

**California State University, Stanislaus**  
16/AS/13/UEPC – Policy for Academic Field Trips

**A. Policy**

This policy establishes the minimum standards for a California State University, Stanislaus academic field trip. This policy complies with Executive Order 1062 issued by the California State University (CSU) Chancellor pursuant to the Standing Orders of the CSU Board of Trustees, Section II (a) and (c). Through this policy, California State University, Stanislaus (University) recognizes the beneficial educational purpose of academic field trips and the necessity for policy and procedures designed to maximize the educational experience, mitigate risk to participants, and minimize the university's liability exposure.

**B. Administrative Responsibility**

The University President, who has the responsibility for the maintenance and oversight of the campus academic field trip policy, delegates authority to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs to ensure that the policy is adhered to, that there is a means for future review of the policy, and to ensure that the policy is updated and communicated to faculty and staff at appropriate intervals.

**C. Definitions**

*Field Trip:* A field trip is a University course-related off-campus activity led and accompanied by a faculty or staff member and designed to serve educational purposes as per Executive Order 1062. A field trip would include the gathering of data for research (such as at a geological or archaeological site), museum visit, participation in a conference or competition, or visits to an event or place of interest. The duration of a field trip may be a class period or longer, and could extend over multiple days. This definition does not apply to activities or placements in the context of a teacher preparation program, intercollegiate sports, or service-learning placements, all of which are governed by separate policies. Faculty members who are uncertain whether or not a particular activity is defined as a field trip for purposes of this policy should contact University Risk Management.

**D. Responsibilities and Procedures**

1. Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs
  - a. Provides appropriate communication with University academic departments to ensure compliance with the academic field trip policy.
2. University Risk Management
  - a. Provides risk management and liability requirements consultation and training to faculty and staff concerning field trip procedures.
  - b. Provides the following documents from the Risk Management website for academic departments to distribute to students participating in field trips:
    - Student code of conduct
    - Field trip liability release form
3. Vice Presidents, Deans, Department Chairs, and Directors
  - a. Administer regular reviews to monitor and document compliance with the academic field trip policy and update requirements as necessary.
4. University Academic Departments
  - a. Identifies and maintains a current listing of all courses that involve off-campus academic field trips, with the faculty coordinator of each field trip identified.

- b. Retains the following documents related to each field trip for one (1) year after the conclusion of the semester during which the field trip took place. Documents may be retained in electronic format.
- Site evaluation
  - Instructional agenda
  - Emergency response plan
  - Roster of participants
  - Student emergency contact information
  - Signed field trip liability release forms

Signed field trip liability release forms must be stored for at least three years after an activity ends. Documents signed by a parent or guardian on behalf of a minor must be retained for at least three years after an activity ends or until the minor turns twenty, whichever is longer.

5. Faculty Coordinator

- a. Upholds University policy and exercises reasonable care to protect and supervise students while participating in a field trip conducted by the University.
- b. Consults University Risk Management if the academic field trip involves overnight stay, hazardous or strenuous activity, or potentially dangerous locations. A customized field trip liability release form may be required.
- c. Prepares a pre-trip evaluation of the site documenting sufficient knowledge to ensure reasonable safety of the participants. Such knowledge may be acquired through a site visit, review of online or published materials, and/or contact with site personnel. A copy of the site evaluation will be provided to the department chair.
- d. Prepares an emergency response plan in accordance with Section E below and provides a copy to the department chair.
- e. Prepares an instructional agenda and provides a copy to the department chair.
- f. Obtains necessary management approvals required for traveling on University business prior to field trip. Complies with the California State University Use of University and Private Vehicle Policy guidelines and the California State University student travel policy, where applicable (see Executive Order 1041).
- g. Works with Disability Resource Services as needed to reach reasonable accommodations for students with special needs.
- h. Provides training for any equipment to be used on the trip.
- i. Requires each student participant to sign a standard risk management approved field trip liability release form. The purpose of the field trip liability release form is to provide notice of potential risks to the participant and to discourage claims against the University. (Reference Executive Order 1051 and CSU Technical Letter RM 2011-01). Prior to each field trip, provide copies of signed releases to department chair.
- j. Obtains student emergency contact information prior to the field trip and provides a copy to the department chair.
- k. Provides each student with the instructional agenda, health and safety information (as appropriate), emergency response plan (see Section E), and the student conduct code prior to each trip.
- l. Communicates campus [Student Conduct Code](http://www.csustan.edu/JudicialAffairs/documents/StudentConductCodev2008.pdf) (<http://www.csustan.edu/JudicialAffairs/documents/StudentConductCodev2008.pdf>) to students and [applicable human resource policies and procedures](http://www.csustan.edu/HR/PoliciesProcedures.html) (<http://www.csustan.edu/HR/PoliciesProcedures.html>) to faculty and staff. Advises participants of the consequences of non-compliance and takes appropriate action when aware that participants are in violation.

- m. Maintains a list (roster) of all persons participating in the field trip, along with emergency contact information (with copies in the academic department office), in the event of a major accident or emergency.
- n. If a participant is unwilling to sign the field trip liability release form and accept the risk of participation, then an alternate assignment must be provided for students to obtain course related credit. In a major where the field trip is a part of the degree requirement, providing an alternate assignment applies to the specific field trip but not the degree requirement. In practice this means that a student may opt out of a field trip to one site, but the student should know that they must complete the requirement by participating in another field trip(s) either at another site or another time. Students need not be informed of this option until a situation arises in which a participant is unwilling to accept the risk of participation. At that time, arrangements specific to the individual student will be made.

6. Field Trip Participants

- a. Must comply with all University policies and codes of conduct while participating in the academic field trip.
- b. Authorized academic field trip participants are limited to:
  - i. CSU Stanislaus faculty and staff
  - ii. Enrolled students in regular or extended education classes
  - iii. Approved volunteers
- c. Guests, including family members and friends, are not allowed on academic field trips (to minimize the risk exposure and liability to the University).

**E. Components of Emergency Response Plan**

The emergency response plan will provide guidelines to assist the trip coordinator and field trip participants if an emergency arises. The field trip coordinator should exercise his or her best judgment in order to minimize risk or injury to all participants if an unexpected situation arises that is not addressed in the response plan. The components of the emergency response plan should include:

- 1. a directive to immediately call 911 in all cases involving serious injury or death, multiple injuries, or extensive property damage—The first priority is to care for any injured individuals.
- 2. the names and locations of nearby hospitals or other facilities near the final destination that would be able to offer assistance.
- 3. a directive to remain with any injured student participants, as circumstances permit until relieved by a responsible individual, such as a family member or emergency medical personnel.
- 4. a directive to contact the College Dean as soon as is reasonably possible after the situation has stabilized. The contact number for the Dean should be included in the emergency response plan. The Dean will coordinate with Student Affairs to obtain emergency contact information from the department chair and/or faculty coordinator and ensure that necessary contacts are made.
- 5. the name of a field trip participant who will assume responsibility for carrying out the emergency response plan in the event the trip coordinator is incapacitated. This person should have access to the participants' emergency contact information.
- 6. a directive to call the Public Information Officer at 209-667-3997 if the situation attracts media attention. All media inquiries should be referred to the Public Information Officer.

**F. Transportation**

- 1. Transportation for Field Trips

- a. Transportation provided by the University (charter bus or rental van), should begin and end on campus. A field trip that begins and ends on campus is less likely to be questioned as a “field trip” by insurance policy administrators when reviewing a claim.
  - b. Transportation not provided by the University requires the participants to convene at the site off campus. Individual participants will be personally liable for transportation to/from/during events when the University does not provide for transportation. In these instances, faculty or staff should not be involved in planning or supervising the travel arrangements of individuals.
  - c. Transportation complies with the CSU Use of University and Private Vehicles Policy Guidelines and the CSU Student Travel Policy, where applicable. (Reference [Executive Order 1041](#))
2. Vehicle Accidents
- a. Record all pertinent information on the [Accident Identification Card, STD. Form 269](#), before leaving the scene of the accident. If another vehicle is involved, detach the appropriate portion of the form and give it to the driver of the other vehicle.
  - b. Immediately telephone the University Police Department at (209) 667-3114 and give a verbal report of the accident. If no answer, leave a message giving your name, department, telephone number where you can be reached, and a brief description of the accident.
  - c. Make no comment or statement regarding the accident to anyone except investigating police, CSUS or other state officials, or an identified representative of the State’s insurance adjuster.
  - d. All drivers involved in an accident while driving on official CSUS business must complete the Report [of Vehicle Accident, STD. Form 270](#), and submit it to the University Police Department, within 48 hours.
  - e. The appropriate administrator of every driver involved in an accident while driving on official CSUS business must investigate each accident promptly and thoroughly and prepare a [Review of State Driver Accident, Form STD 274](#) and submit it to the University Police Department, within five days.
  - f. Note: In the event a driver is involved in an accident and the other party is non-cooperative do not get involved in a confrontation. Obtain as much information as possible, i.e. vehicle license plate number, make of car, description of driver, etc. and report this information to local police and to the University Police Department.

**G. Laws, State Codes, Regulations, and Mandates**

The University complies with the following California State University Executive Orders pertaining to student travel: [Executive Order 1062 – Field Trip Policy and Procedures](#), [Executive Order 715 - CSU Risk Management Policy](#), [Executive Order 1041 – CSU Student Travel Policy](#), and [Executive Order 1051 – Use of Approved Waiver of Liability](#).

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Approved by the Academic Senate on 3/26/13

Approved by President Joseph F. Sheley on 5/30/13