Due to the ongoing global health crisis, the State University of New York Office of Global Affairs (SUNY OGA) has developed a study abroad reopening plan which establishes criteria by which programs are evaluated in order to safely resume.

For a program to be considered, the country of the individual program must be at the CDC country level 2 rating or lower prior to the start of the program. Since CDC levels are likely to fluctuate, SUNY will continue to monitor a country’s location and may cancel should there be a level change prior to the start of the program. Students should understand the potential risk related to the program clearance processes and have a viable back up plan such as return to home campus courses or participate remotely at the partner university if possible. Additionally, a partner university survey* was developed to collect COVID-19 related information from partner universities regarding response plans and support/services available for students. The results will be used to assess if the partners’ COVID-19 response plans align with SUNY’s expectations for COVID-19 related contingency planning pertaining to health and safety protocols and academic continuity.

Due to the fluid nature surrounding COVID-19, the guidelines may be updated/changed at any time as it is likely that new information will be received by the IAP office either from SUNY or our partner universities.

These guidelines apply to ALL participants regardless of vaccination status, prior treatments and/or prior infection/presence of antibodies.

*In an effort to collect, assess, and communicate the best possible information for students for the Summer and Fall 2021 terms, the partner survey will be deployed within a carefully designated time frame that balances the need to acquire the most updated information for planning while being mindful that things might change closer to a program’s departure. Resources and information collected will be updated on the individual program pages as information is received.

STUDENTS GUIDELINES FOR PARTNER UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS

Pre-program Planning:
In order to plan for a successful study abroad experience, students should understand that they will likely encounter more unexpected changes now than what may have been expected in the past. A greater level of independence, a heightened level of awareness and flexibility will be necessary while planning and throughout their study abroad experience. Examples of important changes could be new health entry requirements by the host countries. Other changes might be related to quarantining, housing and academic policies. The IAP office has connected with our partner university colleagues to obtain resources, and serves as a point of contact to direct students to those resources. However, it is the students’ responsibility to continuously reference the resources to remain informed about policies that will affect them and to maintain compliance if and when necessary. Breaking local policies may result in severe legal and financial consequences. Planning ahead is
important. Sources of important information that will require frequent reference are guidelines from host county government agencies, the host university guidelines, and IAP.

IAP strongly recommends students discuss their study abroad plans as well as share this following guide with their parents/guardian and or emergency contact(s).

1. **Risk and Liability information.**
   a. Students are strongly encouraged to take the SUNY Risk Self Assessment survey so that they are aware of their own risk tolerance during the application process in SBUAbroad.
   b. Students are encouraged to meet with their program coordinator to discuss findings of the survey.
   c. All students participating in a partner university program must sign the SUNY Acknowledgement Form which addresses SUNY liability information. This document will be shared in SBUAbroad.
   d. Students are required to participate in IAP’s pre-departure orientation.

2. Students should book their own flight tickets based on the arrival guides of the host university. At the appropriate time, students should reach out to their IAP advisor prior to finalizing the purchase of their flight ticket. IAP recommends students purchase changeable flights and understand the financial responsibility involved with changing flight tickets. SUNY reserves the right to cancel programs based on local conditions.
   a. Students should have contingency funds planned as part of their overall program budget. Examples include funds for a separate quarantine room/location if necessary, or unexpected travel occurrences.

3. In the event a student is not able to travel as planned (for example in case of a positive COVID-19 test result), they should contact the coordinator at their host institution and include their IAP advisor.
   a. If needed, the IAP coordinator will coordinate directly with the host university to discuss late arrival and/or withdrawal from the program.

4. Students must research COVID-19 testing requirements relevant to airlines of choice, host country entry requirements, and host university protocols.
   a. IAP will share COVID-19 resources with students based on CDC information, and host university responses to the SUNY survey.
   b. It is crucial for program participants to remain informed and actively comply with host university and host country guidelines and policies.
   c. Students must be aware that due to the fluid nature surrounding COVID-19 guidelines and policies might change often.

5. During the nomination process, IAP will continuously monitor the CDC and the State Department travel advisories. Only the programs that meet the level(s) designated to be safe for consideration by SUNY OGA will be assessed to determine clearance. Final clearance may not be available until very close to departure date. Students are also encouraged to monitor the travel advisories as they search programs as well as through the application/admissions processes.
   a. COVID-19 resources collected via SUNY survey will be added to individual program pages.
   b. Once a student is nominated and admitted by a partner university, they will begin to communicate directly with that unit in regards to pre-arrival and arrival guidelines. Students are expected to look out for communication from their host university and if they have not made contact should request information from them directly. Students should inform the IAP office of communication concerns.
c. Students will be responsible for researching entry requirements, policies, and restrictions in each specific location relevant to their program.

d. Students will be responsible for remaining informed on current health crisis conditions, restrictions, policies, guidelines set by host country and host university.

6. Students should Identify health facilities in-country and local protocols. IAP will share SUNY international health insurance information prior to departure to allow students to plan for any health related situation.
   a. Students should research and determine COVID-19 testing facilities near their housing location.
   b. Mental Health support is available to students through the SUNY insurance provider.
   c. Students are strongly encouraged to sign the health insurance release form (Personal Representative Appointment). This form enables SUNY/SBU to support students while abroad. This is part of the program application in SBUAbroad.

7. Many of our partner university programs involve students arranging housing independently. It is important for students to prepare a clear plan and have funds available in case quarantine is necessary.
   a. Homestays will not be offered/utilized in situations where IAP has a housing agreement with the partner.
   b. Student research should include what support might be available regarding arranging meals, and transportation to a medical facility or otherwise.
   c. Students arranging housing through the host university should research all COVID-19 related guidelines including testing and quarantine requirements and support services. This information may be provided directly by the host university/housing department and if not, the students should request it.
   d. Students arranging non university housing should research important support services and include in their quarantine plan.
   e. Students should consider transportation during housing planning and when possible stay close to campus. IAP recommends avoiding public transportation when possible.
   f. IAP will try to collect relevant information in the SUNY Partner survey and will share with students after nomination.
      i. Support services - ie: Food delivery services.

8. Students are expected to share their emergency contact with IAP via SBUAbroad and provide the approval for IAP to reach out in case of an emergency.

During Program Requirements:
While in their host country, students will need to follow guidelines set by both the host country and their host university. It is important to understand that breaking local COVID-19 policies may result in severe legal and financial consequences.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
   a. Students will be responsible for bringing their own appropriate PPE which meets health standards of the host country and university.
   b. Students must comply with host country and university policies regarding mask wearing, social distancing, isolation, quarantining etc.

1. Symptomatic student response
a. If a student exhibits symptoms they are required to report the symptoms to the appropriate on-campus office to coordinate immediate testing and isolation from the campus or local community.

b. Symptomatic students are required to follow host country and university guidelines.

c. As per pre-departure planning, students should rely on their quarantine plan and update it as necessary for possible future use.

2. Student travel
   a. IAP expectation: Students should understand that increased movement between cities could increase contagion risk. IAP advises that students should use reasonable judgment in planning their free time.
   b. Students should follow their host city/country policies and host university guidelines in regards to travel restrictions imposed that may require quarantining which would affect students' ability to attend classes.

3. Guidelines for cancelling program
   a. If the outbreak is country-wide and CDC warning escalates to Level 3, an early departure may be required.
   b. If a partner university cancels their in person teaching and moves to remote learning, the situation will be evaluated by SUNY and SBU on a case by case basis.

Post Program Requirements:
Students are responsible for arrangements upon return which comply with their home country/state/campus requirements.

a. Students are responsible for complying with CDC travel requirements for reentry to the USA.

CONTINGENCY PLANS
Some of this information may have been mentioned in previous sections.

1. Per SUNY’s reopening plan guidance, only partner university programs with clear COVID-19 response plans addressing academic alternatives which would include a virtual/remote option to ensure students' ability to successfully complete their program will be considered.

2. Students should have clear personal contingency plans and funds in place addressing housing, travel, food, and finances (refer to Pre-program Planning section #2).
   a. IAP recommends students purchase changeable flights and understand the financial responsibility involved with changing flight tickets. SUNY reserves the right to cancel programs based on local conditions.
      i. Students should determine the proximity of the nearest airport(s) if departure is required prior to the expected program end date.
   b. For programs where housing is included in the Stony Brook program fee, homestays will not be offered/utilized. Students who are arranging accommodation independently outside of their host university housing office are not recommended to arrange host family options.
   c. Students should be ready to adapt to any accommodation changes based on quarantine and local policies and guidelines.
   d. Students should have a clear plan for isolation options in case quarantine is required.
   e. Students should have a clear plan for support services in case of quarantine.

2. Local support
a. While in-country, students are under the care of their host university.
   i. Students should identify support offices such as the international exchange office, and understand they would be their first point of contact in case of an emergency or to obtain up to date information.

PROGRAM FINANCES

Program specific budget sheets will be shared with students during the application process as well as detailed information regarding student’s financial responsibilities and liability. Students will have to sign their acknowledgment of these documents in SBUAbroad.

1. Important Points from Financial Responsibility Acknowledgment Forms:
   - “When participants commit to a study abroad program in the application portal, they accept responsibility for all costs associated with their program.”
   - “In the event a program is cancelled, SUNY will refund only uncommitted and recoverable funds.”
   - “I understand and acknowledge that if I withdraw before the start of the program I will be responsible for paying any part of those costs that cannot be recovered by SUNY or that SUNY may still be required to pay on my behalf. If I withdraw from the program after its starting date, I will not expect to receive a refund of any program fees, differentials, or other charges, and may not receive a refund of SUNY tuition. I may also be obligated to repay any financial aid awards that I received in support of my participation in the program.”
   - “If participants decide to withdraw before the start of a study abroad program, they must inform International Academic Programs in writing as soon as possible. Participants who withdraw after committing in the portal will be charged the full program fee. IAP will work with partner universities, vendors and providers to refund any fees already paid on the participants' behalf but no refund is guaranteed.”

2. Financial Liability:
   a. As per SUNY international health insurance (1/12/2021) a medical provider’s note is required to receive COVID-19 testing refund. Students should plan their budget accordingly.
   b. Normal program withdrawal deadlines will be shared with program participants in SBUAbroad. Students can understand their financial liability by reviewing the Financial Acknowledgement Signature Document in SBUAbroad.
   c. Students’ health related to COVID-19 may affect their ability to depart as planned for their program. Program participants may need to change or cancel their flights. Financial planning should include contingencies for travel changes or cancellation.
   d. If a student’s health related to COVID-19 forces them to withdraw from their program they may be responsible for paying any part of those costs that cannot be recovered by IAP or that IAP may still be required to pay on their behalf.
   e. If a student’s health related to COVID-19 forces them to withdraw from their program and they have made independent payments to the host university they will be responsible for pursuing refunds independently. If asked, IAP can try to advocate to support the student but it is possible that we may not be able to influence the outcome.
   f. Students arranging off campus housing not related to their host university should understand their housing agreement’s cancellation and refunds policy. IAP nor the host university will be able to intervene in case of a dispute.
g. Students are advised to avoid pre paying for services and excursions when possible as things can change and refunds may not be possible.

h. If a program is cancelled or if students are required to return early, students will be responsible for any flight change fees.

**STUDENT COMMUNICATION**

We recognize the importance of stronger communication and transparency during these challenging times. While in-person advising may not be possible, IAP is committed to ensuring that students can access advising virtually. We highly recommend for students and their support persons to reach out to us so that we can answer any questions and direct them if necessary to the appropriate resources during all phases from planning as well as upon return.

1. COVID-19 resources available on program pages and in the COVID-19 section in IAP site.
2. Risk Self Assessment available on IAP webpage and strongly recommended as part of application.
3. Approval for IAP to communicate with students’ emergency contact and SUNY international health insurance provided as part of the application in SBUAbroad.
4. Pre-departure orientation is mandatory.
5. One on one sessions available with the IAP Coordinator and/or Program Director for every student and parent/guardian to discuss any program/concerns prior to departure.
6. IAP will communicate directly with students regarding any and all program updates. Only should an emergency arise (cancellation and/or departure mid-program related to COVID-19, and/or individual concerns related to health or safety of their student) will IAP contact a student’s disclosed Emergency Contacts (SBUAbroad form) to inform and/or request assistance. IAP must comply with FERPA and HIPAA policies and will not disclose any information related to participants.

**International Academic Programs**

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