

**Procedures for
Faculty-led International Travel
March 30, 2010**

Course-related and co-curricular international travel led by faculty members has the potential significantly to enrich students' understanding of a particular region or society by linking in-depth academic coursework at Bowdoin with experiential learning elsewhere in the world. The logistical and pedagogical complexities of such trips require significant effort on the part of faculty members designing and leading such trips, and the College stands ready to help.

International travel experiences raise pedagogical and administrative issues, and the professors leading these experiences can benefit from support and advice from both faculty and staff. Usually substantial lead-time is needed to plan and coordinate a trip. The following outlines the process by which faculty members apply for approval by the College for such travel and the support mechanisms in place to assist faculty.

I. Types of faculty-led trips related to the curriculum

- **Course-related international travel**

These trips are a *required part of a credit-bearing course* at Bowdoin, including independent studies or honors projects.

- **Co-curricular international travel**

These trips *are not part of a course and do not carry any academic credit but they are directly related to the students' course of study and enrich their academic experience* by exposing them to new places and new ways of seeing the world. Recent examples of such co-curricular travel include the faculty-led student trip to France over spring break, chamber choir trips to Europe, and the Niarchos-funded trip to Greece for Classics students.

II. Applying for approval

Each proposed trip will be evaluated by **two separate entities** as part of the approval process for faculty-led curricular and co-curricular travel.

- The first is the **Curriculum Implementation Committee (CIC)**, charged with overseeing the intellectual content of the college's curricular offerings.
- The second is a proposed new administrative committee, tentatively dubbed the **"Academic International Travel Advisory Group" (AITAG)**, to be composed of a representative from the office of the Dean for Academic Affairs, the Associate Director of Off-Campus Study, and the Procurement and Risk Manager. Representatives from the Office of Student Affairs and a faculty member from CIC will be involved as needed. The committee will review proposals with regard to administrative considerations, in

particular safety and funding issues, and will advise the faculty member in the planning and organization of the travel, for example on issues related to insurance and risk management, funding, and student selection.

To propose *course-related international travel*,

The faculty member(s) shall submit to the CIC a proposal detailing

- (1) how the course as a whole and the travel incorporated within it fulfills specific pedagogical principles (described below) and
- (2) how it addresses the administrative considerations (also described below).

The CIC will evaluate the pedagogical and intellectual considerations in a manner similar to the established process for approval of new courses. CIC will then pass its recommendations to AITAG for its review. AITAG will forward its recommendation and CIC's to the Dean for approval. If the Dean approves, the proposal will then go to CEP for a faculty vote at an upcoming faculty meeting, in the normal manner for approving new courses.

In general a faculty member proposing *course-related* travel should begin this process approximately a year in advance. In the case of a new course that incorporates required international travel, approval by CIC serves as a "tentative course approval" (sometimes necessary for the purposes of seeking external funding for the trip). Faculty seeking to lead particularly complex trips are strongly encouraged to begin their planning process in close consultation with CIC and AITAG, whose advice will help faculty anticipate the various pedagogical and administrative issues that must be addressed in the planning process. Finally, if a proposed trip is intended to happen regularly and with a consistent schedule and organization, provisions may be made for a one-time approval to avoid needless duplication of effort and paper work in subsequent iterations of the course.

To propose *co-curricular international travel*

The faculty member(s) shall submit a proposal to the CIC:

- (1) very briefly describing how the proposed travel complements or enhances the goals of a particular course, academic department, or program, and
- (2) addressing the administrative considerations enumerated below.

The first part of the proposal will be evaluated by CIC, and the second part by AITAG. The CIC and AITAG recommendations will be forwarded to the Dean for review and approval. The one-time approval process will be particularly appropriate in the case of annual *co-curricular* trips.

III. Pedagogical Principles for course-related and co-curricular international travel

International travel can greatly enhance a student's experience of courses and programs, while offering intellectual rewards for faculty, as well. For this reason, the college wishes to

encourage the creation of such travel opportunities, and to ensure that they are as accessible as possible to all Bowdoin students. CIC will work with faculty to consider several criteria that pertain specifically to the design of international travel opportunities. These criteria include

- the ways in which the pedagogical goals of a course as a whole are enriched by international travel or the ways that the trip meets the pedagogical standards of a Bowdoin College course (in order to receive academic credit);
- the necessity of travel for the accomplishment of the course's pedagogical goals (Would a fundamentally similar experience be possible without travel or does travel allow the course to be significantly richer than an on-campus experience alone?);
- whether the length and timing of the trip is appropriate for the accomplishment of the course's pedagogical goals;
- the ways in which site-specific plans for the trip (e.g. lectures, visits to museums, developing connections between trip participants and people and institutions at the destination) contribute to the goals of the course and to the broader, College-wide goal of enhancing the international dimensions of a Bowdoin education;
- the ways that students will be selected or admitted for the course or for the international academic travel, and the projected size of the group.

For co-curricular international travel, CIC will evaluate the proposal using the criteria above, while recognizing the distinction in required curricular travel versus enhancement through co-curricular.

IV. Administrative and Logistical Considerations

International travel with students entails complexities, logistical challenges and risks that go beyond the pedagogical matters that arise in the development of a traditional course to be offered on campus. For the benefit of all involved – faculty, students, and the College as a whole – individual faculty need to consider these issues carefully in advance of the travel. At the same time, faculty's efforts in planning for these trips would benefit from the assistance of individuals with expertise in dealing with these extra-curricular issues. AITAG will assist faculty members in addressing these matters. If AITAG is satisfied that these issues have been sufficiently taken into account, it will endorse CIC's approval of the course. On the other hand, if AITAG believes that some of these important matters have not been sufficiently dealt with in the proposal, they will request that the faculty member modify the proposal appropriately. In the unlikely occurrence that AITAG's concerns continue to be unresolved, they may recommend to the Dean that the project not go forward. The Dean will then make the final decision. AITAG will evaluate the following issues:

- the detailed budget for the international trip, an identification of the available sources of funding (whether from the College, from students themselves, or from outside funding sources), and a schedule for seeking any necessary funding;
- the necessity of ensuring that academic international travel be made accessible to students in a manner that is in keeping with the College's commitment to supporting students regardless of financial need;
- the identification of outside organizations that could assist in the planning or execution of the trip;
- the rationale for the inclusion of any participants who are not affiliated with Bowdoin, and the identities of any such individuals;
- the assessment of the various hazards that students taking part in the trip may encounter, including health risks, political instability, warfare and other forms of violence, natural disasters, and other risks;
- provisions for medical or other emergencies (including the possibility of evacuation);
- attention to expectations and guidelines for student behavior, and the proposed penalties for violations of those guidelines;
- requirements for visas or other travel documents;
- methods of ensuring that participants complete required forms and releases.

V. Other Faculty-led Academic Travel

Other types of faculty-led academic travel (e.g. conferences, student/faculty research) are not directly linked to the curricular goals of a course or program of study, so they do not need to meet the pedagogical criteria described above and are not evaluated by CIC. Nevertheless, these trips may involve travel of significant complexity and risk. Furthermore, they are in a very real sense affiliated with the College, enhancing the educational experience of participants, drawing their participants from the student body, and often building upon the skills developed in particular classes within the curriculum. As a result, faculty members who organize such travel are likely to benefit from the collective wisdom of the members of AITAG. The College, too, has a legitimate interest in helping faculty ensure that these opportunities are adequately planned. For this reason, this category of trips is subject to review by AITAG, which will evaluate them according to criteria appropriate to the nature of the trip. In many cases (e.g., a short trip by a single student to an academic conference in a secure location) AITAG's review will be brief. In other cases (for instance, extended travel to distant and/or less secure international destinations), AITAG may wish to consider the full range of administrative and logistical considerations enumerated above.

Faculty planning such travel will notify AITAG via an electronic form that asks for a brief description of the destination of the trip, its purpose, its approximate dates, the names of participating students, and the source of funding. Normally, the faculty member submits this notification well in advance of the trip. If members of AITAG have any concerns or feel that the complexity of the trip merits more detailed consideration, they will contact the faculty member soon after receiving the notification, preferably within a week. Given that different trips require very different amounts of planning, both the faculty member and AITAG will be as flexible as possible in accommodating each other's schedule. Members of AITAG will also be available at any point in the planning process to assist the faculty member in organizing the trip, in particular on issues related to funding, insurance and liability.

In rare circumstances, it is possible that members of AITAG will conclude that the planned travel poses too large a risk to the student, the faculty member, or the College. In this case the Dean for Academic Affairs may ask the faculty member to revise the plans for the trip, or may withhold permission for Bowdoin students to participate.

Individual student travel that has been processed and approved through the Student Fellowship Committee is exempt from this notification process.