

To: Spring 2020 Study Abroad Students
Sent: Friday, February 28, 2020
Subject: Penn Update Regarding Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Dear Penn Students Abroad,

We understand that this is a concerning time for many students abroad as the situation regarding COVID-19 changes daily. The University of Pennsylvania is committed to supporting students whose semesters are disrupted by these unprecedented circumstances.

This letter provides guidance on study abroad for the remainder of the Spring 2020 semester. **It is very important that you read the full contents of this message and that you contact your School advisor prior to making a decision about leaving your abroad program (a complete list of Penn advisors by international program is available within this email).** We are also sharing this email with your parent or guardian later today.

On Wednesday, February 26, Provost Pritchett issued a statement to the Penn community indicating that the University of Pennsylvania will be aligning all travel recommendations with CDC travel guidelines. Specifically:

- CDC Level 3 (Avoid Non-Essential Travel): Travel to this location is considered a health risk and Penn strongly urges to avoid non-essential travel.
- CDC Level 1 (Practice Usual Precautions) or Level 2 (Practice Enhanced Precautions): Travel to this location is not considered a health risk unless you are an individual with chronic medical conditions. Travel, including study abroad, may continue.

Health & Safety

Based on this guidance and at this time:

- Penn is only facilitating the early departure of students from abroad programs at a CDC Level 3 (currently China and South Korea). Students in these countries have already received information about next steps.
- If your abroad program is at a CDC Level 1 or Level 2, Penn is not suspending your program and is not facilitating early departure at this time.
 - *Please note that although a CDC Level 1 or Level 2 is not considered an increased health risk for most students abroad, we do recognize that individuals each have unique medical needs and concerns. If you are an individual with a specific health concern or medical condition for which remaining in a CDC Level 1 or Level 2 country is concerning at this time, please contact Ashlee Halbritter, Director of Campus Health, at ashleeh@upenn.edu or (215) 746-0810 to discuss your individual concerns and next steps.*
- If your abroad program is currently a CDC Level 1 or Level 2 and changes to a Level 3 at a later date, Penn will facilitate early departure. You will receive direct messaging from Penn Abroad regarding next steps for departure and academics in coordination with the CDC Level change.

Academics

Regarding academics, every abroad program is managing this evolving situation differently. Some programs have temporarily suspended courses for a short period of time, while others have moved to online teaching for a short or long period of time. Some programs are completely unaffected. First and

foremost, please stay up to date on all information being circulated by your host program and follow all instructions that you receive. You are expected to complete all coursework as outlined by your abroad program, through and including final exams.

- If your abroad program moves to entirely online teaching for the full remainder of your study abroad term, including the remote proctoring of final exams, then it is your choice to determine whether you would like to remain abroad or depart your abroad location. Please contact your Penn Abroad Global Programs Manager before making arrangements to depart your abroad location.
- If your abroad program does not move to entirely online teaching for the full remainder of your study abroad term, including remote proctoring of final exams AND you, nonetheless, choose to voluntarily depart your abroad location, you are at risk for losing academic credit for your term abroad. **Anyone considering voluntarily leaving a study abroad program must consult their School advisor to discuss how a departure will impact their course of study.** Penn Schools will make every effort to support students whose semesters are impacted by COVID-19.
- **School Advisor List**
 - **College:** Connect with advisors by region: <https://www.college.upenn.edu/node/209>
 - **Wharton:** All regions, contact Dr. Celina Gray (celina@wharton.upenn.edu)
 - **SEAS:** All regions, contact Dr. Sonya Gwak (sgwak@seas.upenn.edu)
 - **Nursing:** All regions, contact Dr. Georgia Kouzoukas (kgeorgia@nursing.upenn.edu)
 - **Huntsman:** All regions, contact Kelly Cleary (clearyk@wharton.upenn.edu)

Tuition and Financial Aid

If you depart from your study abroad program, this may have implications for your tuition and financial aid, if applicable. It is imperative that you work with your School advisor and the Office of Student Registration and Financial Services (SRFS) to determine how your departure from study abroad will impact tuition charges and financial aid awards. To speak directly with SRFS, please call 215-898-1988 or email sfsmail@pobox.upenn.edu.

The guidance above is Penn's decision as of today, February 28, 2020. Should this guidance change, we will be in touch with affected students as soon as possible. In the meantime, we encourage all students to continue to stay healthy and well, especially if planning to travel or if using public or private transportation. Please visit [Penn's COVID-19 resource page](#) for tips on how to stay healthy.

Finally, we want to remind you that CAPS and International SOS are accessible to you 24 hours a day to address additional concerns or stresses this uncertain situation may be causing you. Here are relevant contact numbers for your reference:

- [International SOS](#) (+1 215 942 8478 / 11BSGC000012)
- [Penn CAPS](#) (+1 215 898 7021)
- Penn Abroad (+1 215 898 9073) **Note, Penn Abroad operating hours are Monday– Friday from 9 AM - 5 PM ET*

In closing, **we want to underscore the importance of speaking with your School advisor as you make these decisions.** The Penn Abroad office and your program manager are also here to help answer questions and liaise with the partner institution abroad.

Kindly,

Nigel Cossar
Director, Penn Abroad and Global Programs

Kristyn Palmiotto
Associate Director, Penn Abroad