

Manual of Policies and Procedures for Student Affairs

Chapter 13. Guidelines For Student Travel and Off-Campus Activities (Exceeding 25 miles)

The University of Texas at Tyler sponsors numerous off-campus activities involving student travel. The liability risk to the University for such activities is significant. To effectively manage these activities, the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs has developed the following guidelines. For purposes of this document, the staff adviser, coordinator, director, coach or other person overseeing the off-campus activity shall be identified as the Responsible University Official (RUO).

These guidelines apply to all student travel if the activity or event meets all of the following criteria and is undertaken by one or more currently enrolled students to reach an activity or event.

1. The activity or event is sponsored, organized and funded by UT Tyler.
2. The activity or event is located more than twenty-five (25) miles from UT Tyler.
3. The activity or event is either:
 1. undertaken, using a vehicle owned, leased, or rented by the institution; or
 2. attendance at the activity or event is required by a registered student organization and approved in writing by the Vice President for Student Affairs.

The following guidelines have been extrapolated from *The University of Texas System Business Procedures Memorandum 16-03-02, 16-05-02 and the POLICY ON STUDENT TRAVEL*, adopted by the Board of Regents of the University of Texas System, November 8, 2001, and apply to off-campus trips. All RUO's must be familiar with these documents.

1. **Responsible University Official**

At least one staff member (RUO) must accompany students on any off-campus activity. Staff members are responsible for knowing the University Code of Conduct and its policies. The consequences of noncompliance must be made clear to participants and the RUO must take appropriate action when aware that participants are in violation.

2. **Pre-Trip Orientation**

A pre-trip orientation meeting must be conducted for participants prior to the date of departure. Participants should be informed of as much detail about the trip and its circumstances as reasonably possible, including all known risks. Participants should also be informed of emergency response measures. (See Participant Responsibility Form, Appendix F)

3. **Group Travel Authorization Request Form – Appendix A**

Complete and submit to the Vice President for Student Affairs for approval at least two weeks prior to departure.

4. If the trip is approved, the RUO must submit the following, completed and signed forms, to the Vice President for Student Affairs Office at least one week prior to departure. The RUO must also maintain a copy of these records throughout the trip in a manner that ensures immediate access to the information for each participant in case of an accident or health-related emergency. A copy will be forwarded to the UT Tyler Police Department.

Group Travel Authorization Request Form – Appendix A (Copy of Approved Form)

Group Travel Trip Information Form – Appendix B

Release and Indemnification Agreement – Adult Student – Appendix C or

Release and Indemnification Agreement – Parental Permission (if a minor student) – Appendix D
Emergency Information Contact Form – Appendix E (Intercollegiate athletes see Appendix I)
Participant Responsibility Form – Appendix F

5. **Off Campus Travel and Activity Checklist and Emergency Crisis Response Plan - Appendix G**

This is a checklist for the RUO to go over no less than one to two days prior to departure. A completed and signed copy must be forwarded to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs prior to departure.

6. **Travel Reimbursement Request Form - Appendix H**

Complete and submit this form to the appropriate office within two business days of the completion of each trip.

7. **Medical Insurance**

Students traveling on a University-sponsored **overnight** trip must have medical insurance. Student health insurance is available at minimal cost. Contact the Student Services Office at 903-566-7079. NOTE: The Athletic Department provides secondary catastrophic athletic injury insurance for all student-athletes, but not health insurance. Student-athletes must secure their own primary health insurance.

8. **Weapons, Drugs, and Alcohol**

Use or possession of weapons, alcohol or illegal drugs is forbidden while traveling on a University-sponsored trip.

9. **Departmental Equipment**

Departmental property must be cared for properly. Participants may be charged a replacement fee for lost or damaged equipment.

10. **Drivers and Travel Using a Vehicle Owned or Leased**

All travel subject to this policy must be undertaken in vehicles owned, leased or rented by The University or with common carriers. No personal vehicles are permitted for use in travel that is subject to this policy. Approval includes the driver being a University employee, having a valid operator's license with a Motor Vehicle Record of 2 or less, and participating in instruction and hands-on training (15-passenger vans only). Drivers of motor vehicles shall comply with all laws, regulations, and posted signs regarding speed and traffic control, or additional directives stipulated by UT Tyler or the UT System. If University-owned vehicles are available, they should be used for trips within a 60-mile radius of UT Tyler. All other trips must be booked through the UT Tyler contracted rental company or a charter bus company. All forms must be completed and all guidelines followed whether travel is in University-owned vehicles, rental vehicles, chartered bus, or other common carrier. The RUO shall take reasonable steps to assure that all travel is undertaken in conformance with University approved policies.

11. **Vehicle Determination and Passenger Capacity**

The distance to the destination and/or the number of participants needing transportation determines the type of transportation to be used. Each vehicle using University employees as drivers should attempt to have two certified drivers. However, when a trip exceeds three hundred miles one way two certified drivers per vehicle are required. On long trips, drivers should rotate every three hours*, and no more than eight hours of driving should be completed during any one day. No more than nine (9) people plus gear, luggage or other items may be loaded in any one van. Passengers should be seated toward the front of the van in recognized seating with gear, luggage and other items distributed evenly in the rear behind the last seat. On trips where the number of

participants and available drivers preclude the use of 15-passenger vans, a chartered bus or mini-bus should be used. When a trip exceeds 350 miles one way and/or trips greater than 250 miles that require driving after 11:00 p.m., professional drivers must be contracted. NOTE: All vehicles must have access to a cellular phone, and the number must be indicated on the Group Travel Authorization Request Form.

There may be occasions when, in the best judgment of the RUO, circumstances such as weather, road construction, sleep deprivation of drivers, unsafe operation of vehicle by drivers, etc., would make this rotation unsafe. Such decisions should be documented in writing by the RUO to the Vice President for Student Affairs after returning to campus.

The total number of passengers in any vehicle may not exceed the manufacturer's recommended capacity or the number specified in applicable federal or state law or regulations whichever is lower.

12. Seat Belts

Occupants of motor vehicles (except charter busses) must use seat belts or other approved safety restraint devices at all times when the vehicle is in operation.

13. Liability Insurance

Drivers of all motor vehicles must check to make sure that the vehicle has a current proof of liability insurance card, State inspection certification, be equipped with all safety devices or equipment required by law or regulation and comply with all other applicable requirements of federal or State law or regulations before departing from campus.

14. Periodic Maintenance

Each vehicle owned or leased by UT Tyler must be subject to scheduled periodic maintenance by qualified persons and comply with all applicable requirements of The University of Texas System Business Procurement Memoranda.

15. Emergency Procedures

The RUO must implement the following procedures in the event of an emergency:

For University-owned vehicles:

Accident:

- Notify local authorities @ 911.
- Notify UT Tyler Police @ 903-566-7300 who will notify the Director of Environmental Health & Safety.
- Leave a cellular phone number with the dispatcher.
- Refer to BPM 16-03-02 for Post-Accident Claims Procedures.

Mechanical Breakdown:

- Notify the dispatcher in the UT Tyler Police Dept. @ 903-566-7300 who will notify the Director of Environmental Health & Safety.
- Leave a cellular phone number for someone to call you back.
- Wait for the Director of Environmental Health & Safety or UT Tyler Police to confirm a call for assistance to the breakdown location.
- Do not attempt to make repairs, including changing a tire. Wait for roadside assistance.

For rental vehicles:

Accident:

- Notify local authorities @ 911.
- Call the 800 number provided by the rental company.
- Refer to BPM 16-03-02 for Post-Accident Claims Procedures
- Notify the UT Tyler Police dispatcher @ 903-566-7300.
- Leave a cellular phone number for someone to call you back.

Mechanical Breakdown:

- Call the 800 number provided by the rental company.
- Call UT Tyler Police (903-566-7300) if assistance is needed.

16. Monitoring

When any incident occurs, i.e. accident, mechanical failure, medical emergency, code of conduct violation, etc., the RUO must call his/her supervisor as soon as is feasibly possible. The supervisor will notify the Vice President for Student Affairs. A meeting must be called as soon as feasibly possible after returning from the trip to investigate the incident. The Vice President for Student Affairs will contact the Environmental Health and Safety Officer and UT Tyler Police when appropriate.

17. Side Trips/Early and Late Departures

Non-University business side trips, such as a trip for entertainment purposes, must be planned and approved in advance. Trips to known high-risk areas will not be approved and must not be undertaken. Spontaneous activities, while on the primary trip, such as going to a local movie or special restaurant, shall be at the discretion of the RUO. Students traveling on University funded trips must arrive at and depart the site at the same time as the advisers. The RUO's immediate supervisor and the Vice President for Student Affairs must approve any exceptions to this policy.

18. Parental Permission Form – Appendix I (Intercollegiate Athletics Only)

This form must be completed by the student-athlete's parent or legal guardian and returned to the Director of Athletics prior to the student-athlete's first practice.

Revised: 07/18/08

- **[Back to Student Affairs Manual of Policy & Procedures Table of Contents](#)**