



Subject: March 14, 2020 message for Study Abroad Students

Dear Students and Families,

Ithaca College staff are actively monitoring the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. We are reaching out to provide some relevant updated information that we hope you find helpful in making an informed decision about next steps, given our rapidly changing global health situation. **We are sending this information now only out of an abundance of caution and so that you and your family may thoughtfully consider whether you wish to stay or depart your study abroad program at this time.**

HEALTH AND TRAVEL INFORMATION

College officials have been closely monitoring the situation in each country where coronavirus disease has been reported and where there are currently IC students studying abroad. Both the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Department of State are updating their assessments of the coronavirus situation in various countries and have increased the levels associated with their travel health notices and travel advisories, respectively.

The U.S. Department of State has recently issued a Global Health Advisory that suggests individuals should reconsider travel. Travelers may experience actions that limit their mobility or ability to travel and should seriously evaluate these risks. Because the situation with respect to the coronavirus is so fluid, we encourage you to regularly review the latest information from:

- the [CDC](#)
- the [U.S. Department of State](#)
- the [World Health Organization](#)
- the [Department of Homeland Security](#)

Given this context, and the fact that you initiated your study abroad experience prior to the elevation of risk in some parts of the world, we want to be sure you are fully aware of the current risk assessment in your country of study as reported by the CDC and the U.S. Department of State and are aware of their recommendations.

CURRENT STATUS OF YOUR PROGRAMS

We understand that your programs are currently scheduled to offer their courses as planned, though most are beginning preparatory measures that include moving towards online learning platforms and planning for closure if the situation should warrant. Expect modifications to your programming as global conditions evolve.

Because of the elevated risk assessment, we are staying in touch with Ithaca College's affiliated/exchange partners to learn more about their options for online/distance learning opportunities for students in the event a program must be suspended. If the risk level in your country were to be elevated, and such options were offered, you would hear from the host program and may be connecting with us as well. Because these are not our programs, we cannot dictate the decisions they will make about their curriculum if situations shift. If the affiliated/exchange partner provides an online/distance learning opportunity but requires prior written approval by

Ithaca College, we would happily provide such written approval. If this occurs in your program, you would contact the Ithaca College staff in the Office of International Programs for assistance with obtaining the College's written approval.

Students in **non-affiliated** programs and on a leave of absence from Ithaca College would, in the event there is a change of circumstance/situation, work directly with their program directors on appropriate plans for course completion and course credit.

ACADEMIC OPTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

If you would like to discuss the academic options and implications of a decision to voluntarily depart your program, we would then recommend that you reach out to the following individuals:

- your program director at the study abroad site for information about possibly completing the coursework from a distance;
- the Ithaca College staff in the Office of International Programs (studyabroad@ithaca.edu or +(1) 607-274-3306) and Student Financial Services (sfs@ithaca.edu or +(1) 607-274-3131) for information about any financial aid implications; and
- the Assistant/Associate Dean of your School within Ithaca College for information about any implications regarding your academic progress.
 - School of Business (schoolofbusiness@ithaca.edu or +(1) 607-274-7901)
 - Park School of Communications (commdeansoffice@ithaca.edu or +(1) 607-274-1021)
 - School of Health Sciences and Human Performance (hshpdean@ithaca.edu or +(1) 607-274-3237)
 - School of Humanities and Sciences (hsdean@ithaca.edu or +(1) 607-274-3102)
 - School of Music (musicdean@ithaca.edu or +(1) 607-274-3171)

Because every student's academic situation is different, a choice to discontinue coursework may impact your degree progress, and the individuals listed above would be able to offer you the most appropriate information and support.

AN INFORMED DECISION

We would want you and your family to be able to make an informed decision about whether to remain in your country of study for the planned study abroad experience or to return to the United States, given the recent declaration of the Global Level 3 Health Advisory by the U.S. Department of State. This would be an important decision for you to make with your family, and we would encourage you to do so with the latest information available.

Ithaca College will continue to monitor the situation and will stay in touch as we learn about any additional changes. We ask that you stay in touch with us to keep us informed of how you are doing and please let us know of any changes in your circumstances.

If you have any questions or need to talk, please reach out to your support team in the Office of International Programs (OIP) at studyabroad@ithaca.edu or +(1) 607-274-3306.

Sincerely,

Dr. Tanya Saunders, Assistant Provost, International Programs and Extended Studies
Dr. Jeane Copenhaver-Johnson, Associate Provost for Academic Programs