

# UCEAP Program Suspension Policy

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The University of California Education Abroad Program (UCEAP) represents the University of California system and offers a diverse array of academic offerings that provide UC students with an excellent opportunity to explore new cultures, gain valuable research and professional experience, and transform their lives, UC, and the world.

In executing its academic and administrative oversight responsibilities, UCEAP reserves the right to suspend operations if conditions so warrant.

This document describes the policies and the rationale for the suspension of UCEAP programs. Generally, suspensions may occur because of security, health, academic quality, or operational concerns.

## 2.0 SUSPENSIONS BASED ON SECURITY

### 2.1 BACKGROUND

The health and welfare of all students, staff, and faculty abroad under the auspices of UCEAP are of the highest priority for the University of California. Risk and institutional liability are also important factors in considering program suspensions.

The US Department of State (DOS) periodically posts Travel Advisories for countries based on relevant information that DOS has collected, as follows:

- **Level 1 - Exercise Normal Precautions:** This is the lowest advisory level for safety and security risk. There is some risk in any international travel. Conditions in other countries may differ from those in the United States and may change at any time.
- **Level 2 - Exercise Increased Caution:** Be aware of heightened risks to safety and security. The DOS provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.
- **Level 3 - Reconsider Travel:** Avoid travel due to serious risks to safety and security. The DOS provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.
- **Level 4 - Do Not Travel:** This is the highest advisory level due to greater likelihood of life-threatening risks. During an emergency, the US government may have very limited ability to provide assistance. DOS advises that US citizens not travel to the country or leave as soon as it is safe to do so. DOS provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.

UCEAP monitors all DOS travel information and thoroughly considers all information.

Under the UCEAP Student Travel Policy (for travel during a student's break), students participating in UCEAP are strongly discouraged from traveling during their breaks to locations that US DOS has issued a Level 3 or Level 4 travel advisory, or to any part of a country that has levels 3 and/or 4 locations, and/or study center/partner recommendation to avoid such travel.

### 2.2 POLICY

The UCEAP bases security-related program suspensions on US DOS Travel Advisory levels 3 or 4. Accordingly, the UCEAP will not initiate, operate, supervise, direct, or otherwise support a new program, or a new term of an existing program, in countries for which such advisories are in effect. In such instances, the UCEAP Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director will issue a formal statement of program suspension.

Should a Level 3 or 4 Travel Advisory be issued after the start date of a UCEAP term, UCEAP will evaluate the health, safety, and security conditions at the program location and region to determine if programming can continue. UCEAP will consult, if time permits, with the affected UC Study Center or partner abroad, US DOS regional and security analysts, US Mission Regional Security Officer, other US institutions of higher education with programs in the country, UCOP Office of the President Risk Services, UC security provider, UC insurance provider, and area experts. Once a determination has reached whether programming can continue, the UCEAP Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director will request the President an exception to the Program Suspension policy or will support the suspension of the program. If time permits, the UCEAP Regional Director will consult with the Study Center or its partners to determine the appropriate period for suspending the program and/or the safe evacuation of students, faculty, and staff, from the host country. When possible, UCEAP will assist the students in completing their academic program while minimizing adverse financial consequences. UCEAP will work with the UC campuses to help students transition back to campus classes.

Should a Level 3 or 4 Travel Advisory be issued, for a specific region of a country, before the start date of a UCEAP term, UCEAP will consult with the affected UC study center partners abroad, US DOS regional and security analysts, US Mission Regional Security Officer, other institutions of higher education with programs in the country, UCOP Office of the President Risk Services, UC security provider, UC insurance provider, and area experts, to determine whether there is a threat to continue operations.

### **EXCEPTION TO POLICY**

In compelling circumstances, depending on the local/regional situation, the language of the Travel Advisory and the specific UCEAP program location, the UCEAP International Health, Safety, and Emergency Response Unit will provide a general assessment, contingency plans, and a recommendation to the Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director for an exception consideration, if such exception is deemed reasonable. After review, if the recommendation is to continue the program, an exception to policy will be requested to the University of California Office of the President. Such requests must be backed by a security overview and/or assessment by qualified third-party security professionals, and recommended program modifications to help mitigate risk (e.g. travel restrictions, required cell phones, additional waiver, etc.). A final decision to the appeal for an exception will be issued by the President or his/her designee.

In the event that the US DOS downgrades the Travel Advisory for a country in which UCEAP has ceased operating an existing program(s), UCEAP will start the process to assess the situation to consider the resumption of the program(s) within a reasonable and appropriate time frame, unless other factors provide an independent reason for continuing the suspension of the program(s). However, depending on the specific security situation, UCEAP must first request iJET International to carry out a thorough risk assessment before the resumption of operations happens.

### **EXCEPTION CRITERIA**

Exceptions will be evaluated within the context of potential threats to students and the program. Exception requests that create significant risks without compensating controls will not be approved.

## 3.0 SUSPENSIONS BASED ON HEALTH CONCERNS

### 3.1 BACKGROUND

The health and welfare of all students, staff, and faculty abroad under the auspices of UCEAP are of highest priority. Risk and institutional liability are also important factors in considering program suspensions.

A variety of US and international bodies issue scalable definitions for travel notices about disease occurrences abroad. UCEAP relies on notices from CDC (independently or in conjunction with WHO and the US DOS) when determining to suspend a program because of health concerns.

NOTICE LEVEL	TRAVELER ACTION	RISK TO TRAVELER
<b>LEVEL 1: WATCH</b>	Reminder to follow <b>usual</b> precautions for this destination	Usual baseline risk or slightly above baseline risk for destination and limited impact to the traveler
<b>LEVEL 2: ALERT</b>	Follow <b>enhanced</b> precautions for this destination	Increased risk in defined settings or associated with specific risk factors; certain high-risk populations may wish to delay travel to these destinations
<b>LEVEL 3: WARNING</b>	Avoid all non-essential travel to this destination	High risk to travelers

### TRAVEL NOTICE DEFINITIONS

CDC issues different types of notices for international travelers. The definitions are below. They describe both levels of risk for the traveler and recommend preventive measures to take at each level of risk.

UCEAP monitors all CDC and WHO notices, gives serious consideration to the information contained within them, and constantly reassesses any critical situation.

## 3.2 POLICY

UCEAP follows an unequivocal policy that bases health-related program suspensions solely on Travel Health Warnings issued by US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In such instances, the UCEAP Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director will issue a formal statement of program suspension.

Accordingly, UCEAP will not initiate, operate, supervise, direct, or otherwise support a new program, or a new term of an existing program, in any country for which the CDC, independently or in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), issues a Travel Health Warning. The use of a Travel Health Warning will be the only factor to be considered when suspending programs because of health reasons. In such instances, the UCEAP Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director will issue a formal statement of program suspension.

Should a Travel Health Warning be issued after the start date of a UCEAP term, UCEAP will consult, if time permits, with the affected UCEAP Study Center/UCEAP Representative, CDC and WHO health experts, other organizations that offer programs in the country/region, University of California Office of the President Risk Services, UC insurance, UC campus health experts, and area health experts to determine the appropriate time frame for suspending the program and/or the departure of the students, faculty, and staff, from the host country. When possible, UCEAP will assist students in completing their academic program while minimizing adverse financial consequences. UCEAP will work with the UC campuses to help students transition back to campus classes.

In the event that the Travel Health Warning is removed for a country in which UCEAP has ceased operating an existing program(s), UCEAP will resume such program(s) within a reasonable and appropriate time frame, unless factors other than health provide an independent reason for continuing the suspension of the program(s).

## 4.0 SUSPENSIONS BASED ON ACADEMIC QUALITY

### 4.1 BACKGROUND

The Academic Senate, through the University Committee on International Education (UCIE), exercises academic oversight over UCEAP. Among other responsibilities, UCIE formally reviews existing programs and approves new programs. Having active involvement by UC faculty in the development of new programs ensures that in their totality they are of comparable quality to University of California and that the proposed curricula can be integrated into UC academic majors and programs.

In addition to direct faculty oversight, UCEAP maintains a standard set of informational documents that, taken together, provide assessments of the academic strengths and weaknesses of various programs. These documents include: profiles of the educational systems in host countries, UCEAP partner institutions, and the UCEAP programs; annual reports from each UC study center director or local liaison officer and/or visiting UC faculty or UCEAP staff; and annual status and strategy reports providing a review and assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of each program.

## 4.2 POLICY

UCEAP will not initiate, operate, pay for, supervise, direct, or otherwise support a new program, or a new term of an existing program, in any host institution, if that program does not meet UC standards of quality. To ensure program quality, ongoing assessments are done by the Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director, and the Assistant Dean, and include consideration of such factors as: the academic rigor of learning opportunities, course availability, professional qualifications of faculty, accreditation, UC faculty program reviews, student evaluations, Study Center Director or Regional Director input, reports from UCEAP-international faculty exchange visitors, and access to appropriate research and library resources, among other things.

Program suspension provides an opportunity to develop a plan for restoring program viability. UCEAP will attempt to remediate problems of academic quality for programs that have been identified as problematic. If such remediation is unsuccessful, UCEAP will suspend the program after consulting with UCIE. The UCEAP Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director has the formal authority to suspend programs for academic quality reasons.

# 5.0 SUSPENSIONS BASED ON OPERATIONAL FACTORS & CONDITIONS

## 5.1 BACKGROUND

Programs being considered for suspension because of operational factors and conditions are identified through a variety of mechanisms: the annual status and strategy reports, annual reports, student evaluations, recommendations from study center directors or regional directors, enrollment reports, and others. UCEAP will attempt to remediate the program in those instances that it determines it is appropriate and feasible. UCEAP will alert the relevant UCEAP community in those instances that remediation is authorized. UCEAP will then review the condition(s) or factor(s) that triggered the remediation plan after an appropriate interval of time to determine if they have been satisfactorily addressed. If remediation is unsuccessful, UCEAP will suspend the program after consulting with the UCIE.

## 5.2 POLICY

UCEAP may suspend a program based on operational factors and conditions. These include (but are not limited to): the level of enrollment in the program, the financial impact of operating the program and its participants, ability to meet administrative and logistical requirements associated with operating the program, local conditions affecting the safety, health and welfare of the students and the UCEAP study center, or other factors related to being able to fulfill the provisions and obligations of the contractual agreement between UC and the host university or program provider. UCEAP will suspend a program if conditions so warrant after consulting with UCIE and CCD. The UCEAP Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director has the formal authority to suspend programs based on operational considerations.