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Chapter: Educational Program

Modification No. 001

Subject: **Field Trips**

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- I. Field trips are an important component of educational process. They can significantly enhance course content by providing experiential learning and information that is difficult to convey in a classroom setting. It is important to the educational mission of the College that field trips be planned in ways that maximize student learning and participation and minimize risk and disruption with other scheduled College activities.
- II. For the purposes of this policy, a field trip is defined as an educational off-campus excursion that is part of a credit-bearing or non-credit course and is indicated on the course syllabus. Field trips do not include, for instance, internships, study abroad, service learning assignments for individual students, on-campus activities, or trips organized by co-curricular groups.
- III. It is the policy of the Board of Trustees that students must be given prior notice that their class includes field trips and that participation is limited to students enrolled in Montgomery College as well as authorized faculty and staff.
- IV. Field trips are College sponsored events and, as such, all relevant College policies and procedures, state, and federal laws apply to trip participants. All participants are individually responsible for their personal conduct while on field trips.
- V. Individuals participating in field trips do so at their own risk. Participants who violate College policies and procedures while on the field trip may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.
- VI. The following limitations apply:
  - A. Field trips may not be scheduled when or where there are abnormal hazards to health or safety;
  - B. Field trips involving minors are subject to the provisions of the Protection of Minors policy;
  - C. Field trips outside the territorial United States of America may be conducted only with the approval of the President.
- VII. The President is authorized to establish procedures necessary to implement this policy.

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Board approval: January 24, 2018

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I. Definitions

- A. "Field Trip" means an educational off-campus excursion that is part of a credit-bearing or noncredit course and is indicated in the course notes and/or on the course syllabus. Field trips may be organized (i.e., specific time, place, and travel) or informal (i.e., specific place but flexible time or travel). Field trips do not include, for instance, internships, study abroad, service learning assignments for individual students, on-campus activities, or trips organized by co-curricular groups.
- B. "Field Trip Participants" means Montgomery College faculty, staff, and students enrolled in the course. Other Montgomery College faculty staff and students may participate with the permission of the trip director, but they do so at their own risk and also subject to the procedures below.
- C. "Students" means part-time or full-time students enrolled at Montgomery College.
- D. "Trip Director" means the College employee designated to be in charge of a field trip.

II. Field Trip Procedures

General Responsibilities

- 1. The trip director must take reasonable steps to ensure compliance with this and other college policy and procedures, including the submission of any necessary forms, while planning, preparing for, and conducting a field trip.
- 2. All participants are responsible for their conduct while on the field trip.
- 3. No alcoholic beverages shall be transported or consumed in any vehicle (private, rented, or leased) at any time or consumed during the course of the field trip.
- 4. No narcotics, illegal drugs, or other controlled substances may be in the possession of, or used by, any person engaged in the field trip absent a valid medical prescription.
- 5. Under extenuating circumstances, the College may decide that it is not in the student's or the College's best interest for the student to participate in a field trip. Under those circumstances, the student will be given an opportunity to complete an alternative activity.

A. Instructor Responsibilities

Instructors wishing to conduct a field trip must follow these steps:

1. Obtain Approval from the Appropriate Dean

Typically, all field trips that are a course requirement and/or will require the use of departmental funds must be approved by the appropriate instructional dean prior to the start of the term in which the field trip is scheduled. Field trips which are not part of a course requirement must be approved by the appropriate instructional dean at least five (5) working days prior to the field trip. Exceptions will be granted in rare and unusual circumstances.

2. Provide Notice to Students

All field trips must be clearly identified as such:

- a. in the course notes
- b. on the course syllabus with general information about date, time, locations, means of transportation, and any fees for which the student is responsible.

If an unforeseen field trip opportunity arises later in the term, as soon as possible the faculty member should discuss it with the class. In that case, such a trip is voluntary and cannot be a course requirement.

3. Provide Accommodations

- a. Field trips must reasonably accommodate students with disabilities. Faculty members are encouraged to consult with students requiring accommodations. In the event that Disability Support Services determines that a reasonable accommodation is not feasible, students must be given the opportunity to complete an alternative activity.
- b. Students who cannot participate in field trips due to financial hardship, work, family, or religious obligations should be given an opportunity to complete an alternative activity.

4. Submit Trip Details

The trip director must submit trip details to the appropriate department chair or WD&CE coordinator at least ten (10) working days before the trip. Trip details include, but may not be limited to:

- a. the course name and CRN
- b. the names of the trip director and any other College employees on the trip
- c. the day and time of the trip
- d. the cost and method of funding the trip, if applicable
- e. the method of transportation
- f. a roster of the names of all participating students

5. Provide Notice of Absence

Upon request, the instructor will provide students with a notice of

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absence. This notification implies excused absence from other classes granting the student the privilege of making up missed work.

6. Obtain Liability Waivers

The trip director must:

- a. provide all participants with a general liability waiver that must be completed prior to the trip
- b. collect and submit all liability waiver to the appropriate department chair or WD&CE coordinator prior to the trip

7. Obtain Other Approvals as Necessary

A contract may be required for the use of facilities or the procurement of other goods or services. Contracts must be reviewed and signed by the appropriate account manager.

C. Student Responsibilities

1. Notify Trip Director of Accommodation Needs

- a. Students must notify the instructor in advance of the field trip of any documented disability on file with Disability Support Services. In the event that Disability Support Services determines that a reasonable accommodation is not feasible, the student will be given an opportunity to complete an alternative activity.
- b. Students who cannot participate in field trips due to financial hardship, work, family, or religious obligations should discuss the matter with the instructor. Students may be given an opportunity to complete an alternative activity.

2. Complete and Submit Required Forms

Students are expected to complete and submit any required forms prior to participating in a field trip.

3. Request Notice of Absence

If a field trip will cause a student to miss a class, the student must request that the instructor provide the student with documentation that the student can show to other instructors. Students with proper documentation of an approved field trip have the opportunity to make up any missed work.

4. Comply with Field Trip Details

- a. Field trips typically begin and end on campus. Some regional field trips may begin or end in designated commuter areas. Students are strongly discouraged from joining or leaving the field trip at any other time.

- b. Any fees associated with the field trip not covered by the College are the responsibility of the student.

5. Abide by the Student Code of Conduct

Students participating in a field trip are expected to conform to the Student Code of Conduct.

D. Transportation and Use of Vehicles

Trip directors are encouraged to use these transportation options in the following order:

1. Public transportation is the preferred method of transport. Field trips should begin and end at designated public transit locations.
2. A limited number of college-owned 7-passenger vans are available only for in-state field trips. Requests and use of college-owned vehicles are governed by Policy and Procedure 79001-Use of College-Owned Vehicles. Drivers of college-owned vehicles must pass a driver's license check pursuant to Policy and Procedure 32101-Employment Practices.
3. When appropriate, and subject to available budget, chartered buses or rented vehicles can also be used for transportation on a field trip. The appropriate department may rent or lease from a College-contracted rental agency. Drivers of rented vehicles must be employed by the College, pass a driver's license check, and be at least 25 years of age. Insurance and damage waivers are required when renting a vehicle or chartering transportation from a third party.
4. Students may drive themselves to and from the designated field trip area when appropriate and when other means of transportation are unavailable. Students using their own vehicles do so at their own risk and assume liability.
5. If none of the above transportation options are available, an employee may use their own personal vehicle under the following circumstances:
  - a. The field trip has been properly approved;
  - b. The driver passes a driver's license check conducted by HRSTM;
  - c. The driver attests to HRSTM that their personal vehicle is safe and that they have automobile liability insurance coverage; and
  - d. The employee submits a mileage reimbursement.

In the case of an accident within the state of Maryland, the driver's personal automobile liability insurance will respond first to any claim. The owner is responsible for any deductible amounts under their personal policy for damages to their vehicle. In the absence of malice or gross negligence and within the parameters of the Maryland Local Government Tort Claims Act, the Montgomery County Self Insurance Program may act as excess coverage over the personal coverage. The County's Self Insurance Program may provide secondary insurance coverage, but only

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for trips within the state of Maryland.

6. Drivers of College owned, rented, or leased vehicles must comply with the Use of College Vehicles policy and procedure.
7. Any traffic or parking violations are the sole responsibility of the operator of the vehicle.

E. Reporting Accidents

In the event of an accident, regardless of the means of transportation used on the field trip, the trip director will submit a detailed report within 24 hours of the accident with details of the circumstances, for insurance purposes, to Public Safety. Public Safety will create an MC Incident Report which will be forwarded to the Vice President for Facilities and Security with copies to the Chief Human Resources Officer and the trip director's appropriate supervisory administrator.

F. Sanctions

1. Violations of the Field Trips policy and procedures may be the basis for appropriate sanctions, including disciplinary action under applicable provisions of the College's policies and procedures, Student Code of Conduct, or collective bargaining agreements.
2. While engaged in the field trip, the trip director may enforce the provisions of this policy and procedure by withdrawal or limitation of privileges, or by excluding the person(s) from further participation and arranging to return the offender to the campus or convey the offender to the nearest point of public transportation for return to campus. The cost of such return transportation is a proper charge against College funds, but the College reserves the right to obtain reimbursement from the offender.

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Administrative Approval: June 3, 1982; January 10, 2003; February 13, 2018.