International Travel Guidelines for Faculty-led Program

College of Design Policies
August 2025

International Travel Guidelines for Faculty-led Program

College of Design Study Abroad Goals & Purpose of Document
Definitions of ISU-led Faculty Travel
Why is International Travel Treated Differently?

International Travel & Study Abroad in the College of Design

The College of Design's participation in international study abroad programs is a central part of our educational mission.

We endeavor to integrate international travel into the curriculum of all majors and to improve the accessibility of travel opportunities for all students.

The College of Design is committed to offering a diverse portfolio of engaging, innovative and sustainable study abroad experiences led by faculty members who are experienced and knowledgeable about their program destinations, culture, activities, and local partners resources.

To achieve this goal, we rely on a robust process of planning, reviewing, and administering these programs.

This document outlines the guidelines and requirements of international travel proposals enforced by the College of Design and Iowa State's International Programs.

ISU-Led Student Travel Programs

"ISU-led Student Travel" is a term defined by the University as travel that is led/managed by a group leader which includes one or more students with similar program experience, dates, itinerary, and related activities (e.g., faculty-led study abroad programs, service trips, academic competitions, etc.).*

ISU-Sponsored Travel is:
- Funded in whole or part by ISU funds (e.g. course fees)
- Part of a credit-bearing student activity
- Arranged/organized by ISU faculty or staff

College of Design, ISU-led study abroad programs are either:
- A semester-long residential study abroad program (e.g., Rome)
- Part of a summer study abroad course (with variable duration)
- Embedded within in a semester course or studio (with limited duration)
  - Courses under one week are not recommended
  - Recommend combining travel with Spring break or Thanksgiving.

- Official definitions from ISU International Program are included in the addendum of the document

International Guidelines for Faculty-led Programs in College of Design, August 2025

Why is International Travel treated differently?

All student-related international group travel* must be reviewed and endorsed by the College of Design's Dean's office and International Programs Director, and ISU's Education Abroad Committee (EAC) before it may proceed. This review encompasses academic content and compliance with Risk Management.

ISU's Study Abroad Center & Risk Management offices have an obligation to follow the due diligence in the planning and administering an international trip in compliance with regulatory bodies and insurers ("Duty of Care").

Students will need varied resources and support including:
- Rigorously-planned academic activities
- Support and guidance in preparing passport and student visa applications
- Health insurance coverage
- Safety and security review including reliability of emergency services
- Repatriation and evacuation needs

* ISU's definition of "international" destinations is broadly based on relative risk-factors determined by ISU's insurance provider, not legal definitions. As such, US territories are included in the list of destinations that require review and approval.
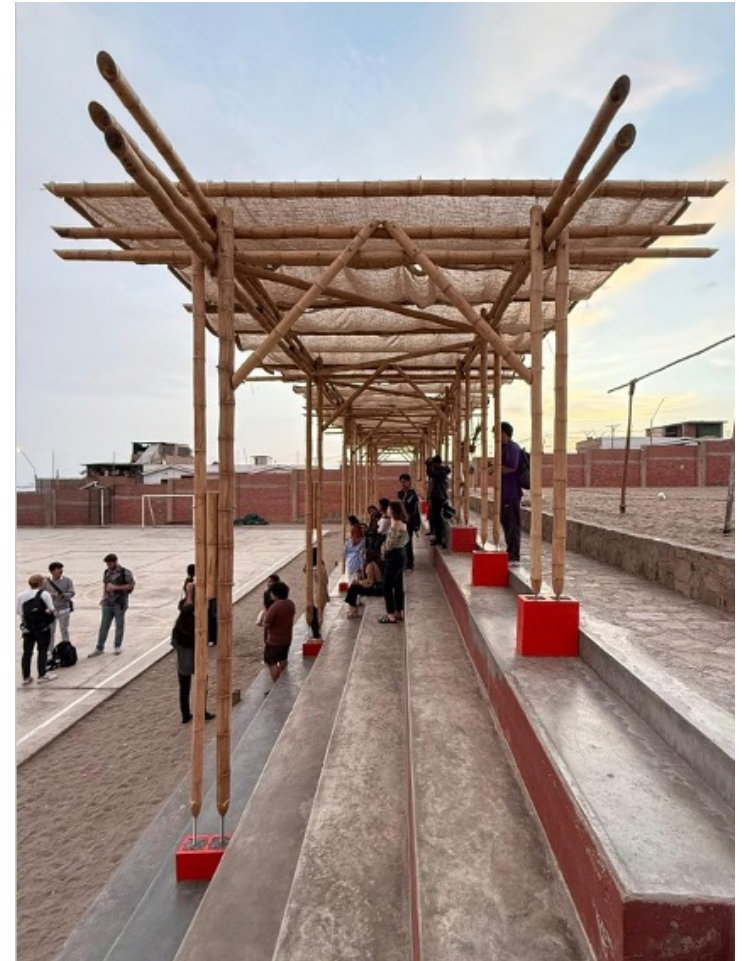
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Planning the Trip

Sequence of Approvals
Best Practices:
      Academic Standards
      Risk Management
Timeline and Deadlines
Stakeholder Responsibilities

Approval Sequence for Proposing a Trip:

Sequence: 1. Departmental Chair, 2. Dean's Office, 3. CoD's International Programs Director, and 4. ISU Education Abroad Committee (includes Risk Management & Provost's Office). Completed proposals will route internally for final approval.

Description of Roles:
Chairs: All faculty teaching assignments, including study abroad, require initial approval by department chairs. Additionally, chairs provide counsel on course offerings, enrollment demands, and ways the proposal can contribute to broader departmental study abroad initiatives.

Dean's Office: The Dean's office reviews all study abroad proposals from a strategic, tactical, and compliance perspective to make sure our courses are successfully enrolled and supported. Not all proposals will be approved. Non-compliant proposals will be flagged for further development or adjustment.

CoD International Programs: These are complicated proposals to put together; the College of Design's international program partners have extensive experience helping to plan faculty-led programs around the world. See "Planning Your Trip" suggestions.

Educational Abroad Committee: Document from EAC on following pages

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BEST PRACTICES: Planning for a Study Abroad / Academic Standards

Begin planning as early as possible. Preliminary planning must include: ***Course, credits, location(s), dates, number of students, tentative budget, pre-departure activities, critical on-site activities, basic itinerary, and potential local collaborators.***

Academic Value: Choose a destination that adds direct academic value to the course. Faculty-led travel proposals should focus on enhancing student learning outcomes through the integration of study abroad activities that include meaningful intercultural development (beyond the typical benefits of travel and exposure). The destination(s) should be familiar to the instructor and the destination should be directly aligned with course work. There should be opportunities to cultivate contacts abroad who can provide additional experiences for students during travel.

Course Listing, Credits, and Duration: Select a course that allows for study abroad. Variable credits allow for flexibility in the proposed duration of the travel. Typically, **one week abroad is equal to one credit.** Pre-departure and Post-travel departure meetings are normally offered and these can be included in the total number of credits for the program (or a separate class can be offered). The Registrar requires 800 contact minutes of instructor-led activities per credit.

Timing: Semester-long and summer programs can be deliberately planned to align with various activities and have more flexibility in planning. International travel that occurs during the semester is quite complicated and disruptive; we don't recommend international travel programs that last under one week.
- By policy, students can only be excused from two consecutive course meeting times so the maximum duration would be, for example, Tuesday through Sunday. Short trips don't allow for the same level of deep academic engagement, participants may be adversely affected by back and forth changes in time zones, and the cost of airplane tickets per day is cost prohibitive.
- Travel is forbidden during the first week of the semester OR during Prep Week and Finals Week as stated in Faculty Handbook.

Estimated number of students: Course capacity could be slightly lower than in-person offerings (e.g., 12-14 students per instructor for studio). Instructor cost is included in program fees so the overall cost per student is higher with low enrollment. Courses may be canceled if enrollment is below a certain threshold as determined by Dean's Office.

BEST PRACTICES: Planning for a Study Abroad Programs / Risk Management

Effective programs require organized planning and strong communication to connect faculty, students, and staff before, during and after the program.

Faculty are expected to take responsibility for planning and participating in the field study activities when it is part of their course. Trip organizers will have to follow ISU policies with Finance Delivery, Risk Management, Procurement, and Workday for managing costs and ensuring compliance.
- Guidance is provided by ISU International Risk Analyst and Study Abroad Risk Management Committee to determine relative risk of different location (see Required Risk Assessment documents included in this document).
- Important general information for field trip planning / responsibilities (please read): Travel Checklist (Procurement), Allowable Travel Expenses (Controller's Dept.), and for International trips: Plan, Prepare, Travel (Risk Management)

Additional assistance provided by College of Design International Programs team:
Pre-departure sessions will need to include College of Design International Programs representative. These sessions will prepare students for the cultural, personal, and academic experiences by discussing the host country's general cultural values and norms along with critical health, safety, and security measures.

Coordinate with College of Design International Programs team for assistance in **facilitating bookings** for travel, tours, and/or airfare.

Questions? Ask Chair, Dean's office, International Programs team, EAC, Risk Management, etc.

REQUIRED: Timeline & Deadlines

Internal deadlines for review / approval are based on the requirements set by the EAC. The earlier the planning process begins, the easier it is to meet these deadlines (*we recommend starting a year in advance*!).

Study Abroad in Fall Semester:

Chair Approval	Mid-February
Dean's Approval	Mid-March
Planning Process	March-May
Final EAC Proposal	End of May*

Study Abroad in Spring Semester

Chair Approval	Early Sept
Dean's Approval	Mid-Sept
Planning Process	Sept-October
Final EAC Proposal	Mid-October*

Study Abroad in Summer

Chair Approval	Nov 1
Dean's Approval	Mid-Nov
Planning Process	Nov-Jan
Final EAC Proposal	Mid-Feb*

EAC deadline: *12 weeks before travel, 8 weeks before start of course. Proposals submitted after this time will not be accepted.

BEST PRACTICES: Stakeholder Responsibilities

Faculty

- Start planning early
- Communicate with all parties associated with trip planning (Chair, Dean, etc.)
- Prepare (then refine) goals & itinerary for the trip
- Work with International Programs to finalize "Intent to Offer" application for EAC
- Help with student recruitment & communication about trip details
- Help administer and distribute information about forms, policies, and procedures
- Pre-departure orientation meeting
- Have a rich and exciting educational trip!
- Post-return feedback / reflection meeting?

International Programs Partners

- Provide support for academic programs planning (strategic and tactical)
- Assist with preparing EAC proposal and application
- Share in recruitment efforts
- Collaborate on pre-departure presentation to include relevant health, safety, and security information
- Assist students with visa applications, registration, billing, etc.
- Liaise with other departments, committees, that assist in travel when appropriate

Students

- Start planning early
- Ensure passport is valid
- Determine if visa is needed
- Procure documents needed for visa application
- Complete application in ISUAbroad
- Communicate questions or concerns about the program with faculty
- Attend Pre-departure orientation meeting
- Have a rich and exciting educational trip!

Resources & Additional Information

Iowa State University Links / Websites
Visa Application Reminder for Faculty and Students
Education Abroad Committee
        Definitions
        Approval Process
        Required Risk Assessment

Resources & Links

Iowa State University Links
- Risk Management International Travel
  - Travel Registration
  - Global Assistance & Insurance Program
  - Travel Advice & Best Practices
- Study Abroad Program Planning & Timelines (EAC)
- International Travel Registration Policy
- Global Risk Intelligence Portal (risk ratings)
- Procurement Travel Information
- Controller Travel Information

College of Design International Programs Partners
- Director, Jen Hogan (jenhogan@iastate.edu)
- Anne Grevstad-Nordbrock (anneg@iastate.edu)

International Guidelines for Faculty-led Programs in College of Design, August 2025

What is the Role of the International Programs Partners in College of Design in the Visa process?
Study abroad programming relies on a **partnership** with the country that we are visiting. Because a student visa is a legal document that allows students to being in a foreign country for a set period of time, applications are subject to any changes, schedules, delays, etc. imposed by that Consulate and their governmental policies.

What this means in practice is simple: Once the College of Design International Programs partner turns over collected documents to a consulate, ISU no longer has control of the review process. We can't compel them to either respond to us or to meet any specific deadlines for completing the visas.

Applying for a visa can be a complicated process. There is an important role that our study abroad coordinator plays in this process of submitting visas.
- We work directly with the Consulate to understand the rules, expectations, and requirements of applying for a Visa—and we communicate those to students.
- We communicate these submission requirements and help to coordinate all the paperwork, collect passports, financial documents, etc. and submit them on behalf of our ISU Study Abroad students.
- By consolidating and coordinating the documentation as a group, we are able to submit documents in a "batch." Normally, by submitting everyone's documents in a batch, as opposed to having each individual submit their own documentation, helps us to broker a timely and more uniform review of visas.
- By doing the work collectively for all traveling students, we can make sure there is a consistency of information and expectation, help travelers to interpret expectations, and do our best to make sure no one is left behind in the process.

* This information must be shared with students before accepting their passport and visa application materials to clarity the limited liability of ISU in the timing of the review process

Risk Management: Definitions

Please note the inclusion of "Student Individual Travel" and "Employee Travel" as additional categories for ISU-Sponsored Travel.

Employees that travel internationally as part of their job responsibilities (e.g., conferences, site visits, etc.) must register their travel.

ISU-Sponsored International* Travel
Definitions, Registration, & Risk Assessments

Student-Related Travel
- Any ISU-Sponsored Travel involving an undergraduate student, including employees traveling with undergraduates.
- Any ISU-Sponsored Travel for academic credit

Student Group Travel	Student Individual Travel
Student-Related Travel by a cohort of students with similar program experience, dates, itinerary, and related activities. Typically involves a group leader and an ISU department or student organization that has some control over logistics and planning. Examples Include: • Factulty-led study abroad programs • Student organization travel • Service trips • Research/project trips • Ensemble trips	Student-Related Travel by a student resulting in work that will be considered for academic credit or is otherwise related to the student's program of study. Travel arrangements typically made by student for themselves. Examples Include: • Study abroad programs with partner organization • Research field work • Internships or pratica registered for academic credit • Other independent travel supported by ISU-controlled funds

Employee Travel

ISU-sponsored travel that does not otherwise meet the definition of student-related travel. Nearly all travel by ISU employees as a part of their job responsibilities or their status as a faculty or staff member. Typically arrangements are made on an individual basis.

Examples Include:
- Conference attendance
- Research field work by employees
- Recruiting
- Development
- NCAA athletics competition
- Site visits
- Research collaboration
- Business meetings

NOTE: Any travel that meets the definition of student-related travel will need to follow process for all participants, including employees.

ISU-Sponsored Travel

- Funded in whole or in part by ISU funds, regardless of purpose, including funds administered by the university on behalf of a sponsored project and in conjunction with employee reimbursement expenses;Part of a credit-bearing activity (study abroad);
- Undertaken by an ISU recognized student organization;
- Undertaken by other official ISU organizations, including, but not limited to sport clubs, varsity athletic teams, academic or administrative departments;
- Travel by a student that is actively arranged or organized by ISU faculty or staff;
- Travel involving an ISU employee/volunteer exercising their official responsibilities;
- Student travel accompanied by an ISU employee exercising their official responsibilities
- Student travel resulting in work that will be considered for academic credit or is otherwise related to a student's program of study; or
- Any international travel by a faculty member in which they are engaged in research, teaching, or other activity that is part of their ISU employment, scholarship, or service. This excludes travel for outside consultancies or work engaged on behalf of other institutions or companies, unless such work is performed in conjunction with an ISU sponsored project.

High-Risk Travel Viability Consultation
If you are considering high-risk travel as part of a program, research project, or other purpose, Risk Management can consult on travel viability. Even for proposals with minimal details, a consultation can help identify high-risk factors that need to be managed early-on. Contact intlrisk@iastate.edu if you're interested in a consultation.

*All ISU-sponsored travel outside of the 50 states and Washington DC needs to be registered, reviewed, and approved according to these processes.
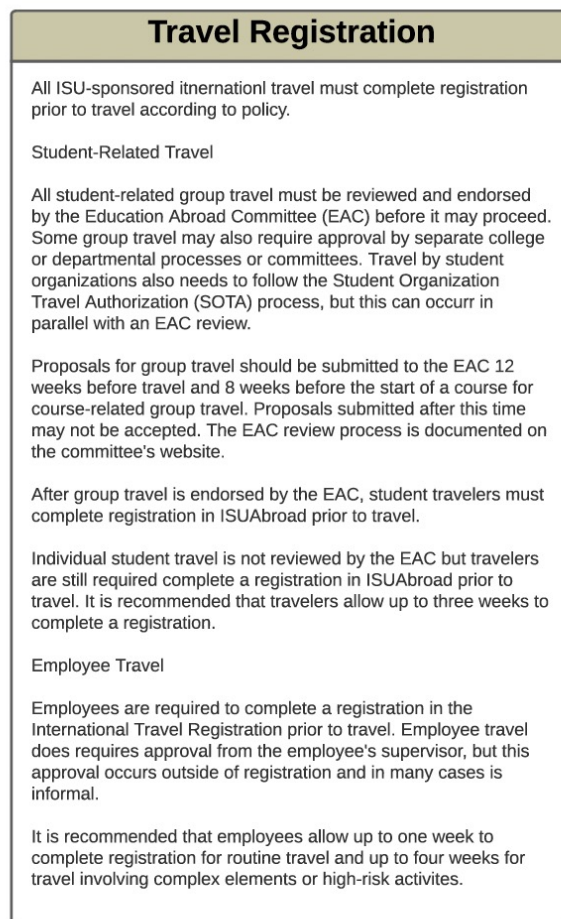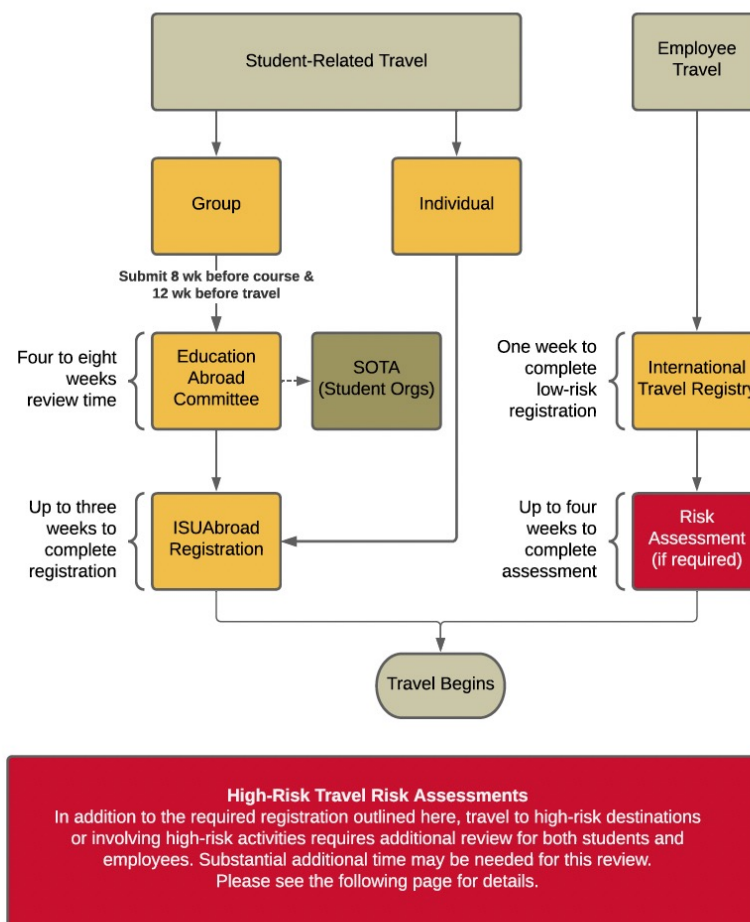
Risk Management & Review Process

Faculty will have to plan their trips in compliance with guidelines established by their Chair, the Dean's office, and Risk Management

Information regarding requirements for Travel Registration for Student and Employee Travel is shown.

The EAC review process is documented on the committee's website.

Travel Registration

All ISU-sponsored itnernationl travel must complete registration prior to travel according to policy.

Student-Related Travel

All student-related group travel must be reviewed and endorsed by the Education Abroad Committee (EAC) before it may proceed. Some group travel may also require approval by separate college or departmental processes or committees. Travel by student organizations also needs to follow the Student Organization Travel Authorization (SOTA) process, but this can occurr in parallel with an EAC review.

Proposals for group travel should be submitted to the EAC 12 weeks before travel and 8 weeks before the start of a course for course-related group travel. Proposals submitted after this time may not be accepted. The EAC review process is documented on the committee's website.

After group travel is endorsed by the EAC, student travelers must complete registration in ISUAbroad prior to travel.

Individual student travel is not reviewed by the EAC but travelers are still required complete a registration in ISUAbroad prior to travel. It is recommended that travelers allow up to three weeks to complete a registration.

Employee Travel

Employees are required to complete a registration in the International Travel Registration prior to travel. Employee travel does requires approval from the employee's supervisor, but this approval occurs outside of registration and in many cases is informal.

It is recommended that employees allow up to one week to complete registration for routine travel and up to four weeks for travel involving complex elements or high-risk activites.

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High-Risk Travel Risk Assessments
In addition to the required registration outlined here, travel to high-risk destinations or involving high-risk activities requires additional review for both students and employees. Substantial additional time may be needed for this review. Please see the following page for details.

Risk Management Framework

Required Risk Assessments

International travel destinations each carry risk ratings from 1 to 5 maintained by ISU Risk Management.

Student-related travel to Level 3 - Medium risk destinations or higher must be approved by the Study Abroad Risk Management Committee (SARMC) prior to travel. It may take up to 6 weeks for the committee to receive a report and review student-related travel.

Employee Travel to Level 4 - High risk destinations or higher must be reviewed by ISU Risk Management prior to travel. This review serves to advise the employee's unit leadership on travel approval (if applicable). Depending on the complexity of the proposed travel risk and destination, this review may take up to 4 weeks to complete.
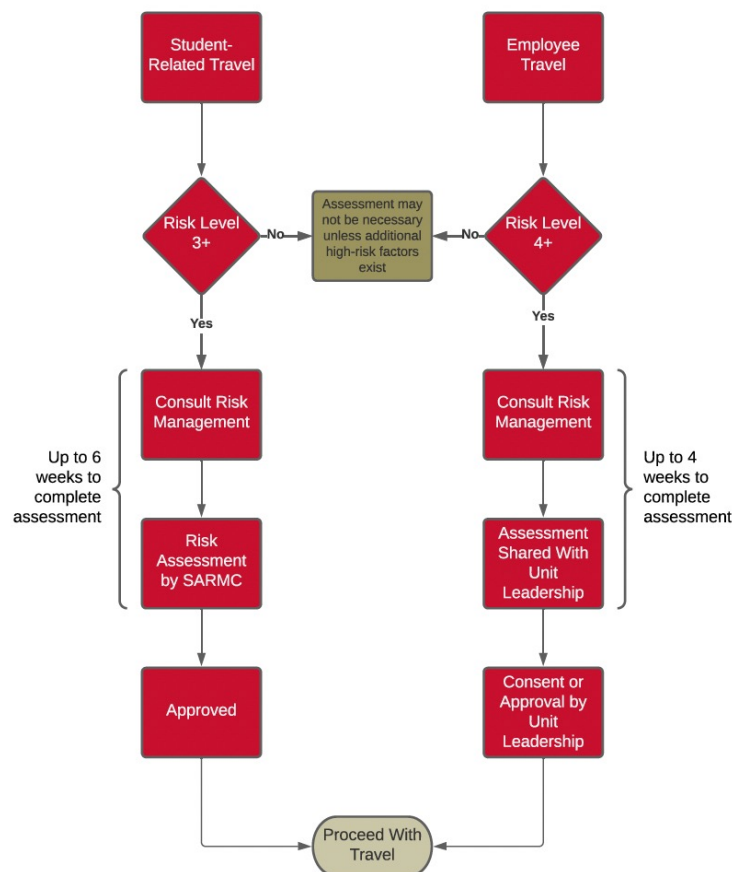
For group travel, the group leader should submit information for risk assessment on behalf of the entire group. Individual travelers should submit for themselves.

In addition to destination risk-rating, additional factors may necessitate a risk assessment or extend review timelines. Some of these factors include:
- A change in the safety or security environment not reflected by the risk rating
- A change in the safety or security environment following a review may require additional review
- High-risk activities such as swimming/diving, significant overland travel, wilderness exploration, exposure to animals, limited access to medical care, or others
- Travel group participants that are not ISU students, faculty, or staff
- Limited experience in destination or lack of in-country partner

The goal of a risk assessment is to manage potential risk associated with travel to facilitate successful trips. Allowing for greater time for planning increases risk mitigation options, so it is recommended that you consult ISU Risk Management as early as possible when planning high-risk travel.

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Flowchart — Student-Related Travel → Risk Level 3+ → (No) Assessment may not be necessary unless additional high-risk factors exist ← (No) Risk Level 4+ ← Employee Travel. Student side: Risk Level 3+ → (Yes) Consult Risk Management → Risk Assessment by SARMC (Up to 6 weeks to complete assessment) → Approved → Proceed With Travel. Employee side: Risk Level 4+ → (Yes) Consult Risk Management → Assessment Shared With Unit Leadership (Up to 4 weeks to complete assessment) → Consent or Approval by Unit Leadership → Proceed With Travel.

Questions?

Contact:
Associate Dean of Academic Programs, Rob Whitehead
International Programs Director, Jen Hogan