

IN-TOWN, COURSE-RELATED FIELD TRIPS - DEFINITION, POLICY, AND PROCESS

Updated 1/15/2026

DEFINITION:

- A Field Trip is defined as any course-related educational opportunity core to the learning experience requiring students to travel off campus.
- Travel 'off campus' includes any location off campus including site visits and walking tours of the Loop.
- Field trips outside of the classroom but on AIC or SAIC property, including the Art Institute of Chicago, the Sullivan Galleries, and Homan Square are considered 'on campus' and do not require the field trip policy to be observed. It is, however, still a requirement for faculty to notify the departmental administrative staff if they plan to hold class away from their scheduled meeting space.
- SAIC sponsored off-campus events are, by definition, an extension of SAIC's existing programs, and therefore are subject to all applicable SAIC policies as well as federal and state law. It is important to follow these procedures to reduce personal liability.
- All off-campus events must be approved in advance by the Department Chair. Each faculty member is responsible for identifying the following when seeking approval for an off-campus event: date, time, location(s), method of transportation, and any fees for which the student is responsible or any cost to SAIC. In addition, each faculty member must consider whether the event involves risk to, or has a possibility of, endangering students.

POLICY:

- All trips must be clearly identified in the course syllabus. Any fees to be paid for by the students must be clearly communicated at the beginning of the semester.
- Field Trips are limited to students enrolled in the course, the Faculty member, and Teaching Assistants.
- A substitute faculty member may lead the Field Trip if approved in advance by the Department Chair.
- Student participation is not required for Field Trips approved after the syllabus has been distributed. If the Field Trip is optional, a waiver is needed.
http://www.saic.edu/sites/default/files/off_site_waivers.pdf
- Students are responsible for their own transportation. Faculty must communicate travel expectations with students directly.
 - Public transportation, such as the CTA or Metra, is preferred. CTA is covered by UPass in most cases.
 - Students may use taxi cabs and ride share companies.
 - For trips involving long distances SAIC strongly recommends the use of a charter bus.

- When public or chartered transportation is not an option, a faculty or staff member may rent a vehicle. The vehicle must seat 12 or fewer people, be driven on paved roads, and be equipped with emergency supplies. Faculty need to accept all insurance offered by the rental company.

PROCESS:

- Obtain approval from the Department Chair in advance of the field trip. See above.
- If approved with need for chartered group transportation, such as a bus, contact the administrative staff in your department to arrange.
- Provide a roster of attendees/cell phone numbers to the administrative staff in your department on the day of the trip. Take this roster with you on your trip.
- During the first class of the semester, communicate to students the details of the trip, expectations for behavior during the trip, and any relevant preparedness information. Repeat these communications at least one week in advance of the trip.
- With a valid id, students have free admission to the Art Institute of Chicago and the Museum of Contemporary Art.
- Inform students to contact DLRC for assistance as soon as possible if an accommodation is required.
- In case of emergency, call 911 first. Second, call the Dean on Call number (312-768-8485).

If you have any questions about this document, contact the Dean of Administration, Budget, and Planning.