Health & Safety Pre-Departure Requirements and Recommendations for Graduate Students Traveling Internationally
Office of Global Safety and Security

Required:

Disclose travel to the following locations with security evacuation provider, Drum Cussac, at least EIGHT weeks prior to departure in order to assure political/security evacuation coverage: Afghanistan, Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Libya, Niger, North Korea, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. Contact Julie Anne Friend in the Office of Global Safety and Security (OGSS) for the report template as soon as travel is under consideration to allow time for a full evaluation of applicable risks.

Sign and Submit a Graduate Student Travel Warning waiver/release if your destination is on the U.S. Department of State Travel Warning list. Releases are available on the Office of Risk Management Travel Policies page. Additional requirements exist for undergraduates traveling to these locations. If undergraduates will be participating in the travel experience, review the Undergraduate Travel Policy and contact OGSS as soon as possible.

Obtain NU’s HTH Worldwide international insurance coverage. Northwestern requires all students traveling abroad under university sponsorship to obtain an international medical insurance plan with our preferred provider, HTH Worldwide. HTH covers all medical care obtained abroad (including prescriptions and mental health care, such as counseling) with no deductibles or copays and can arrange for direct billing for hospital admits abroad. Note that the international coverage benefit in the AETNA plan, which is administered by On-Call, is inadequate.

- Group Travel: Check with group leader to determine if insurance is being purchased on your behalf. If not, once your plans are finalized including destination and travel dates, click on the HTH enrollment page to purchase your insurance for less than $10.00/week. Within 24 hours of enrolling with HTH, you will receive an e-mail confirmation. Print this e-mail as proof of enrollment and carry it on your person at all times.

Provide a copy of your travel details (flight itinerary and accommodations bookings) to the unit or department sponsoring your travel.

Save these numbers to your international cell phone:

- NUPD Int’l Emergency Assistance: 847-491-3456
- HTH 24/7 Service (ask for Global Health Team): 610-254-8771

Comply, if you are an international student (F-1 or J-1 visa holder), with all overseas travel requirements outlined by the International Office, or risk facing detention by Department of Homeland Security Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) officials upon return to the U.S. OGSS has no authority with the CBP and cannot intervene on a traveler’s behalf.

Recommended:

General Preparedness

Study OGSS’s Powerpoint Presentation on Global Risks: Resource for Responsible Travel Preparation, or better yet, invite OGSS to give a talk to your unit or department on global travel risks mitigation and overseas emergency response.
Develop an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) by considering foreseeable risks and likely responses.

Inform friends and family about the specific location(s) where you will be traveling, foreseeable risks and steps to mitigate risk. Assign a point-person to facilitate communications with Northwestern and the Office of Global Safety and Security in the unlikely case you face a serious emergency abroad.

Agree on a communications plan with friend and family. Acknowledge that your travels may cause anxiety for some loved ones. Help them manage this by creating realistic expectations for communication.

Pack all toiletries to be carried on in a small, zip lock plastic bag. Liquids cannot exceed 3.4 ounces. Read the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) guidelines for carrying on toiletries and other liquids.

Entry/Exit

Confirm your compliance with any necessary visas to travel to, and remain in, your destination country legally by reviewing entry/exit requirements with the applicable foreign embassy.

Ensure that your passport is valid for at least six months beyond your planned return date to avoid any confrontation with customs or immigration officials during your time abroad.

Safety/Security

Read the U.S. Department of State Country Information Sheet (CIS) for all destinations, playing particular attention to the sections on Crime and Transportation.

Register your travel with the U.S. Department of State Smart Travelers Enrollment Program (STEP) to receive important security information and updates from the embassy or consulate in your designated area(s) of travel. Go to the STEP website and follow directions to create an account and then “add a trip” to your profile. This is a two-step process. U.S. citizens will require a passport number; non-U.S. citizens should leave the passport field blanks.

Health and Wellness

Review required and recommended travel immunization at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Travelers’ Health page.

Check that you are up-to-date on all routine vaccinations such as Chicken pox (Varicella); Hepatitis A; Hepatitis B; Influenza; Pneumococcal; Polio; Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR); Meningitis and Tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis (DTP). If you need adult boosters for any of the above, the cost should be covered by your domestic health care plan.

Visit (if applicable) the Northwestern Medicine Travel Clinic located in downtown Chicago, near the Intercampus shuttle Ward bus stop. A branch Travel Clinic will open by fall 2015 at the Northwestern Medicine’s Maple Street Facility in Evanston. Note that NU’s Aetna Student Health covers travel vaccines the same as other routine immunizations. Referrals are not required, but students must use providers that are in-network. For more information review the NU/Aetna Plan Homepage, call Aetna Student Health Customer Service at 877-626-2314 or email the NU Student Insurance Office.

Ensure you have a sufficient supply of all prescription medications for the duration of travel. Keep medications in their original containers. If your liquid medication exceeds the 3.5 ounces rule or you need to carry on special medical devices, such as syringes or EpiPens, review the TSA guidelines for traveling with medications.

Discuss managing any pre-existing conditions with your current health care provider to develop a medical management plan for your time abroad. Contact OGSS for assistance in identifying health care resources abroad if care will be needed during travels.