

TO: Students/Participants Registered for Spring Break 2022 Study Abroad Programs

FROM: Center for International Education

DATE: September 22, 2021

SUBJECT: Considerations for Travel Abroad Amidst Continuing Uncertainties

Dear Students/Participants,

The Center for International Education (CIE) is excited to be able to send students abroad on Faculty-led programs in the coming year after a long hiatus. We know you are also excited to get out into the world and to participate in one of our programs. However, as you can imagine, traveling in this current environment, due to the continued COVID-19 pandemic, brings with it certain challenges.

CIE is taking all the necessary steps to mitigate risks on our UMW Faculty-led programs, but, we cannot control everything. This message aims to address some of the foreseeable areas of concern. After reviewing this information, please feel free to reach out to your Study Abroad Coordinator, Sarah Moran, at smoran2@umw.edu with any questions or concerns you have regarding your participation in a UMW Faculty-led program in the coming year.

DEPOSITS & REFUNDS

CIE wants to extend extra flexibility to students in terms of deposit refunds, as we know these decisions are especially difficult right now. **Therefore, CIE will allow for program deposit refunds, no questions asked, up until 3 days following the program's registration/deposit deadline as found on the program's website.** At that point, it is necessary to establish the final headcount for the program so logistics (accommodations, transportation, etc.) can be arranged. If you want to withdraw after this point, you are subject to the terms outlined in CIE's [cancellation policy](#). Final balances are due according to each program's set deadlines.

COVID-19 VACCINATIONS

As per the [Return to Campus—Fall 2021 plan](#), all students, staff and faculty planning to physically access the UMW campus must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2.), or must submit a waiver for health or religious reasons. **Students, faculty and staff engaging in any UMW approved education abroad travel are subject to the University's vaccination requirement and any other entry requirements imposed by program location(s).**

Approved format(s) for proof of vaccination for entry into a given country may vary. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that every traveler take all the necessary steps to obtain their state-held electronic record while safeguarding their white CDC vaccine card provided on vaccination.

Students granted an exception to the UMW vaccination requirement on medical or religious grounds for study, live or work on campus at UMW should understand that **it is highly unlikely that exceptions can be accommodated in an international program.** In fact, airlines and foreign governments are requiring that in order to fly and cross borders travelers demonstrate a) proof of vaccination, b) a negative PCR test taken within 72 hours of departure, and c) a sworn statement to comply with entry requirements.

COVID-19 TESTING

Testing for COVID-19 prior to departure from the US is not included in UMW Faculty-led program fees nor will CIE arrange for testing. Testing for COVID-19 prior to departure from the program's host country for re-entry to

the US is not included in the UMW Faculty-led program fees. CIE will work with each Faculty Director to provide guidance about where tests can be located while in-country and they will pass this information along to you.

It is your responsibility, as a participant on a UMW Faculty-led program, to bear the burden of proof of a negative test prior to departure from the US and for re-entry to the US.

POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST

If you, as a participant on a UMW Faculty-led program, **tests positive for COVID-19 prior to departure and are unable to participate in the program abroad you are not guaranteed any refund of non-recoverable expenses** (see *Trip Insurance* section) nor are you guaranteed academic credit (see *Academic Implications* section).

If you, as a participant on a UMW Faculty-led program, **tests positive for COVID-19 while in-country and are not able to board your flight back to the US there may be additional financial, academic, and personal implications** (see *Return Delays* section).

RETURN DELAYS

There are many reasons why you may not be able to make your scheduled flight back to the US. This may include, but is not limited to: illness, injury, airline requirements (ex. positive COVID-19 test), lost passport, tardiness (i.e. missed flight).

If you are unable to take your arranged return flight to the US for any reason, you are responsible for making alternate arrangements (accommodations, flight rescheduling, etc.) and will incur the associated costs.

If for some reason you are incapacitated or unable to secure necessary funds for these arrangements, the Faculty Director of your program may step in to cover the costs, but as a last resort. If this situation occurs, you are responsible for the repayment of all associated expenses involved in the situation within 10 days of the program's return date.

TRIP INSURANCE

CIE has always encouraged students to purchase trip cancellation/interruption insurance in case, for whatever reason, they were unable to participate in their program. In light of the information covered above, while CIE cannot mandate that you enroll in trip cancellation/interruption insurance, we want to **strongly encourage you** to purchase this coverage. All students traveling on spring break 2022 UMW Faculty-led programs will be enrolled in iNext international medical insurance (including evacuation for natural/political disaster). As the time of enrollment, you will be sent a packet of information. In this packet is information about enrolling in trip cancellation/interruption covered. To obtain this coverage, you will need to **self-enroll in, and pay for separately** from the international medical insurance that is already included in your program fee.

PASSPORTS

If you do not have a passport or need to renew your passport you **need to start this process as soon as possible.** The latest statement from the US Department of State mentions that expedited processing will take up to 12 weeks. Regular processing up to 18 weeks. You cannot travel internationally without a valid passport. Passports should be valid for six-months after the program's return date.

IN-COUNTRY RISK MITIGATION

While in country, it will be especially important that you mitigate risks while participating in program activities and time outside of the scheduled itinerary. **Large gatherings** such as nightclubs, bars, crowded restaurants, theaters, concerts, etc. **should be avoided** and **masks must be worn according to guidelines of the host country, regardless of vaccination status.**

In addition, all students who plan to travel on spring break 2022 Faculty-led programs should plan to practice extra caution two-weeks prior to departure date to avoid a positive COVID-19 test that would prohibit them to travel abroad as scheduled.

FLIGHTS

Airfare arrangements will be made through an airline logistics provider for all spring break 2022 Faculty-led programs. If, for any reason, alterations to the planned itinerary are required for your travel, you will work directly with the travel provider to make alternate arrangements, handle any refunds, make additional payments, etc.

ACADEMIC IMPLICATIONS

Depending on how your program is arranged (i.e. full spring 2022 course, spring break only course) there could be academic implications if you are unable to participate in the abroad portion of the program. **Any academic implications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis** according to which program, what is missed, if there are opportunities for make-up assignments, etc.

If you are waylaid in country, for any reason, and unable to return to the US in time to resume your spring 2022 courses after spring break, you are responsible for working with your other faculty to determine alternate arrangements.

PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION

Each UMW Faculty-led program participant is required to attend a Pre-departure Orientation session. This session will be scheduled, as a group meeting, about on month prior to your program's start date. At this session additional paperwork will be completed and information regarding travel tips, personal safety best practices, utilization of insurance, and more will be covered.

CIE is here to support you throughout this study abroad process so please do not hesitate to reach out to your advisor, Sarah Moran (smoran2@umw.edu) with additional questions. Your Faculty Director is also available to discuss academic matters.

We ask that you sign below, and return via email to smoran2@umw.edu, in acknowledgement that you have read all of the information included in this memo:

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____