

How to Mitigate Risk for Programs in Travel Warning Countries: Mexico A Case Study

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Presenters



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Objectives

- ✓ Address why a university may want to engage in mobility to a Travel Warning country
- ✓ Strategies for mitigating risk for students and the university
- ✓ Considerations for different university offices
- ✓ Examples of how to conduct a site assessment



Agenda



Mexico Case Study

- ✓ Why engage in a country with a Travel Warning
- ✓ Risk Mitigation Strategies
- ✓ Models for site assessments

Round table discussions

Report back to large group

Mexico Case Study

Why would a university want to engage in setting up Study Abroad Programs in a Travel Warning country?

Why would a university want to engage in programs in Mexico specifically?



Mexico Case Study

Trade
Shared Border
Shared Culture
Business Ties
Energy
Natural Resources
Language
History
Architecture

Strong Ties
NAFTA
Great Universities
Research
Collaborations
Low Cost Programs
Career Preparation
Networking
Opportunities



Why Mexico?

Whatever your goals, studying abroad in Mexico can help you achieve them.



Learn or improve your Spanish



Earn credit toward your degree



Expand your professional network



Prepare for an exciting career



Experience rich culture and history

Risk Mitigation



In pairs, discuss possible risk factors and how you would assess the risk in a particular location (city and university provider).

Risk Considerations

- ✓ Location
- ✓ Access to healthcare
- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Housing
- ✓ Student support
- ✓ Local university health and security protocols
- ✓ US university — insurance, evacuation plans, medical, security



What About Safety?

UT Austin Site Clearance:

UT Austin International Oversight Committee (IOC) has completed an extensive review of several study abroad partners and feels that they provide a safe environment for UT Austin students.

U.S. State Department has indicated that there are no advisories regarding specific concerns endemic to these areas.

MEXICO CITY

- ◆ ITESM – Ciudad de Mexico Campus
- ◆ UNAM
- ◆ ITAM
- ◆ CIESAS

QUERETARO

- ◆ ITESM- Queretaro Campus

MERIDA

- ◆ Universidad Autónoma de Yucatan (organized by IFSA Butler)

UTSA Location Clearance

UTSA IOC reviews individual travel requests from faculty leading programs to Mexico. Requests require: communication plan; hospital/clinic information; health/safety briefing from International SOS; transportation details.

Mexico City

- ❖ ITAM & ITESM

Guadalajara

- ❖ ITESM
- ❖ CIESAS
- ❖ Universidad de Guadalajara

Puebla

- ❖ Universidad de las Americas Puebla

Oaxaca

- ❖ Uni. Autónoma Benito Juárez de Oaxaca
- ❖ CIESAS
- ❖ Instituto Cultural Oaxaca

Site Assessment



1. Research
2. Questionnaire or Survey of on-site university or provider
3. In-person site visit
4. University board or committee review and make decision
5. On-going review of location

Small Group Discussions

You are the Senior International Officer (SIO) on your campus. Your institution is considering setting up a program in a travel warning/advisory country (e.g. Mexico, Colombia, etc.). What factors do you consider? How do you make a case to key offices on your campus?

1. Legal Affairs Office
2. Risk Officer
3. Academic Dean
4. Student Affairs Dean



Small Group Discussions

Questions to consider as you build your case:

1. What health and safety factors should be considered when proposing to open a program in this country?
2. What networks and resources can you draw upon to assist with your assessment?
3. What factors would you assess to determine locations in this country to send students or not send students?
4. Is program type a factor (e.g. faculty-led vs. exchange vs. third-party provider)?
5. What is your institution's risk tolerance? How do you effectively address a low risk tolerance?

Large Group Discussions

Small Group Reports

1. Legal Affairs Office
2. Risk Officer
3. Academic Dean
4. Student Affairs Dean



Large Group Discussion

How can this case study in Mexico apply to other countries with a State Department Travel Warning (e.g. Colombia) or countries with significant security concerns (e.g. Brazil) or strained diplomatic ties to the U.S. (e.g. Cuba)?



Recap

- ✓ Why a university may want to engage in mobility to a Travel Warning country
- ✓ Strategies for mitigating risk for students and the university
- ✓ Considerations for different university offices
- ✓ Examples of how to conduct a site assessment



Future Application

What can you apply to your home institution?

