainment establishments such as restaurants, etc.
      ii. Examples of health measures are identifying potential exposure to insect-, food- or water-borne illnesses, noting particular health risks associated with specialized activities, such as animal care (rabies) or construction (tetanus), etc.
   b.  
   c. A description of the student proposing to participate in this experience (age/standing, major, academic motivation, language ability, etc.) and the
applicability of this experience to the student’s academic or professional development.

d. The statement addressing the compelling academic or professional rationale for the experience to occur in this location (as opposed to a location not subject to a Travel Warning).

e. A proposed itinerary, including a short description of arrival/departure transportation logistics, housing/classroom/internship/research facilities, including an explicit description of security measures with regard to the housing and classrooms or internship/research facilities. The proposal should indicate whether or not the experience would be credit-bearing.

f. If applicable, a description of any additional educational activities to be undertaken and the locations in which the student would be studying, conducting research or interning, including any field trips/overnight excursions to other locations outside the main city of study (that are part of the academic program). Be sure to note any activities that may expose students to unusual risks, such as construction, open-water, volatile chemicals, wild mammals, insects or reptiles, extreme heat or cold, specialized equipment which requires training for operation, medical/dental care/services, etc.

2) Institutional or organizational context
This section explains the institutional or organizational context of this activity and any institutional or organizational health and safety support for the student and should:

a. Describe on-site organizational or institutional support for health and safety that would mitigate the concerns raised in the Travel Warning. Include relevant information about local staff and any relevant training or experience for managing health, safety, or security issues.

b. Note whether other Northwestern students participated in this experience or engaged in similar activity at this location. If possible, the proposal should provide their names and contact information for possible Committee follow-up.

3) Letter of endorsement from sponsoring academic unit
A complete application will include at least one letter of endorsement from the most relevant, senior academic officer, such as a department chair(s) or college in whose disciplines students will likely receive course credit. This letter need not endorse the safety of the location but should make a compelling and detailed argument in support of the academic value of the program and the academic rationale for operating a program in a country subject to a U.S. Department of State Travel Warning.

4) List of relevant links
   a. U.S. Department of State Travel Warning
   b. U.S. Department of State Country Information Sheet
   c. CDC Country Profile

5) Health, safety, emergency, and evacuation plan
Northwestern units should provide documentation and procedures regarding safety, security, and evacuation including:
a. Policies and measures the program or organization will take for ameliorating the specific health or security risks identified by the U.S. DOS or the CDC.
   i. Examples of safety or security measures might include avoiding travel to certain neighborhoods in a city or regions within a country, using only specific means of transportation, not traveling alone after dark, avoiding public protests, avoiding crowded public entertainment establishments such as restaurants, etc.

b. A copy of or link to the program or organization’s risk management procedures, including an emergency plan (or link to such procedures or plans on the organization’s web site). If the program or organization cannot adequately respond to such information requests, two options exist: the sponsoring academic unit could work with the organization to develop such plans or find another experiential sponsor.

c. Confirmation that all travelers will fulfill standard pre-departure travel requirements as outlined by the Study Abroad Office of the Office of Global Safety and Security, such as:
   i. Enrollment in NU’s international medical insurance and assistance plan;
   ii. Referral to the CDC’s Travelers Health web-based resources for information on required and recommended immunizations and/or prophylactic medications;
   iii. Registry with the U.S. DOS’s Smart Travelers Enrollment Program (STEP), and steps to ensure the action has been taken;
   iv. Participation in pre-departure educational programming (on-line or in person); and
   v. Registry with the International Travel Registry (not necessary for study abroad participants since relevant information from the program application is dumped into this database).

6) Communications protocols
   Lists of contact names, addresses and numbers for relevant on-site staff/faculty.
   a. Provide the name of at least one on-site contact person: include 24-hour phone number, office phone number, email address, office address, home address, etc.
   b. Provide the name of at least one NU contact person involved in supporting this experience: include 24-hour phone number(s), office phone number and email address.
   c. Provide complete contact information for the U.S. Embassy or Consulate nearest the program’s/organization’s location. (For traveling programs, provide this information for each overnight location).
   d. Unless circumstances suggest otherwise, state the expectation that the student will have a cell phone that will work in overseas location and a timeline by which this number will be established and shared with relevant NU officials. (The Committee recognizes that the possession of a cell phone in some locations makes one a target for crime and that other modes of communications may be preferable). If the student is not required to have a cell phone, address how anticipated communications challenges will be met.
Special Note: Please provide all phone numbers as if one were dialing from the U.S. For example, a London phone number would read: 011-44-207-456-6789.

The individual making the application will package all of the aforementioned material in one email and send it to the ADISS at least two weeks prior to the next IRAC meeting. If the agenda for that meeting is already full, then these materials will be held for distribution and review at the next regularly scheduled or specially called emergency meeting.

**Meeting Protocol**

The IRAC will meet at least six times a year, preferably seven (October, December, February, March, May, June and July). Meetings will be limited to 1.5 hours. The agenda will be set 10 days in advance of the meeting. Only complete permission request packages will be put on the agenda. No more than two travel permission applications will be scheduled per meeting.

The individual making the request on behalf of the student and the student will be required to attend the meeting.

The individual making the permission request will provide a 5-7 minute overview of the program’s location, perceived risks and mitigation strategies. It will be assumed that all members have read the permission application request in full prior to the meeting. Members who are unable to attend the meeting are expected to submit their questions or concerns in advance of the meeting to the Chair, who will ensure that they are discussed. Then, the Chair will open the floor for questions. At the close of the Q&A, presenters will be asked to leave the room while the Committee deliberates. The Chair will follow-up with the presenters as soon as a recommendation is made.