MEMORANDUM

Date: November 14, 2019

To: Deans’ Council, Chairs and Directors

From: Carolyn Russell, Director Student Recruitment and Global Engagement
        Ben McAllister, Manager Risk, Insurance & Continuity Planning

Subject: Government of Canada Travel Advisory – Hong Kong

The recent geopolitical and civil unrest in Hong Kong has resulted in the Office of Global Engagement and the Office of Risk Management receiving inquiries from the university community regarding institutional policy and expectations related to travel to Hong Kong. The information below has been prepared in an effort to communicate a consistent message to our community regarding university policy and recommendations regarding travel to Hong Kong.

Academic Programming in Hong Kong

We’re aware that given the geopolitical unrest in Hong Kong that some universities in the region are intending to close for the semester and that others may be considering alternate teaching arrangements. We recommend that departments and schools reach out to any students currently attending a university in Hong Kong (e.g., as part of an exchange) to determine if their institution is impacted. Where academic programming has been compromised, please work with your student on determining an appropriate accommodation plan.

Government of Canada Travel Advisory – Hong Kong

On October 2, 2019 the Government of Canada updated the travel advisory for China to include the following additions:

“Risk level(s) – exercise a high degree of caution in Hong Kong due to ongoing large-scale demonstrations”.

This addition to the travel advisory did not result in an increase to the overall risk level for Hong Kong, which remains unchanged at a risk level 2 - Exercise a high degree of caution. As per the Off-Campus Activity Risk Management Policy (AD2210), there is no restriction on UVic students, staff or faculty traveling to a level 1 or 2 country.

The Office of Global Engagement Office has also received information from colleagues at other Canadian post-secondary institutions that they have either advised students to avoid travel to Hong Kong at this time or formally cancelled/suspended travel and programs in Hong Kong. We are not recommending cancellation or suspension of programs at this time. However, given the
current situation in Hong Kong we are recommending travelers take additional precautions in advance of travel and consider the following in planning travel.

**Advice in Advance of Travel:**


If you decide to travel to Hong Kong:

- Follow the travel safety preparation steps outlined on the [Travel Safety website](https://travel.gc.ca/destinations/hong-kong).
- Review the [International SOS members page](https://travel.gc.ca/destinations/hong-kong) to learn about the destination.
- Enrol in [International SOS](https://travel.gc.ca/destinations/hong-kong) to receive travel alerts and contact International SOS in advance of travel to speak with a security expert who can provide you up-to-date information regarding conditions country. Information on how to enrol and contact International SOS can be found on the [International website](https://travel.gc.ca/destinations/hong-kong).
- While travelling, you can contact International SOS for updates on current conditions or should you require assistance in an emergency situation.
- Enrol in the [Registry of Canadians Abroad](https://travel.gc.ca/destinations/hong-kong) to receive alerts from the Government of Canada and make it easier to locate you in an emergency.
- Follow the Canadian Embassy in Beijing and/or Consulate General of Canada, Hong Kong on social media.
- Contact the Office of Global Engagement Office at [world@uvic.ca](mailto:world@uvic.ca) to complete a pre-departure orientation.

For your students, faculty, and staff already in Hong Kong on UVic sanctioned programs and activities we strongly encourage you to recommend that they (if this hasn’t already occurred):

- Enrol in International SOS to receive travel alerts. Information on how to enrol in International SOS can be found on the [International website](https://travel.gc.ca/destinations/hong-kong).
- While travelling, you can contact International SOS for updates on current conditions or should you require assistance in an emergency situation. Enrol in the [Registry of Canadians Abroad](https://travel.gc.ca/destinations/hong-kong) to receive alerts from the Government of Canada and make it easier to locate you in an emergency.
- Follow the Canadian Embassy in Beijing and/or Consulate General of Canada, Hong Kong on social media.
- Stay alert and trust your instincts – it is always good to be alert and aware of what is going on around you. If you are in a busy market or square, make sure you are aware of the people and what is going on around you. If you feel uneasy or are not sure about something get out and away from the place. Trust your instincts and if you are not happy about something, move to an area where you feel more comfortable.
- Be well informed - as a foreigner in the country you are visiting, ensure that your behaviour falls within the expected cultural norms of that country and that you are aware of changing legal requirements that may impact acceptable/unacceptable behaviours.
- Be cautious on social networking sites – be careful how much personal information you provide on social networking sites, including those you may normally use at home, while in a
foreign country. The more information you post, the easier it may be for someone to use the information inappropriately.

Please distribute this memo to your faculty members as appropriate.

**Contact Information:**

If there are any questions, please contact Carolyn Russell, Global Engagement, at carolynr@uvic.ca or Ben McAllister, Manager Risk, Insurance & Continuity Planning at bmcallis@uvic.ca

Individual travelers (staff or faculty) or those responsible for sending students abroad who have questions should contact the Office of Global Engagement at world@uvic.ca