Field Research and workplace safety legislation

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Director, Field Research Office
**Historical perspective**

- Pre-2004
- 2004 Alberta Government *Occupational Health and Safety Act*
- 2006 Report by Dr. Brian Jones
- 2008 *Field Research Activities Committee (FRAC)* formed
- 2009 *Field Research Office (FRO)* opened
- 2010 University of Alberta *Off-campus and Travel (OCAT)* policy.
  - Recognizes academic freedom of researchers.
  - Balances this with legal responsibilities – especially when students are being taken in the field
  - Tools to determine risk level
Role of Field Research Office (FRO)

• Advocate for field researchers to University administration
• Provide information on how to be compliant with the OHS act
• Facilitate training
• Provide safety equipment at low-cost

Contact Us:
Office: SAB 1-03   Phone: 780-492-8981
   Kim Schaerer, Program Coordinator
Website: http://www.fieldoffice.ualberta.ca
Basic Steps in Planning Field Research

• to work safely
• to comply with UAlberta policies and procedures
• to be well prepared
• to protect yourself
STEP 1: Where are you going?

- Review travel advisory of destination
- Affects what procedures you must follow and the approvals you may need
- Can affect your insurance coverage
- Need to use the Government of Canada’s Country Travel Advice and Advisories web page

http://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories
Chile - Exercise normal security precautions

There is no nationwide advisory in effect for Chile. Exercise normal security precautions.
Advisories

PERU - Exercise a high degree of caution
There is no travel advisory in effect for Peru. However, you should exercise a high degree of caution due to potential social conflicts and theft that occur, even outside the security...

Regional Advisory
General advice for Canada advises against non-essential travel to the following areas:
- Areas of interest: Ashik, San Pedro, and Chinchero provinces. In the Ashik province, the government has increased security measures in the province of Chinchero. In the San Pedro province, the government has increased security measures in the province of Chinchero.

Regional Advisory for the border area with Colombia
General advice for Canada advises against non-essential travel to areas along the Peru-Colombia border due to drug trafficking and occasional mountain-related incidents.

Regional Advisory for the border area with Ecuador
General advice for Canada advises against non-essential travel to the Peru-Ecuador border area, especially in the Chocó and Carchi provinces, as there have been reports of security threats. Visitors to the area should be aware of official entry points only.
STEP 2: Who is going?

- Undergraduate students
- Graduate students
- Volunteers

These categories of participants require certain planning steps to be taken, and affect level of risk.
STEP 3: What activities will take place?

• Needed for your Field Activity Plan
• Identify training that is required
  o driving
  o working in remote locations
  o climbing or glacier travel
  o chainsaw use
  o ATV
  o snowmobile
  o and more
STEP 4: Determine the Risk level

Review relevant UAlberta policy (OCAT)

- Off-Campus Activity and Travel Policy

easier way to look at the Policy and determine your risk:
http://www.offcampusactivity.ualberta.ca
Off-Campus Activity and Travel

The University Guide to Off-Campus Activity and Travel

The University of Alberta strongly believes in the benefits of a rational and international approach to learning, research, collaboration, and professional development. Off-campus activities and travel allow students to broaden their experiences and expand and share their knowledge, while encouraging innovation and collaboration.

As with on-campus activities, off-campus activities and travel can incur some level of risk. The University is committed to supporting its travelers in planning and participating in safe and enjoyable travel experiences.

The purpose of these pages is to support planners of off-campus activities while helping ensure adherence to University policy—especially the Off-Campus Activity and Travel Policy.

Select the option below that best describes your off-campus activities and travel:

- For faculty, staff, and PDAs when students are not included
- For registered University student groups (you will sign in to BearsDen)

Questions?

Please view our Travel Policy Questions and Answers page.

For further questions about the policy, contact Murray Middleton of the Office of Insurance & Risk Assessment:
murray.middleton@ualberta.ca or 780.492.0386.
# OCAT website

Off-Campus Activity and Travel Policy  
Appendix B: Risk Assessment Matrix for Off-Campus Travel Involving Students

Instructions:  
- Review column 1 and determine the appropriate risk level based on the category of student traveling.  
- Review column 2 and determine the appropriate risk level based on the kind of activity being performed.  
- Review column 3 and determine the appropriate risk level based on where the travelers are going.  
- Assign a final risk level. This will be the highest risk level identified in any of the three columns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Level</th>
<th>1) Who is traveling?</th>
<th>2) What kind of activity are they doing?</th>
<th>3) Where are they going?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Graduate students engaged in research.</td>
<td>An activity that entails hazards or risk no greater than those encountered by participants in their everyday lives (e.g. meetings, conferences).</td>
<td>A location where Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada Travel Reports indicate &quot;exercise normal security precautions&quot;. Typically travel within Canada is low risk. However, possible risks such as natural disasters and public health issues should be taken into consideration in determining whether the risk level should increase.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Undergraduate students. Graduate students not engaged in research.</td>
<td>Activities that entail a higher level of risk than individuals would encounter in their daily lives, but those risks are easily mitigated (e.g. most field research activities, off-road vehicle use, sharps use)</td>
<td>A location where Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada Travel Reports indicate &quot;exercise high degree of caution&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Activities that have the potential to expose participants to hazards that are significantly greater than those likely to be encountered in their everyday lives but which can be minimized through planning, training, standard operating procedures, etc. (e.g. direct work with dangerous wildlife, travel or work in extremely isolated locations)</td>
<td></td>
<td>A location where Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada Travel Reports include a Travel Warning that indicates &quot;avoid non-essential travel&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme</td>
<td>An activity for which there is substantial risk to participants, which strategic planning cannot effectively minimize with any reasonable probability (e.g. activities that result in a high probability of an incident that could result in serious injury or death)</td>
<td></td>
<td>A location where Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada Travel Reports include a Travel Warning that indicates &quot;avoid all travel&quot;.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STEP 5: Complete Field Activity Plan (FAP)

Best Practice:
• Always complete a Field Activities Plan
• Assists you to comply with Occupational Health & Safety laws

You MUST complete a FAP if:
• Your activities are deemed high or extreme risk and you are taking students
**STEP 5: Complete Field Activity Plan (FAP)**

- FRO can assist with completing the FAP
- FRO does NOT approve the FAP
- More sample FAPs will be added to the [FRO website](#) in the near future

**Approvals based on risk level**

- **Low (none)**
- **Medium (Supervisor/Chair)**
- **High (Supervisor/Dean)**
- **Extreme (DeanProvost)**
STEP 5: Complete Field activity Plan

Completing a Field Activity Plan involves:
• Identifying specific research location and team
• Determining their qualifications
• Determining safety and communication equipment needed
• Lodging needs
• Conduct hazard assessment, identify mitigation controls, use [Hazard Assessment and Control Tool](#)
Field Activities Plan forms available through FRO website
Field Activities Plan – sample
Canoe Reach, May 2015
Hazard Assessment and Control Tool

This tool can be used to help you prepare your Hazard Assessment and Control Brief. For many different commonly-encountered field work hazards we provide examples of appropriate control measures. Just click on the "hazard" links under the appropriate sub-heading and this will generate information on control measures and further detailed information. From here, you can select the links for specific hazards relevant to you and paste this into a text document. You should always customize/multiply the hazard control information according to your particular field location(s) and activities and consider the probability and severity of the identified hazards.

### Remote Location/Weather

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biological</th>
<th>Chemical</th>
<th>Equipment</th>
<th>Physical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hazards, potential, equipment, etc.</td>
<td>Chemicals</td>
<td>Air Travel</td>
<td>Avalanche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microorganisms</td>
<td>Area</td>
<td>Backcountry/wilderness conditions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazards</td>
<td>Chemicals</td>
<td>Emergency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazards</td>
<td>Chemicals</td>
<td>Explosives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Electrocution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife Encounters</td>
<td>Off-road vehicles</td>
<td>Exposure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-road vehicles</td>
<td>On-road vehicles</td>
<td>Forest Fire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scuba Diving</td>
<td>Scuba Diving</td>
<td>Garcia Travel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects (e.g., bleeding, injury, burns, cuts, swelling, etc.)</td>
<td>Hazardous sites - exploration sites, trenches, open pits, unshielded facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Field Research

- Hazards, potential, equipment, etc.
- Chemicals
- Air Travel
- Avalanche
- Backcountry/wilderness conditions
- Emergency
- Explosives
- Safety
- Electrocution
- Off-road vehicles
- Exposure
- On-road vehicles
- Forest Fire
- Scuba Diving
- Garcia Travel
- Exploration sites - trenches, open pits, unshielded facilities
- Hazardsites - exploration sites, trenches, open pits, unshielded facilities
Working Alone

This tool can be used to help you prepare your Hazard Assessment and Control Brief. For many different commonly-encountered field work hazards we provide examples of appropriate control measures. Just select the test for specific hazards relevant to you and paste this into a test document. You should always customize/modify the hazard control information according to your particular field location(s) and activities and consider the probability and severity of the identified hazards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hazard Category</th>
<th>Hazard Sub-Category</th>
<th>Hazard</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Working Alone</td>
<td>It’s a getting test</td>
<td>Worldwide</td>
<td>Awareness of working alone procedures, have a communication plan</td>
<td>All participants will be trained in working alone procedures, including all hazards that may be encountered, appropriate communication methods and check in procedures and emergency procedures. All participants will wear visibility vests or carry them in an easily accessible location, such as a field back pack, whenever they are working alone. No swimming allowed when someone is alone. See OES Working Alone Protocol and template.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Register field research with Campus Security office under their travel abroad emergency support program. See Protection Services Travel Abroad Emergency Support Program.
Step 6: Training and equipment

- Training should be arranged and taken ASAP
- Check FRO website for the training we arrange
- Call FRO if you do not see what you need
- Defensive Driving now online
- Contact Fleet Safety Officer- Kenji Kinoshita (cell# 780.405.5201) for driver evaluations and to arrange ATV training – also see
Step 6: Training and equipment
FRO organizes courses, provides info on others:
- First aid, firearms, snowmobile, ATV, etc.
- Takes requests for needed courses
- Some offered by the UA
- Often funding available
Step 6: Training and equipment

Upcoming training in 2016

• February 15-16 – Standard First Aid
• February 17-19 – Wilderness First Aid
• March 9-11 – Chainsaw Course
• April 26 – Shotgun Users Course
• April 27-29 – Chainsaw Course
• May 2 – Trailering Workshop
• Further courses can be scheduled – please contact fieldoff@ualberta.ca for information.
Step 6: Training and equipment

• Satellite phones: $30/week, plus call cost
• inReach communicators: $15/week
• Emergency first aid kits: $5/week
• AEDs (automated defibrillator): free
• Bear spray sharing program: free
• RESERVE EARLY, DEMAND IS HIGH
Step 7: Daily Field Safety Log Book

- Obtain from FRO prior to fieldwork
- Log your daily safety meetings
- Record changing daily hazards
Step 8: While in the field

- Know your responsibilities
- See UAlberta EHS “Appendix B” Environmental Health and Safety Responsibilities (most recent approval May 28, 2014)
- Complete regular check-ins
- Fill in Daily Safety Log Books – have all participate in safety discussions
- Report incidents (EHS director Rob Munro will follow)
- Record unanticipated hazards so that next years Field Activity Plan can be improved
Step 8: While in the field

• Please remember safety comes first!
• The University of Alberta (Chief Environment, Health & Safety Officer) has the ability to stop work where there is an immediate and significant health and safety risk.
• See Appendix A of the EHS Policy
Step 9: When you get home

- Debrief team about successes and problems of field practices
- Return equipment
- Properly repair and store equipment
- Store Daily Field Safety Log Book
  - 10 years after fieldwork
Working with other programs

- Some researchers do field research with other organizations
- If they have established safety procedures then simply refer to these in your FAP
- e.g. US Antarctic Program, Antarctica New Zealand, CERN ....
- In other countries, need to follow legal requirements. Use judgement if safety standards are lower.
Field Equipment Storage

All University of Alberta researchers are allowed to store their field equipment at the South Campus Equipment Storage facility. This is the fenced area, located immediately southeast of the Feed Mill (F-45). This is an outdoor storage lot. See aerial image of South Campus layout below.

Blue circled area: Field Equipment Storage Area
Yellow circled area: Flammable Storage Cages

This space belongs to Facilities and Operations, Department of Operations and Maintenance; however, this is an unsupervised storage area, and all who use it do so at their own risk. Researchers must make every effort to secure and identify their property when storing it on the South Campus site.

Please note that dangerous and/or flammable goods, including fuel and propane, may not be stored on the blue circled storage yard. You are able to store your flammables in cages to the south end of the Butler building (marked in yellow on the above map). To obtain access to these cages, please contact Vehicle Pool.

Access
A key may be obtained from the Vehicle Pool Building on South Campus, and must be requested in person. Researchers may not use their own padlock on the gate as this is shared space.
Join our email distribution list to receive notices of training scheduled, new equipment to borrow, change to policies, etc.

If you signed up to attend this session, you will be automatically added to the list.

Tell others to email fieldoff@ualberta.ca to be added.
Questions?

Please contact the Field Research Office at (780) 492-8981

fieldoff@ualberta.ca

http://www.fieldoffice.ualberta.ca