



SUBJECT: FIELD WORK SAFETY

1. Purpose

The University recognizes its obligations to take all reasonable precautions to protect the safety of its employees, students, and visitors while they are conducting work on behalf of the University.

The conduct of every person working on University projects is expected to be such that it does not contribute to the occurrence of accidents or the creation of hazards, which may endanger that individual or another person.

2. Scope

All authorized persons undertaking fieldwork or attending field schools must operate within the various legal requirements and adopt the safety guidelines established by the British Columbia & Yukon Chamber of Mines "Safety Manual" which will be considered the University standards. This policy applies to fieldwork and field schools in continental North America. International travel shall be covered under the International Travel Policy.

3. Authority

The Risk & Safety Manager is responsible to the Director, Purchasing, Contract & Risk Management for the administration of this policy and the development of procedures.

4. Safety & Legal Standards

The responsibility for ensuring that these standards are applied, rests with all persons who participate in teaching and research activities in the field. The University expects those persons who directly supervise and carry out teaching and research in the field to inform the participants of the following standards:

- i) state of health and fitness of all participants;
- ii) risks associated with the work performed and the potential for contact with chemical, physical, biological, and radioactive agents;
- iii) procedures for responding to accidents involving injuries, damage to property and equipment, and spill, leaks or releases of hazardous materials;
- iv) availability of first aid care and supplies, and access to emergency medical treatment;
- v) environmental impact of the work performed;
- vi) local government legal requirements related to safety; and
- vii) provision of training for all participants in fieldwork regarding the risks associated with such work, and the applicable safety measures.

4.1 Definitions

4.1.1 Field Work

Fieldwork is any work, study or research authorized by the University and conducted by staff, post-graduate students and under-graduate students at a site other than the Prince George campus or regional campuses.

Participants must register with Workers' Compensation Board in the jurisdiction where the activities are to take place. The University's Payroll Department will assist with the registration process upon receipt of written notification by the research participants.

4.1.2 Remote Fieldwork

Remote fieldwork involves:

- i) working near a frequently traveled road that is more than 5 km from a town, farmhouse or other facility with telephone or radio communications (even if personal communications equipment is available); and
- ii) working off-road in areas with infrequent traffic or hills, dense timber or other topographic features that would make it difficult to summon help, medical and other emergency support, which would be an hour or more away without a vehicle. It should be noted that river, inland waterway, estuarine and oceanic work sites are considered remote fieldwork sites.

4.1.3 Supervisor

A supervisor in relation to field activities is the person who has the authority to influence or direct the actions of students or employees involved in the activity.

The person authorized by the Program Chair or Supervisor to lead the field trip activities is responsible for the health and safety of all persons participating in the duration of the field trip.

All persons participating in a field trip activities have a responsibility to work safely, take reasonable care to protect their own health and safety and that of their fellow workers and students.

4.1.4 Legal Considerations

Program Chairs and Supervisors of field trip activities should be aware of their responsibilities under the Workers' Compensation Act and Regulations and the University's policies, procedures and guidelines. All involved in field trip activities should understand:

- i) University Occupational Health & Safety policy and associated guidelines;
- ii) relevant statutory requirements; and

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- iii) other legal considerations including licensing requirements and applications for relevant permits which have to be made and received.

4.1.5 Insurance Considerations

The following is a brief outline of the types of insurance that should be considered when undertaking field activities. Included is a description of the various policies that the University maintains, as well as additional coverage that is available through separate placement. Any specific questions related to insurance requirements should be directed to:

Director, Purchasing Contract and Risk Management
(local 5502)

5. Procedures

5.1 Property Insurance - University Owned

Coverage is automatic on all University owned property funded by the Ministry of Advanced Education, in Canada or the U.S., including property that is in transit. This coverage is subject to a deductible of \$3,000 on each loss.

Coverage is included for the following:

- employees' property when used for instructional, research or employment purposes (limit of \$3,000 per employee);
- cost to restore valuable papers and records or to reproduce media and data;
- damage or destruction by civil authority during conflagration;
- costs incurred to comply with Municipal bylaws;
- debris removal of destroyed property; and
- Accountants' and Consultants' fees when necessitated to adjust a loss.

6. Miscellaneous and Non-Owned Property Insurance

6.1 Additional insurance coverage can be obtained for the following:

- non-owned real and personal property for which the insured is liable or has received instructions to insure;
- owned property funded by sources other than the Ministry of Advanced Education;
- unknown, unreported miscellaneous property which has been loaned, leased or rented for less than 30 days with a sub-limit of \$10,000; and
- employee tools and personal effects (max \$2,000).

6.2 Coverage must be requested through the Director of Purchasing, Contract and Risk Management within 60 days of acquisition to ensure continuous coverage.

6.3 Coverage extends to Canada and U.S. coastal and inland waters, including property while in transit. Other exclusions also exist and should be discussed with the Director of Purchasing, Contract and Risk Management.

6.4 Deductibles are \$2,500 in most cases.

7. Comprehensive General Liability

Protects the University against the liability imposed at law or assumed under contract for damages to third parties, resulting in personal injury or property damage caused by the University's negligence. This program covers a broad range of additional interests including: instructors, faculty, employees, volunteer workers, students, third parties and contractors who supply services that are part of a program.

7.1 Exclusions include:

- personal injury sustained by any person arising out of and in the course of their employment by the University who is included under the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act;
- motor Vehicles required to be covered by the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia;
- personal injury arising out of the performance of criminal or illegal acts; and
- personal injury or property damage arising out of pollution or contamination of the environment.

8. Vehicle Insurance - University Owned

Automobiles or other motorized vehicles used for fieldwork activities require special care to be taken to comply with local laws and regulations. For vehicles registered in British Columbia, it is mandatory for the vehicle to be insured by the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia.

If the vehicle is owned or leased by the University, the minimum insurance coverage required is \$1,000,000 limit per loss except \$10,000,000 limit for school bus type vehicles. If an accident were to occur, it is possible that the individual's driving record could be affected. It must be noted that the University cannot protect an individual's driving record.

9. Vehicle Insurance - Non-University Owned

For non-University owned vehicles it is necessary for the owner to have insurance. The University does have Special Excess Third Party Liability coverage which:

- provides excess liability for the difference between the coverage purchased by the vehicle owner and one million dollars (\$1,000,000);
- coverage applies to officers, employees, and volunteers operating their vehicle on behalf of the University; and
- it must be noted that the university cannot cover the base insurance for employees' and volunteers' vehicles or the individual's safe driving record.

10. Accident Insurance for Students, Volunteers and Employees

10.1 Students

10.1.1 The University is covered for liability resulting from negligence of employees or students causing harm to others in the performance of instruction and research.

10.1.2 The University does not provide Student Accident Insurance. Some coverages apply to students on practicums, or as employees to the University. Questions related to accident insurance should be directed the Director of Purchasing, Contract and Risk Management.

10.2 Volunteers

The University has basic Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance, Medical Expense Reimbursement, Wage Indemnity, etc., for volunteers.

10.3 Employees

Coverage is provided by the University to all employees. For details, contact the Human Resources Department - Benefits Administrator.

10.4 Other

Certain research situations require special insurance arrangements. If other issues arise outside of the following, please contact the Director, Purchasing, Contract and Risk Management (Local 5502):

- property insurance outside Canada and the United States will require special coverage for equipment being used or transported internationally;
- any aircraft used must have separate coverage provided by the owner; and
- watercraft over 40 feet requires special coverage if owned by the University, or provided by the owner; and
- insurance policies generally have exclusions in some form regarding war risks, political insurrections, terrorism etc., which require special policy placements.

11. Research Contracts

11.1 The Purchasing, Contract & Risk Management Department will review all Research Contracts to ensure that the appropriate insurance coverage is in place.

11.2 Benefits Considerations

Included is a description of the various policies that the University maintains. For practical reasons, these descriptions are necessarily general, and any specific questions should be directed to:

Benefits Administrator
Human Resources
(local 5533)

12. Employees Going on Paid Leave

12.1 Coverage under all University benefit plans in which the member is enrolled (MSP, Extended Health Care, Dental, Life Insurance, Accidental Death and Dismemberment, Vision Care, Pension) is continued automatically for the duration of the paid leave.

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- 12.2 The University continues to pay its share of cost for all benefit plans in which the member is enrolled for the duration of the paid leave.
 - 12.3 The employee's contributions for benefit coverage will automatically be deducted by Payroll on a semi-monthly basis for duration of the paid leave.

13. Employees Going on Unpaid Leave

- 13.1 The University does not continue its normal contribution for any of the benefit plans in which the member is a participant during the period of the leave.
- 13.2 The employee may elect which benefit plan coverage he/she wishes to continue and/or suspend during the period of the leave by paying both the University's and the employee's contributions towards the cost of the elected benefit plan coverage while on leave:

- Extended Health
- Vision Care
- Accidental Death and Dismemberment
- B.C. Medical Service Plan
- Long Term Disability
- Life Insurance
- Dental

- 13.3 British Columbia Workers' Compensation

Any person considered to be in an employment relationship with the University is covered under Workers' Compensation Act and is eligible for benefits. For further information regarding eligibility for benefits, contact: Risk & Safety Manager (local 5535)

14. Field Trip Approval and Notification

- 14.1 University Employees
 - 14.1.1 Employees must submit to their Supervisor or Program Chair a proposed itinerary for the fieldwork, along with a Field Work Safety Checklist and any other relevant information requested for approval.
 - 14.1.2 Upon approval of the trip, the Program Chair will nominate a leader who will be responsible for making decisions in the field.
 - 14.1.3 The Program Chair may formally delegate responsibility for approval of a detailed itinerary, or for variation of an itinerary, to a member of the staff having significant experience in the proposed field operations.

- 14.2 Post-Graduate Students

Prior to venturing into the field, all fieldwork must be appropriately documented and permission received from the student's supervisor, and the Program Chair should be

notified. A complete itinerary must be submitted along with a Field Work Safety Checklist. The Program Chair should give final approval for the field trip.

14.3 Honours and Undergraduate Students

Honours and undergraduate students should be accompanied by an employee of the University while conducting field work, and must be accompanied in remote locations. The supervisor of the honours student or the class/course must prepare the appropriate documentation including a complete itinerary and Field Work Safety Checklist. The Program Chair should give final approval for the field trip.

15. Administration Procedures for Fieldwork Operations

15.1 Licensing of Vehicle Operators

15.1.1 Motor Vehicles

All drivers of vehicles must have a current vehicle license that covers the automobile being used for the field operation.

15.1.2 Boats & Vessels

All water vehicles that are mechanically propelled and have a motor larger than 9.9 HP and are less than 45 feet in length must have a license issued by Canada Customs. Vessels 45 feet in length or larger must be registered with Transport Canada.

15.1.3 Aircraft

All pilots of aircraft must have an appropriate Canadian Pilot's License with a current medical certificate and comply with all applicable restrictions and regulations.

15.2 Hazardous Materials

Hazardous Materials must be properly identified, labeled, packaged, handled and stored at the fieldwork site and during transport in accordance with the applicable regulations. Material Safety Data Sheets and other appropriate safety documentation must accompany these materials into the field and during transport. Any specific questions should be directed to:

Risk & Safety Manager (local 5535)

15.3 First Aid

Consideration must be given to the appropriate level of first aid service and equipment. Certified personnel, equipment and supplies in accordance with the Occupational First Aid Regulations must be provided. Any specific questions (including arrangements for first aid training) should be directed to: Risk & Safety Manager (local 5535)

Equipment is available through the UNBC Risk & Safety Office for fieldwork on a sign out basis at the Prince George campus.

15.4 Accident Procedures

- 15.4.1 Prior to a field trip, the next of kin for all participants must be recorded. This data shall be maintained on a Field Work Critical Data form for each participant and maintained with the other relevant Field Work information by the Program Chair or designate. The Field Work Critical Data form.
- 15.4.2 In the event of an accident, the University will contact the next of kin. UNBC Security at the Prince George campus is to be notified in accordance with emergency communications established for personnel off campus. Upon returning to the University, reports must be completed and submitted in accordance with the University's Incident/Accident Reporting Policy & Procedures. Alternatively, reports may be completed and faxed to the UNBC Risk Management & Safety Office to ensure they are received within the time line for reporting as established by the Worker's Compensation Board.

16. Use of Vehicles

An employee may drive a University vehicle with permission from the Program Chair or Supervisor if the employee has the appropriate class of license.