



## Study Abroad

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

SUBJECT: Guidance for students applying to UW Study Abroad programs while COVID-19 travel restrictions are in place

DATE: November 9, 2020

Currently all on-site study abroad is not allowed due to the campus travel ban and other travel restrictions. Many factors are considered for when programs can re-open, including relevant travel warnings and restrictions ([CDC](#), [DOS](#), [Campus](#), location-specific), our on-site partners return to full operations, adherence to [UW system considerations](#), and the UW-Madison [Travel Policy](#). We will make decisions to run programs on a program-by-program basis.

However, as study abroad takes considerable planning and preparation before a program's start date, a selection of [programs currently have applications open](#) for summer and fall/academic year 2021 in case conditions improve in time for those programs to run.

We will confirm the ability to run these programs between mid-March and mid-July. The timing of the decision per program will be based on factors including the program start date to allow students to make alternate plans as needed.

Determining which programs remain open to accept applications was based on a variety of factors including local conditions at the program site, participation trends, and partner and program host capacity. If the program you are interested in does not currently have an open application for the duration that you are interested in, please note that we are constantly monitoring global circumstances and will reevaluate the opening of each program application as conditions allow.

If there is a program with an open application that you are interested in, we recommend that you apply and have a back-up plan that doesn't include study abroad, if you need it. Be sure to talk about your plans with your academic advisor(s).

If you have already started or are planning to start an application for one of these programs, here is what you SHOULD be doing now:

### Research Programs and Apply

- Attend general [advising](#) to help narrow down programs and make an appointment for program-specific inquiries once you've narrowed down a program.

- Review what programs are of most interest to you and have several options in mind. Look at the [virtual program options](#) we currently have available. Please note that some summer programs will offer virtual options, in place of onsite programming. These virtual options will start to become available in February.
- Check the program webpage to see if there is an application open for your desired term, as not all programs are accepting applications due to COVID-19.
- Apply for your program by the application deadline.
- Ensure you have a valid passport that expires at least six months after your program end date. If you do not, you are strongly encouraged to apply immediately. Application instructions and information is available [here](#).

### **Understand Your Program's Costs**

- Review the cost sheet for your program, which includes our financial policies. Important notes:
  - Acceptance deposits are normally non-refundable. However, if you cancel your program participation for an on-site (non-virtual) program prior to the start of the program due to concerns about COVID-19, then the acceptance deposit is refundable.
  - Acceptance deposits are refundable if UW Study Abroad cancels a program for any reason.
  - Remember that out of pocket expenses are your responsibility.

### **Understand What Your Experience Will Be Like**

- Study abroad and study away will look differently than it did in years past. In the immediate future once on-site programs are able to recommence, there will probably be fewer locations to choose from, housing options may be more limited, program dates may shift, course formats may change, excursions might change, and physical distancing guidelines will need to be followed. We will do our best to keep you updated on changes that may occur on your program. We'll be here for you to answer any questions you may have and support you in your planning.
- Travel while on the program may look different as well. Whether you can travel or not to other countries while abroad will depend on each program's and country's regulations. You may be restricted to stay within your host country. If you are in a situation where your ability to travel is limited to your host city or local region, we hope you embrace this as an opportunity to deepen your understanding of the local culture and landscape.

### **Once Accepted to a Program, Complete your Acceptance Tasks**

- Complete required Acceptance Tasks in your [MyStudyAbroad](#) (MySA) account, and check in on this task list regularly.

- Familiarize yourself with your program information and related policies. These are found on your program website, study abroad/away and program handbooks (located in your [MySA account](#)), and your program cost sheet.
- Research housing and other on-site arrangements, but do not make any arrangements until the program is confirmed to run.
- Submit Course Equivalency Requests (CERs) (when applicable) in your [MySA account](#) to determine course equivalents.
- Research visa requirements (if required) for studying in your program location.

**WAIT** on the following activities, or connect with your Study Abroad Advisor with questions/concerns before moving forward with these tasks:

- Do not purchase an airline ticket at this time. We recommend you explore fully refundable tickets and travel insurance options.
- Do not put any money down for program housing. If you are looking for housing in Madison, read the lease carefully, and have a back-up plan if your study abroad program runs.
- Avoid paying any other non-recoverable expenses at this time specific to your plans to study abroad/away.

The pandemic requires all of us to remain flexible as plans can change any time. We encourage you to have backup plans for classes, housing, and other arrangements.

We will be in touch with you through the process and we encourage you to [reach out to us](#) if you have any questions about programs, policies, and planning.