Program Suspension Policy

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The University of California Education Abroad Program (UCEAP) is the distinctive and distinguished international program of the University of California that provides academic exchanges and integrates international curricula and learning opportunities into the University. Operating programs in over 150 universities and 35 countries, EAP provides a diverse array of quality academic offerings while placing the highest priority on the safety and health of its student participants. In executing its academic and administrative oversight responsibilities, EAP reserves the right to suspend programs if conditions so warrant.

This document describes the policies and the rationales underlying the suspension of UCEAP programs. Such suspensions may occur because of security, health, academic quality, or operational concerns.

2.0 SUSPENSIONS BASED ON SECURITY

2.1. POLICY

The UCEAP follows an unequivocal policy that bases security-related program suspensions solely on U.S. Department of State Travel Warnings. Accordingly, the 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 a U.S. Department of State Travel Warning is in effect. In such instances, the EAP Director will issue a formal statement of program suspension.

Should a Travel Warning be issued after the start date of an EAP program term in a country, UCEAP will consult, if time permits, with the affected UC Study Center or Study Centers, U.S. Department of State regional and security analysts, other organizations that offer programs abroad, and area experts, to determine the appropriate time frame for suspending the program and/or the departure of the students from the host country, and, when possible, UCEAP will assist the students in completing their academic program while minimizing adverse financial consequences.

In the event that the U.S. Department of State removes its Travel Warning 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 security provide an independent reason for continuing the suspension of the program(s).

2.2. 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 U.S. Department of State periodically posts Travel Warnings for countries that it deems to be unsafe for Americans based on relevant information that the Department has collected. Travel Warnings are issued 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 American citizens is constrained due to the closure of an embassy or consulate or because of a drawdown of its staff.

Note that Travel Warnings are distinct from two other forms of Department of State information, Country Specific Information (CSI) and Travel Alerts (TA):

- **Country Specific Information (CSI)** is available for every country of the world. These pages include such information as location of the U.S. embassy or consulate in the subject country, unusual immigration practices, health conditions, minor political disturbances, unusual currency and entry regulations, crime and security information, and drug penalties. If an unstable condition exists in a country that is not severe enough to warrant a Travel Warning, a description of the condition(s) may be included under an optional section entitled “Safety/Security.”
• Travel Alerts (TA) 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.

EAP monitors both Travel Alert and Country Specific Information and gives serious consideration to the information contained within them. Under the EAP Student Travel Policy, and by signature of agreement in the Student Agreement, students participating in EAP Programs are strongly discouraged from traveling independently during their breaks to locations that a CSI or TA recommends avoiding as well as to countries under a Travel Warning. However, EAP does not make decisions about program development and operation solely on the basis of a CSI or TA.

3.0 **SUSPENSIONS BASED ON HEALTH CONCERNS**

3.1. **POLICY**

The UCEAP follows an unequivocal policy that bases health-related program suspensions solely on Travel Health Warnings. In such instances, the EAP Director will issue a formal statement of program suspension. Accordingly, the Universitywide of California EAP 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 U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), independently or in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), issues a Travel Health Warning. No exceptions will be considered. 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 EAP Director will issue a formal statement of program suspension.

Should a Travel Health Warning be issued after the start date of an EAP program term, UCEAP will consult, if time permits, with the affected EAP Study Center or Study Centers, CDC and WHO health experts, other organizations that offer programs abroad, and area health experts to determine the appropriate time frame for suspending the program and/or the departure of the students from the host country and EAP will assist the students in completing their academic program while minimizing adverse financial consequences.

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).

3.2. **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 U.S. 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 U.S. Department of State) when determining to suspend a program because of health concerns.

The CDC issues four different levels of information and warnings regarding disease outbreaks. The notices are as follows:

**In the News:** This notice provides information about sporadic cases of disease or an occurrence of disease of public health concern affecting a traveler or travel destination. At this level, the risk for an individual traveler does not differ from the usual risk in that area. CDC’s recommended preventive measure is to keep travelers informed and reinforce standard prevention recommendations.

**Outbreak Notice:** Information is provided regarding a disease outbreak in a limited geographic area or setting. The risk for travelers is defined and limited, and the notice reminds travelers about standard or enhanced travel recommendations such as vaccination. CDC’s recommended preventive measure is to issue reminders about standard and enhanced recommendations for the region.

**Travel Health Precaution:** CDC does NOT recommend against travel to the area. Specific information is provided to travelers that a disease outbreak of greater scope is occurring in a more widespread geographic area. This precaution also provides guidance to travelers about what to do if they become ill while in the area. At this level, CDC does not recommend against travel to a specific area, but might recommend limiting exposure to a
defined setting (e.g., poultry farms or health-care facilities). CDC’s recommended preventive measure is to issue specific precautions to reduce risk during the stay, and provide guidance as to what to do before and after travel. The risk for travelers is dependent on patterns of transmission, as well as severity of illness.

**Travel Health Warning:** CDC recommends against nonessential travel to the area. A travel health warning is a notification by CDC that a widespread, serious outbreak of a disease of public health concern is expanding outside the area or populations that were initially affected. The purpose of a travel warning is to reduce the volume of traffic to affected areas, limiting the risk for spreading the disease to unaffected areas. 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). CDC recommended preventive measure: In addition to the specific precautions cited above, postpone nonessential travel. Additional preventive measures may be recommended, depending on the circumstances (e.g., travelers may be requested to monitor their health for a certain period after their return; arriving passengers may be screened at ports of entry).

**CDC Criteria for Downgrading or Removing Notices**

To downgrade a travel health warning to a travel health precaution, there should be:

- Adequate and regularly updated reports of surveillance data from the area
- No evidence of ongoing transmission outside defined settings for two incubation periods after the date of onset of symptoms for the last case, as reported by public health officials.

To remove a travel precaution, there should be:

- Adequate and regularly updated reports of surveillance data from the area
- No evidence of new cases for three incubation periods after the date of onset of symptoms for the last case, as reported by public health authorities.
- Limited or no recent instances of exported cases from the area; this criterion excludes intentional or planned evacuations.

CDC will revisit “In the News” and “Outbreak Notices” at regular intervals; these will no longer be issued when the health concern is under control and no further information needs to be distributed.

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

### 4.0 SUSPENSIONS BASED ON ACADEMIC QUALITY

#### 4.1. 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 Director, Associate Director/Academic Dean and Associate 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 EAP-International Faculty Exchange visitors, and access to appropriate research and library resources, among other things. 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 the University Committee on International Education (UCIE). The EAP Director has the formal authority to suspend programs for academic quality reasons.

#### 4.2. BACKGROUND

The Academic Senate, through (UCIE), exercises academic oversight over EAP. 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 UC 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, EAP partner institutions, and the EAP 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.

5.0 SUSPENSIONS BASED ON OPERATIONAL FACTORS AND CONDITIONS

5.1. 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 on EAP 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 EAP 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 EAP Director has the formal authority to suspend programs based on operational considerations.

5.2. 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.

REQUEST FOR EXCEPTIONS:

Adopted 6-1-05
UCIE approved
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