



DEPARTMENT OF
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Vice-Principal (Finance and Administration)

Queen's U., K7L 3N6

Dear VP Janiec

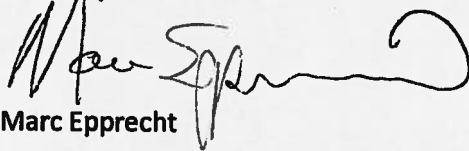
The Dept of Global Development Studies would like to express its deep concern over the new guidelines for reimbursement of travel expenses. We fully understand and support the principles of accountability and transparency. In practice, however, the new guidelines impose a number of burdensome and potentially even dangerous requirements for those of us who travel to, and who work with colleagues in, the Global South.

- Much of the economic activity in our countries of research takes place in the informal sector. Service providers are often unwilling and unable to give receipts. Innumerable hidden costs can never be accounted for (for example, "car guards," window washers, "thank you" payments and such). Yet without such transactions, daily life let alone research grinds to a halt. At present these are more or less covered by the per diem.
- Official exchange rates can be extremely misleading, and receipts provided at the official rate would actually inflate costs. Until 2009, for example, breakfast in Harare at the official rate would have cost about Cdn\$6,400 (approx. Zw\$300 billion, equivalent to Cdn\$4 at the street rate). Requiring receipts precludes the necessity of street transactions and barter, without which life in some countries is just not possible
- Official currency rates are sometimes extremely volatile, and will require different calculations on daily basis. A six month sabbatical could thus entail 180 different rates, and more if, as is often the case, multiple borders have to be taken into consideration

- Colleagues may technically be in violation of local laws when they collaborate with us: a proposed law in Uganda, for example, would make Ugandan colleagues subject to a 3-year prison sentence for failing to report to the police a researcher who knows information about same-sex practicing individuals, or who advocates (in Canada) for human rights for sexual minorities. Discretion is advised, and a paper trail, *even if falsified*, creates a new risk.
- Colleagues whom we invite to visit Queen's will likely feel patronized or offended by the seeming surveillance.

The new guidelines do not merely create difficulties for us and our colleagues as researchers. They will, we anticipate, generate significant additional administrative costs (eg., thousands of missing receipt forms, hours of admin assistant time adding up misleading numbers, long explanatory memos, requests to the Dean or Provost for "exceptions" etc). Given that our funding mostly comes from federal granting agencies, we question why and whether provincial guidelines can be applied. Given that the university sees internationalization as a pillar of its future vision, we wonder why you are creating new obstacles to achieving that goal.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marc Epprecht', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Marc Epprecht

(on behalf of the DEVS faculty and staff)

cc. Dean Alistair MacLean

Vice Provost (International) John Dixon

Vice Provost (Research) Stephen Liss

Provost Alan Harrison