Permissible University-Sanctioned Travel

Effective April 4, 2022, and until revised or replaced

Our Policy

In order to advance our teaching, learning, research, and service missions, the University encourages our community members to travel beyond the campus and its local area. As part of facilitating this travel, and to support the well-being of the traveler, ensure the interests of the University, and promote public health and the health of the environment, some reasonable and prudent conditions on University-sanctioned travel are necessary. Undertaking travel with the University’s sanction carries with it the responsibility to follow the University’s travel policies and guidelines.

These guidelines fully replace all previous guidance regarding permissible University-sanctioned travel, including those issued specifically for the pandemic period and the former higher risk travel policy.

These requirements and guidelines are in effect until modified or rescinded. They are issued and maintained by the Global Safety & Security (GS&S) office.
Section 1: For Travelers

Where can I travel?

Where you can travel with University sanction – and so, with University funding and support – depends on three things:

✓ **Your status** (undergraduate, graduate student, faculty/academic professional, staff, or guest);

✓ **The kind of trip you are taking** (individual short term, group short term, or long term/relocation); and,

✓ **The risk category assigned to your destination** – A, B, C, or X (see Section 2 for more on risk categories). You can find a destination’s current risk category online.

**Domestic travel** is unrestricted for everyone, provided you know that it is feasible.

**International travel** is fully suspended to a small number of ‘Category X’ destinations, where sanctions or security risks are extremely severe.

For **all other international destinations**:

**If you are an undergraduate, you can...**

- Travel to destinations in Category A, for any reason and without any special steps, if you know the trip is feasible.

- Travel to destinations in Category B, for any reason, if the Office of International Programs (for academic trips, study abroad, and most internships) or the appropriate **unit head in Campus Life** (for co-curricular and Athletics trips) certifies certain details about the importance of the trip and the steps taken to manage any elevated risks.

- Travel to destinations in Category C, for any reason, if the Dean of the College (for academic trips, study abroad, and most internships) or the Vice President for Campus Life (for co-curricular and Athletics trips) approves an exception.

**If you are a graduate student, you can...**

- Travel to destinations in Category A, for any reason and without any special steps, if you know the trip is feasible.

- Travel to destinations in Category B for short-term individual and group trips, if your department chair, program director, or dean certifies certain details about the importance of the trip.

- Travel to destinations in Category C for short-term trips, including both individual trips and curricular or co-curricular short-term group trips, if the Dean of the Graduate School approves an exception.
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• Temporarily relocate to destinations classified as Category A, B, or C risks, if the Graduate School approves you for “in absentia” status, you know the relocation is feasible, and you, as an individual, accept the level of risk.

If you are a faculty member or academic professional, you can...

• Travel to destinations in Category A or B for short-term individual and group trips, if you know the trip is feasible and, for Category B destinations, if you feel the trip has an essential purpose.

• Travel to destinations in Category C for short-term individual and group trips, if your department chair, program director, or dean certifies certain details about the importance of the trip and the steps taken to manage any elevated risks.

• Travel to destinations in Categories A, B, or C for long-term trips or for relocation, if the trip is otherwise approved through relevant Dean of the Faculty processes, you know it is feasible, and you accept the level of risk.

If you are a staff member, you can...

• Travel to destinations in Category A for short-term individual or group trips, if you know the trip is feasible.

• Travel to destinations in Category B or C for short-term individual or group trips, if your supervisor (for Category B) or the Cabinet Officer to whom you report (for Category C) certifies certain details about your trip.

• Travel to destinations in Categories A, B, or C for long-term trips or relocation, if the trip is otherwise approved through relevant Human Resources processes, you know it is feasible, and you accept the level of risk.

If you are sponsoring a guest or visitor’s travel, they can...

• Travel to destinations in Category A for short-term trips as individuals or in a group, if you know the trip is feasible for them.

• Travel to destinations in Category B for short-term trips as individuals or in a group, if the Cabinet Officer to whom you report certifies some things about the importance of the trip and the steps taken to manage any elevated risks.

What are certifications and exceptions? How do I get them, if required?

A certification is a record that a trip is feasible, and in circumstances of elevated risks, that the trip is important enough to justify those risks. Where risks are critical, the certification also documents that you are taking reasonable mitigation steps.

• There are three levels of certification, depending on how much risk is involved in a trip: green, yellow, and red. The charts at the end of this section tell you which level of certification you need and who has to sign the certification.
Green-level certification is done by the traveler during the required travel registration process online.

The forms for yellow and red-level certifications should be downloaded, filled out by the traveler, and signed by the appropriate office/official listed in the charts at the end of this Section. Certifying offices/officials will have their own internal process for review and signing. You should consult with them directly for guidance. Once completed and signed, you will upload the certification form as part of your travel registration.

- For more on the feasibility, purpose, and risk-mitigation tests applicable to each level of certification, see Section 3.

An exception is an approval from a senior University administrator allowing a specific trip or program to proceed in a destination that would otherwise be prohibited on the basis of risk.

- Individuals wishing to seek an exception for a specific trip should download and complete the Statement of Exigency/Request for Exception for submission to GS&S.

- Those wishing to plan undergraduate programs that require an exception should contact GS&S directly for more information on the review process.

- Detailed information on the exception process is in Section 4.

Are there any other University requirements I need to fulfill before or during University-sanctioned travel?

Before your trip begins:

- ✓ Research and know the laws, rules, and regulations at your destination. This is your personal responsibility, but GS&S can help you find resources to assist you.
- ✓ Complete the travel registration process in the Enroll My Trip tool online.
- ✓ Comply with the University’s policies on Covid-19 vaccinations, if you are traveling domestically.
- ✓ Be up to date on your Covid-19 vaccinations, if you are traveling internationally. If you don’t meet this requirement, contact GS&S for further information.
- ✓ Plan the logistics of your trip in accordance with Finance and Treasury’s travel polices.
- ✓ Comply with the University’s Export Control policies, including any additional requirements sent to you by the Export Control team after you complete your travel registration.
- ✓ Make sure you have contacted Global Financial Services if you will be engaging in work while you are overseas for which you expect the University to pay you.

During your trip:

- ✓ Keep your itinerary and contact information in Enroll My Trip up to date.
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✓ Remember that you remain subject to relevant University policies, as if you were living and/or working on campus.

✓ Report immediately to GS&S, UHS (for health issues), or other University resource any and all risks to your safety, health, or well-being, as well as to your ability to complete your travel as planned at the time of certification.

✓ Do not willfully violate local or national laws, rules, or regulations in force at your destination. This includes recommended and mandated public health measures, and immigration laws and rules. The University cannot guarantee you assistance if you do violate any such laws.

Can the University cut my trip short?

Following the requirements in these guidelines makes it unlikely your University-sanctioned travel could be cut short; however, there is never an absolute guarantee this will not occur. If you go out of compliance with these guidelines or if the risk at your destination increases unexpectedly, the University can instruct you to end your travel at any time. After receiving such an instruction, if you decline to end your travel as directed, your trip will become personal travel, with all the consequences outlined in Section 2.

What about personal travel?

You can travel anywhere you like if your trip is wholly personal, but the University assumes no responsibility for personal travel. You are solely responsible for all risks and consequences of personal travel, so the University does encourage you to consult and follow the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Department of State when traveling overseas.

If you are taking a trip that combines personal and University-sanctioned portions, those parts that are meant to be University sanctioned must be done in compliance with this policy. For example, you cannot travel to a Category X country on a personal trip and then engage in activities that are University-related while you are there.

If you are a student, your ability to take personal trips while you are living or studying on the University campus may be subject to restrictions enacted under separate policies issued by UHS or EHS to ensure campus public health. If such a policy is in place, it takes precedence over what might otherwise be allowed under these guidelines.
## What is my certification-level or exception requirement?

### Level of certification or exception required from the individual/office shown in a box...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Green Certification</th>
<th>Yellow Certification</th>
<th>Red Certification</th>
<th>Exception</th>
<th>FULLY SUSPENDED</th>
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### Domestic and International Travel Certification Requirements

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<th>Domestic</th>
<th>International</th>
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<td>Category A</td>
<td>Category B</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Short-Term</td>
<td>Traveler self-certifies</td>
<td>Traveler self-certifies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Short-Term</td>
<td>Traveler self-certifies</td>
<td>Traveler self-certifies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Study Abroad/other long-term program</td>
<td>Traveler self-certifies</td>
<td>Traveler self-certifies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Undergraduate

### Graduate Student

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<tr>
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<th>International</th>
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<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Traveler self-certifies</td>
<td>Traveler self-certifies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relocation for approved in Absentia status</td>
<td>Traveler self-certifies</td>
<td>Traveler self-certifies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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#### Faculty/Academic Professional

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<td>Category B</td>
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<td>Traveler self-certifies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Long-Term/Relocation</td>
<td>Traveler self-certifies</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Faculty group travel is treated as individual short-term travel for each group member.**

#### Staff

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Long-Term/Relocation</td>
<td>Traveler self-certifies</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Staff group travel is treated as individual short-term travel for each group member.**

#### Guest/Visitor (non-employee/non-student)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domestic</th>
<th>International</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category A</td>
<td>Category B</td>
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<td>No requirement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>No requirement</td>
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Section 2: For Everyone

What happens if someone travels without proper certifications or to a prohibited destination?

Obtaining the required certifications and completing the required travel registration process are what make a trip University sanctioned. **Travel that is not University sanctioned is automatically considered to be personal – and University funding cannot be given for personal travel, nor is someone on a personal trip eligible for other University support, including University-purchased health, accident, and other travel-related insurances.**

In other words, **not following the permissible travel guidelines means no funding and no support from the University.** In some instances, going against these guidelines may also be so egregious that it might justify disciplinary action under Rights, Rules, and Responsibilities.

When in doubt, consult with GS&S about your travel, to be certain you are permitted to do it and that you comply with these guidelines and other University travel-related policies.

What are the destination risk categories? How are they decided?

GS&S determines the risk categories for international travel destinations worldwide. In most cases the designation is at a country level; however, sometimes regions within a country or territories with disputed or autonomous political status may be designated separately because they have a significantly different set of risks. Barring emergent circumstances that affect risks in a destination, GS&S reviews risk designations at the Category A and B levels twice per year, and at the Category C and X levels monthly.

The four risk categories are...

- **Category A:** Destinations where the overall risk of harm to an inexperienced traveler or disruption to their trip is no more substantial than that what they would face during a trip to an average U.S. city.

- **Category B:** Destinations where the overall risk of harm to an inexperienced traveler or disruption to their trip is moderately higher than what they would face in an average U.S. city.

- **Category C:** Destinations the overall risk of harm to an inexperienced traveler or disruption to their trip is substantially higher than what they would face in an average U.S. city. This generally includes, but is not limited to, circumstances where:
  - There is an express warning against travel from the government of the United States.
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- The destination is under comprehensive sanctions imposed by the United States or other government.
- There is an active civil or inter-state armed conflict or an armed insurgency.
- The U.S. government has no diplomatic presence or this presence limited to an interest section operated by a Protecting Power.

- **Category X:** Destinations that meet one or more criteria for Category C, but where the risks posed by the criterion(a) are so critical and/or cannot be effectively mitigated, so that travel needs to be suspended for all travelers.

It is your responsibility to know the risk designation for wherever it is you want to travel internationally. GS&S maintains an online resource to help you research the categories for destinations worldwide.

What definitions apply to key words used in these guidelines?

There are some words and phrases used in these guidelines that have specific meanings in the context of applying the guidelines to your travel. These can be important to understanding exactly what you are required to do in a specific instance.

Here is a list of those important terms and what they mean for purposes of these guidelines (Warning: Bureaucratic language ahead!):

- **Domestic travel:** Travel that originates from and is wholly and exclusively within the United States or its territories; or that originates from and is wholly within the country of the traveler’s home location, if not the United States or its territories.

- **Group travel:** For the purposes of these guidelines, travel that involves more than two University individuals traveling to the same destination over the same period as part of a trip or program organized or facilitate by a University entity, including without exception any travel undertaken by two or more University individuals to the same destination as part of a University course. Travel to academic and professional conferences hosted by third-parties is not considered group travel, even if more than two University individuals attend.

- **Guest/visitor:** An individual not temporarily or permanently employed by a University entity and/or not enrolled in any status as a student at the University.

- **Home location:** A traveler’s place of physical residence at the time their travel commences. This may be unrelated to a traveler’s domicile.

- **International travel:** Travel that does not meet the definition of domestic travel; and/or that might be considered domestic travel but involves crossing a boundary between the
jurisdictions of two political authorities (de jure or de facto) not actually subject to the same central government; and/or that involves a traveler passing through immigration controls.¹

**Long-term travel:** Travel which begins and ends in the same home location and the duration of which is more than 45 calendar days from the date the traveler departs their home location until they return to it.

**Personal travel:** Any trip that does not meet the definition of University-sanctioned travel below, regardless of length, destination, or purpose.

**Relocation:** Travel of any duration that involves changing a University individual’s home location.

**Residual risk:** The potential for harm to a traveler or disruption to travel from any source that remains possible and more than notionally probable after all known risks have been reduced by available mitigation methods.

**Short-term travel:** Travel which begins and ends in the same home location and the duration of which is 45 calendar days or less from the date the traveler departs their home location until they return to it.

**Travel:** A trip, including the transit to and from and time spent at the destination(s), that involves:

1. A stay longer than 24 hours outside of:
   a. the state of New Jersey; or
   b. the metropolitan statistical areas of Philadelphia or New York City; or
   c. if not in New Jersey or these areas, the metropolitan statistical area of the traveler’s home location in the United States; or
   d. if not in the United States, the country’s first-level administrative division in which the traveler’s home location is located.

2. And/or, an overnight stay outside of the traveler’s home location, including paying rent for accommodations, regardless of the destination’s distance from the home location.

**Traveler:** A University individual or guest/visitor engaging in any activity considered travel under these guidelines.

**University entity:** A department, office, center, institute, council, program, group, or other administrative unit subject to oversight by the Trustees of Princeton University.

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¹ For purposes of these guidelines travel between Italy and Vatican City, between Italy and San Marino, and between stations within Antarctica is treated as domestic travel. Travel to and from Antarctica, regardless of origin and destination is considered international.
University individual: An enrolled undergraduate student, enrolled graduate student, faculty member (including visiting and emeritus), academic professional (including postdocs, research staff, and library employees), or staff member.

University-sanctioned travel: University-related travel that is performed in compliance with all applicable University policies, standards, guidelines, and/or rules.
Section 3: For Certifiers

What is a certification?

A certification is your confirmation that one or more of the following is true of a given trip, depending on the certification level involved:

- The trip is feasible and for a University-related purpose.
- In circumstances of elevated risks, the reason for the trip is important enough to justify those risks.
- Where risks are critical, your belief that reasonable steps are being taken for the traveler’s well-being.

There are three levels of certification, depending on how much risk is involved in a trip: green, yellow, and red.

- Green-level certification is always done solely by the traveler during the required travel registration process online.
- Yellow and red-level certifications are done either by the traveler or by a certifier through a form available from GS&S that the traveler fills out and the certifier reviews and signs. The traveler then uploads the signed form as part of the travel registration process.

When you certify, you are not being asked to make a judgement about the risk of a trip; that is already established by the risk category assigned by GS&S to the destination. You are confirming that the trip meets the basic feasibility and purpose criteria for any kind of University-sanctioned travel. In yellow and red-level certifications, you are also determining that the purpose of the trip justifies the risks involved, because you have a better understanding of a traveler’s need to make a given trip than GS&S does.

What are the general guidelines for handling certifications?

There are two kinds of certifiers: travelers themselves and non-traveler certifiers.

If you are a traveler who can self-certify...

- You complete green-level certification as part of the online travel registration.
- You complete a yellow or red-level self-certification by filling out and signing the relevant certification form (available for download), and uploading it during your online travel registration.
If you are a non-traveler certifying individual or office, you can decide...

- What process you would like travelers to follow in terms of submitting completed yellow and red-level certification forms to you for review and action.
- Who specifically can sign certifications on your behalf, provided the person you delegate reports directly to you (where an individual is the certifier) or to the head of the office (where an office is the certifier).

For all certifiers, avoid “pro forma” certifications. Each request for certification must be reviewed individually against the standards contained in these guidelines.

What standards do I apply to make certification decisions?

For all travel, there are two basic certification tests for all University-sanctioned travel: Is the trip feasible and does it have a University-related purpose?

A trip is feasible if all of these conditions are true...

- The traveler’s passport is valid for travel to their proposed destination.
- The travel is allowed under U.S. laws and regulations, including export control regulations and applicable sanctions.
- The travel is allowable under and can be performed in full compliance with the laws and regulations of the destination, including but not limited to those dealing with immigration, customs, and taxation.
- The traveler can enter the country without having to submit to any government-imposed restrictions on their freedom of movement, other than a quarantine lasting ten days or less that is completed in a location of the traveler’s choosing.
- The destination is not subject to any local or national-level “stay-at-home,” lockdown, martial law or other order(s) that prevents freedom of movement, other than overnight curfews lasting no more than 10 hours.

A trip is for a University-related purpose if any of these conditions is true...

- The costs of the trip are covered (to any degree) by funds that a University entity has the discretion to pay or not to pay, except in cases where financial aid or emergency funds are used to support a student returning to their permanent home.
- The University benefits in any way from the traveler making the trip.
- If the traveler had no relationship with the University, they would not and/or could not take the specific trip in question.

For yellow-level certifications, you are certifying that the trip has an essential purpose, in addition to being feasible and University related.
A trip has an essential purpose if both of these conditions are true...

- The travel will provide benefits or results that are worth a risk of harm to the traveler or disruption to their plans that is moderately greater than what they would face while going about their daily routines in an average U.S. city.
- There are no convenient, cost-effective ways to obtain the same kind of benefits or results other than by traveling.

For red-level certifications, you are certifying that the trip has a critical purpose and that reasonable risk mitigations are being taken, in addition to the trip being feasible and University-related.

A trip has a critical purpose if all of these conditions are true...

- The travel is vital to the University’s teaching, learning, research, and/or service missions, or is for a vital student experience that cannot be replicated remotely.
- The travel will provide benefits or results that are worth a risk of harm to the traveler or disruption to their plans that is substantially greater than what they would face while going about their daily routines in an average U.S. city.
- There are no realistic alternatives to traveling that will accomplish the same benefits or results, regardless of how inconvenient or how much costlier an alternative might be.

You can certify that reasonable risk mitigations are being taken if...

- You are satisfied you understand why the destination is in Category B or C.
- The traveler has provided on their certification form a list of the steps and factors that will protect their health and safety that is more than just a reference to the standard services provided by or through GS&S to all travelers (like ISOS coverage or the University’s evacuation insurance).
- You, as a reasonable person, would take the trip in question in order to accomplish the trip’s purpose, knowing the risks involved and the steps and factors the traveler has identified to lessen those risks.

How do I know what risk mitigations are required?

There is no “one-size-fits-all” set of mitigations that will work for every destination where you must certify them. GS&S can consult with you – whether you are a traveler or a certifier – to help you consider available and reasonable steps you can take or factors you should consider, given the specifics of a destination and a traveler.

Some common mitigations include...

- The extent of a traveler’s real-world experience, language abilities, and ability to navigate the destination’s cultural, political, legal, security, and health systems unassisted.
• Realistic contingency planning for how a traveler will respond to specific likely problems.
• Advanced training for the traveler in competencies relevant to the risks at the destination, whether from Princeton or third-party sources.
• Support, confirmed in writing, from a third-party organization with a demonstrated ability to operate safely in the destination.
• Credible commitments from the destination’s government to protect the traveler from the risks in question.
• Limitations on or procedures for the work to be performed during the travel that will reduce the likelihood of encountering a specific risk.

Keep in mind that the bundle of support that GS&S and other offices routinely provide to all of our travelers – like ISOS coverage and our destination risk reports – is only sufficient on its own to enable travel where green and yellow-level certifications apply. These supports need to be augmented with more specific plans where a red-level certification or an exception is required.

How do I plan mitigations for international programs involving students?

When planning international programs involving students that will require red-level certification (or an exception, but more on that in Section 4), use this rule of thumb:

The mitigations you put in place must provide our students with a level of health, safety, and well-being that is arguably equivalent (but not necessarily equal) to what they would have if they were to remain on campus – adjusting, of course, for the risks at play in a destination.

GS&S is available to consult with you on your mitigation plans, although GS&S will not approve plans. The decision that your plans meet the requirements of these guidelines rests with the certifier.
Section 4: Exceptions

How do I ask for an exception if I am a student making an individual short-term trip?

Step 1: Download the Statement of Exigency/Request for Exception (SERE) form and complete it as instructed.

Step 2: Send the completed form to GS&S, who will determine if an exception is possible under the permissible travel guidelines. If it is, GS&S will complete a residual-risk analysis on the SERE form, forwarding a copy to you and to the official who can grant an exception.

Step 3: The certifying official will engage in whatever process they deem appropriate to review and reach a decision on your request. When they have made their decision, they will complete their portion of the SERE form and send it back to you, with a copy to GS&S.

If the exception is approved, you will need to register your trip in the Enroll My Trip online tool, uploading the final copy of the SERE form.

Keep in mind, this exception process requires at least three working weeks to be completed from the date you first contact GS&S. Given the volume of requests and the work involved in conducting an individual risk assessment, expedited consideration is not possible. Be sure you plan ahead!

If I am planning or running short-term group/program travel, or study abroad /long-term international program for undergraduate students, how does the exception process work?

You should coordinate planning for any such programs with the Office of International Programs or the appropriate Campus Life unit (Athletics, ODUS, etc.). As the travel/program organizer, you will need to complete a group Statement of Exigency/Request for Exception (SERE) form and submit it to OIP or the appropriate Campus Life unit. Those offices will coordinate with GS&S on the remaining steps for review and decision on the exception request. Be sure to review the information on risk mitigations in Section 3, as this is an important part of reviewing a program for an exception.
Appendix: Initial Destination Risk Designations

The Director for Global Safety & Security has determined the below risk designations shall be effective at the time of the release of these guidelines and remain effective until modified. The current risk category for a destination can always be found online.

Category A Destinations

- The United States and its territories
- All destinations subject to a Level 1 or Level 2 travel advisory from the U.S. Department of State, unless specifically listed under Category C or X

Category B Destinations

- All destinations subject to a Level 3 travel advisory from the U.S. Department of State, unless specifically listed under Category C or X

Category C Destinations

- All destinations subject to a Level 4 travel advisory from the U.S. Department of State, unless specifically listed under Category A, B, or X.

- The following destinations, regardless of their travel advisory level:
  - Armenia/Azerbaijan: Nagorno-Karabakh region, or within 50 miles of the border between the two countries
  - Burkina Faso
  - Cuba
  - Democratic Republic of the Congo
  - Ethiopia
  - Egypt: Sinai Peninsula other than Sharm el-Sheikh, or within 100 miles of the borders with Libya and Sudan
  - Lebanon
  - Mali: Bamako
  - Moldova: other than Transnistria
  - Myanmar (Burma)
  - Sudan: Khartoum
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- Turkey: Within 50 miles of the border with Syria
- Venezuela

Category X Destinations

- The following destinations, regardless of their travel advisory level:
  - Afghanistan
  - Belarus
  - Central African Republic
  - Chad
  - Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea)
  - Georgia: Abkhazia and South Ossetia
  - Iran
  - Iraq
  - Libya
  - Mali: all areas other than Bamako
  - Moldova: Transnistria
  - Mozambique: Cabo Delgado Province
  - Russia
  - Somalia, including Puntland and Somaliland
  - South Sudan
  - Sudan: all areas other than Khartoum
  - Syria
  - Ukraine
  - Yemen