

Study Abroad and Global Exchange

Dear Study Abroad Group Leader/Trip Organizer:

By now, you have likely read the President's email concerning foreign travel and the COVID-19 outbreak. As your safety is of the utmost importance to us, we have made the decision to cancel all non-essential foreign travel, which includes Study Abroad, for the foreseeable future. I realize that this is likely very disappointing news and potentially presents problems for many of your students. I want to assure you that we are taking steps to address your concerns. Deans, department heads, and faculty leaders are being instructed to work with students who may now find themselves short credit hours that were previously tied to a Study Abroad experience. Likewise, I am working with Business Services to determine the most feasible way to reimburse travelers (students, faculty, and staff) for any out-of-pocket expenses related to approved Study Abroad experiences. In many cases, these experiences may be canceled with enough notice that touring companies will willingly provide refunds...time is of the essence, so please reach out to them ASAP. In the event that we are not able to secure a complete refund for you and/or your travelers through a touring company, we will cover the costs of your out-of-pocket trip related expenses. Please go ahead and gather any receipts you may have related to your planned trip and have them ready to share if/when requested. While I do not have step by step instructions for you at this point, I would ask that you adhere to the following best practices to ensure that we provide efficient service to you and other travelers:

- Group leaders/trip organizers should reach out immediately to cancel a trip and request a travel voucher for future Study Abroad travel or a refund if eligible (keep in mind that not all travelers will be interested in travel vouchers, especially those who will be graduating).
- If you are unable to secure a complete refund, please let me know as quickly as possible so that I can work with Business Services to identify a funding source and to arrange for reimbursement to you and/or your students directly from the university.
- If you required your students to arrange their own airfare, lodging, transportation, etc, please have your students immediately reach out to those entities and attempt to cancel their reservations. If they are unable to receive a refund or credit for their reservation, the university will work with them to arrange for reimbursement. Let them know that we will contact them soon to determine their reimbursement status.
- **Please tell students that they should not contact the travel agency unless they are directed to do so by you!**

I want to assure you that we are working to make this cancellation process as smooth as possible. Dr. Robitaille and I will be in touch with more information shortly.

Best,
Dr. Barkley

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