

# URGENT INFORMATION – PLEASE READ NOW!

October , 2009

Dear Parent of Travel Course Student:

The focus of this letter provides information on the following topics: •Student/faculty safety; •Department of State travel warnings; •May Term emergency information web site; •Travel insurance. We, the faculty and administration, believe that students engaged in an excellent liberal arts education benefit from a global classroom experience by preparing them for “responsible citizenship and leadership in a democratic society and a global community”—a central objective of our May Term philosophy and in the University’s mission statement. We also believe that we have an obligation to proactively educate our students.

## **Student / Faculty Safety**

IWU holds matters of student/faculty/staff safety to be of paramount priority. This primary concern was evidenced during the Gulf War, when every student and faculty leader participating in short term travel courses was returned home as a precautionary measure. It is University policy that every international trip must have a host institution or multiple travel course leaders and/or adult assistants. After the events of September 11, 2001, the University further developed its travel policy stating, “...faculty and students will not be permitted to travel on official University business...to any country where a Travel Warning has been issued by the Department of State and said Warning is in effect on their date of intended departure.” Should an emergency occur, students and parents will be immediately informed of itinerary changes as soon as details are available. Information will also be posted on the May Term “Emergency Information” website: <http://www2.iwu.edu/melloncenter/mayterm/index.shtml>. You can also check on the status of travel warnings around the world at: <http://travel.state.gov/travel/wwcl.html>. In the event of an individual student/faculty emergency the course leader or assistant will immediately contact the University. Family members will be notified of the situation as soon as possible.

***With this in mind, Illinois Wesleyan’s May Term Office strongly suggests that each student traveling be sure that at least one parent or legal guardian has a valid passport at the time of departure.***

## **Last minute cancellations can be costly**

We cannot control unexpected events—a call to jury duty, a sudden illness or death in the family, a strike or the bankruptcy of an airline, etc. However, there are protective steps that can be taken. IWU does not mandate additional travel insurance; rather our goal is to provide information to you so that you may make an informed decision. The choice is yours to make. Many homeowners’ policies provide coverage while traveling abroad. Illinois Wesleyan strongly suggests to May Term travel participants (as it has for many years) that you carefully research and discuss the option of acquiring travel insurance.

## **How to locate travel insurance that fits your needs**

The travel agencies with whom IWU regularly works offer information from Travel Guard International, Travelex, and CSA Travel Protection. Information is available at their web sites: [www.travelGuard.com](http://www.travelGuard.com); [www.travelexinsurance.com](http://www.travelexinsurance.com); and [www.travelinsure.com](http://www.travelinsure.com). You may wish to investigate other companies on your own. **The May Term Office cannot respond to questions concerning specific insurance coverage.** Please call the insurance providers with all questions regarding travel insurance.

If you should decide to purchase travel insurance, please: a) carefully compare the coverage offered by each company, b) adhere to the payment schedule—Companies may require immediate payment dates in order to receive complete (pre-existing conditions) coverage; c) provide the May Term Office with the travel insurance contact information.

We hope you have found this information of value.

Zahia Drici  
Associate Dean of Curriculum