



## **Providence College Policy on Study or Travel Abroad Safety Travel and Health Alerts and Warnings**

### **Introduction**

As part of its educational mission, Providence College (PC) aims to provide transformative international academic and cultural learning experiences to help students develop and acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that will prepare them to

- have a diverse and knowledgeable worldview
- comprehend the international dimensions of their major field of study
- develop cross-cultural sensitivity and adaptability, and
- utilize global competencies throughout their professional and personal lives

At the same time, PC is committed to providing safe study abroad programs for our students. All decisions regarding program operations are made with reference to information from a number of sources here and abroad, including the consular information sheets and advisory messages posted by the U.S. Department of State ([www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) ([www.cdc.gov/travel/](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/)).

### **US State Department: Travel Alerts and Warnings**

- **Travel Alerts** are issued to disseminate information about short-term conditions, generally within a particular country, that pose imminent risks to the security of U.S. citizens. Natural disasters, terrorist attacks, coups, anniversaries of terrorist events, election-related demonstrations or violence, and high-profile events such as international conferences or regional sports events are examples of conditions that might generate a Travel Alert.
- The US government issues **Travel Warnings** to describe long-term, protracted conditions that make a country dangerous or unstable. A Travel Warning is also issued when the U.S. Government's ability to assist U.S. citizens is constrained due to the closure of an embassy or consulate or because of a drawdown of its staff.

### **CDC: Health Precautions and Travel Health Warnings**

- A **Travel Health Precaution** is a notification by the CDC that a disease outbreak is occurring in a widespread geographic area. The purpose of a travel health precaution is to provide accurate information to travelers and Americans living abroad about the status of the outbreak (i.e., the magnitude, scope, and rapidity of spread), specific precautions to reduce their risk for infection, and what to do if they become ill while in the area.

- A **Travel Health Warning** is a notification by the CDC that a widespread, serious outbreak of a disease of public health concern is expanding outside a more limited area or populations than were initially affected. The **CDC recommends against nonessential travel to the area** because the risk for the traveler is considered to be high (i.e., the risk is increased because of evidence of transmission outside defined settings and/or inadequate containment).

#### **A. Policy for Study Abroad on Providence College Sponsored and Faculty-led Programs**

- PC observes U.S. State Department Travel Warnings and CDC Travel Health Warnings with respect to all PC short-term study abroad and service programs. PC programs for locations currently under a Travel Warning or Travel Health Warning will be suspended for the duration of the Warning, with the following distinctions noted below.
- With that suspension, no Providence College student is permitted to depart on a program in the affected locale, region, or country, nor are any short-term faculty or staff-led programs permitted to depart for the start of the program, as long as the Travel or Health Warning is in effect.
- If such a Warning is issued while a PC program is already underway, the College may continue the program, or it may suspend or terminate the program, as the situation and circumstances warrant. Events and circumstances will be carefully monitored by the Dean of International Studies, the PC Director of Emergency Management and, if necessary, the College's Safety & Emergency Management Committee in determining whether:
  - 1) the PC program(s) should be allowed to continue, or
  - 2) the program(s) should relocate temporarily to a safe site in order to allow the program to continue, or
  - 3) the program(s) should temporarily suspend operations, or
  - 4) the program(s) should be closed and the participants return to the U.S.

#### **B. Policy for Study Abroad on Recognized Non-Providence College Programs**

- PC will not approve students going on programs that take place in countries for which a U.S. State Department Travel Warning or CDC Travel Health Warning has been issued.
- In the instance of a Travel or Health Warning issued while a Providence College student is participating on a PC-recognized program already in progress, the Dean for International Studies will evaluate the situation on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the PC Director of Emergency Management and the program provider or host institution. If the U.S. State Department issues an evacuation or departure order, Providence College approval for any student studying in the affected area will be withdrawn and the student will be expected to depart as directed.

#### **C. Petition for an Exception**

Requests for an exception to these policies will be reviewed by the Dean of International Studies who may, in rare instances, grant a waiver. The decision of the Dean of International Studies is final. If a student's participation on the program is approved, the student and his or her parents or guardians will both be required to sign a Special Release and Hold Harmless Agreement. Study in Israel is the only College-approved exception to the policy currently and does not require a petition – only the signed Release & Hold Harmless Agreement.