

DURING COVID-19: FIELD TRIPS AND SITE VISITS (2021-2022)

During this global health crisis, our maintaining safety as we go out in the field requires even more care and attention. Use this guide to help consider the ethics, risks, and opportunities of heading off-campus for class. Please also refer to the original Site Visits guide for additional detail.

DO NO HARM; MINIMIZE RISKS

We want to do no harm and minimize risks in the places we visit.

Protecting the Community

A top priority in planning is ensuring the safety and well-being of community members and the general public, who may be more vulnerable than students. Is it possible to stay at a safe distance? What can you do to minimize contact between yourself and others? COVID-19 may be impacting the community you are visiting differently than your own. While you may be vaccinated and low-risk, that may not be true for others. Educate yourself about the structural inequalities and context.

Do You Need to Go?

Reflect on the purpose of your field work. There is a value in seeing a place first-hand and interacting with people. Are there suitable alternatives that are lower risk?

Flexibility and Accommodation

At this time, flexibility for students is recommended, particularly to accommodate students who are ill or quarantined. Field trips and travel may only be required with the permission of your director.

Communicate Clearly

Communicate the requirements and expectations to all involved in advance, including students, community partners, and others involved. Clarify the current guidelines, and specify if masking and distancing are expected.

REQUIRING FIELD TRIPS

We recommend flexibility around field trips and travel to accommodate students who may be ill, quarantined, or have concerns for personal health or safety. Field trips and travel may only be required for a course with the permission of the director.

INCLUDING THOSE WHO AREN'T HERE

Students who can't participate in field trips or site visits, due to health risks, isolation, or other factors, still need a way to get involved. Below are some suggestions to bringing them along in the experience.

Create a Video or Virtual Tour

Create a video tour of yourself visiting recommended sites, and encourage students to observe closely for important characteristics.

Utilize virtual platforms like [ArcGIS StoryMaps](#) and [Google Earth Tour Builder](#) to create an interactive tour that connects reading and other materials.

Pair Students Here and Away

Pair students who are able to go on a local field trip with those who cannot, and ask them to share investigation into the site.

APPROVAL FOR OVERNIGHT TRIPS

Group overnight travel must be approved by your chair and director prior to scheduling. Additional procedures are in place to promote safety.

FOLLOWING GUIDELINES

All WashU community members must follow the University and local guidelines for each municipality and/or site.

Check local public health requirements such as gathering size and travel warnings.

- [City of St. Louis Department of Health](#)
- [St. Louis County Information Center](#)
- [Missouri Health & Senior Services](#)

Note the University's Alert Level

Check [WashU Together](#). If the University moves to a Red Alert, cancel your trip.

Plan ahead to limit risk

- Whenever possible, plan field trips that meet outdoors in a location where social distancing is possible.
- Communicate expectations around masking and distancing with guests and partners in advance.

Consider additional protection, especially indoors.

- Follow University guidance for masking, and wear masks with people while indoors and in crowded places.
- Maintaining distance from other people.
- Regularly sanitize or wash your hands.
- Have all field trip participants complete and pass the COVID-19 self-screening.

Additional guidelines on [WashU Together](#).

All field trips must have travel time included during designated class time.

GET READY TO GO

Being fully prepared for a field trip will make everything run more smoothly.

Make a Plan and Share Widely

Make sure you have informed everyone of the plan including:

- Transportation from place to place
- What clothing you'll wear to be comfortably and respectfully dressed
- Schedules
- Sharing responsibilities with classmates
- Safety precautions
- Emergency plans and contacts
- Inclement weather plans
- Needed supplies including transit cards, identification, and recording tools

Sign Field Trip Waivers

Field trip waivers are still required for all off-campus trips, regardless of distance. See the end of this page for more information.

Bring Supplies

Be sure to bring along additional supplies such as masks and hand sanitizer.

Have a Record of Who's There

Keep accurate records about who participates in field trips for the purpose of contact tracing. Read more about campus contact tracing [here](#).

DURING COVID-19: FIELD TRIPS AND SITE VISITS

INTERACTING WITH PEOPLE

While you're out on site, you may encounter people going about their daily life. It is essential to reduce risk and do no harm to those you encounter.

Be Respectful of Others Preferences

If you are asked to comply with specific procedures by a community member beyond what you would not normally do, such as wearing a mask outdoors, be respectful of their tolerance for risk.

Be Ready to Set Boundaries

As you interact with people in public, such as on the sidewalk or in public, outdoor spaces, be prepared to ask for the necessary health boundaries. Practice saying "Could you stay six feet back from me please? I want to be sure to keep us both healthy." or "Would you mind putting on your mask?"

Remove Yourself as Needed

If you are in a situation that feels unsafe or unhealthy, exit immediately and get to somewhere that you feel more comfortable. Do not engage in confrontations about mask usage, distance, or other health precautions; simply leave if you feel that anyone's health or safety is at risk.

Have a Description

Decide as a group how you will talk about who you are, what you're doing, and what will happen as a result of your work. Be consistent in identifying yourselves and setting expectations.

Find more resources at insidesamfox.wustl.edu/facultystaff/engagement/

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Consultations

Contact the Office for Socially Engaged Practice or the Gephardt Institute for Civic & Community Engagement (gephardtinstitute.wustl.edu) for consultation about your particular class.

Other Blue Pages

- [Site Visits: In The Field](#). Going out in the world to see the site and location where you want to work is an essential part of understanding a project for a course. Use this guide to help consider the ethics, risks, and opportunities of heading off-campus for class.
- [Representing People: Photography & Visuals](#). Representation of people and places is powerful. The use of photography, drawings, and words communicates experiences, opinions, perspectives, and judgments about the people and places. Consider these guidelines for ethical representation.
- [Entering & Exiting Communities](#). This guide goes more in-depth on entering and exiting when working with a partner or a community. Think through the before, during, and after to create a safe and reciprocal experience for communities.

FIELD TRIP LIABILITY WAIVER

All students participating in off-campus activities for class must complete a Field Trip Liability Waiver. Check with your faculty member to ensure you've completed this form.

Field Trip Liability Waivers should be completed for every individual field trip, rather than as a blanket for St. Louis trips. This allows for more accurate tracking of who participated in trips.

All waivers must be returned to the **Registrar's Office** (crisbaldwin@wustl.edu), in addition to the following contacts:

- **Undergraduate courses:** Kat Vendetti (kat.vendetti@wustl.edu)
- **Graduate architecture courses:** Mandy Wortmann (a.wortmann@wustl.edu)
- **Graduate art courses:** Melissa Whitwam (whitwam@wustl.edu)

Download the templates:

- [Art Field Trip Liability Waiver](#)
- [Architecture Field Trip Liability Waiver](#)