

April 2, 2003

DEANS, DEPARTMENT CHAIRS AND DIRECTORS

Re: Guidelines for assuring equal access by students to class field trips

Many faculty on our campus include field trips to industrial, research or service organizations in the Bay Area as part of their instructional class activities. Lately, because of heightened security concerns, certain host organizations are disallowing non-citizens or citizens of selected countries admission into their premises. We are aware of several cases where this issue has arisen, and faculty response has not been uniform. In one case, the faculty member decided to cancel field trips in order to avoid discrimination against non-citizens students; in another, the instructor went ahead with the field trip without these students. This message is intended as an interim guide to faculty who may face this problem. It takes as its starting point the general principle enunciated in the University's nondiscrimination policy statement:

Nondiscrimination Policy Statement - Student-related Matters

The University of California, in accordance with applicable federal and state law and University policy, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, medical condition (cancer-related), ancestry, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or status as a Vietnam-era veteran or special disabled veteran. This nondiscrimination policy covers admission, access, and treatment in University programs and activities.
[<http://uga.berkeley.edu/uga/nondisc.stm>]

Discrimination on the basis of citizenship for access to instructional activities of a class must not be allowed. Instructors should make every effort to provide equal access to all students in their classes to the benefits from all class-related instructional activities. When planning class field trips, instructors should make every effort to ensure that all students can equally participate regardless of their citizenship. Depending on the circumstances, the following actions are recommended:

1. Contact the host organization as early as possible to arrange permission for all students to participate in the field trip. Certain organizations require background checks. Contact the Registrar regarding the type of information you may provide under the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
2. If a host organization generally does not accept non-citizen students on a field trip, consider steps to allow exceptions to accommodate all of the students.
3. If it is still not possible to accommodate all students without discriminating on the basis of citizenship, a field trip that is equally accessible to all students should be organized or the field trip should be cancelled.

In the meantime, I have asked the Academic Senate to develop specific policies to guide us in the future.

Paul R. Gray
Executive Vice Chancellor and
Provost

cc: Academic Senate Chair Koshland
Chair der Kiureghian