

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL STUDENT RISK PETITION

Students need to submit a petition that demonstrates the educational value of the program/experience as well as a variety of steps to mitigate unknown health, safety, and security travel risks. Students are responsible for working with the appropriate individuals and utilizing available resources to prepare the written petition request. The petition requires substantial documentation; resources are outlined at the end of this document and should be referenced in the students' responses.

The petition proposal must be strongly linked to students' educational programs, and the concerns raised in the questions below must be adequately addressed and documented. In the absence of a compelling case and justification, it is unlikely that the International Travel Committee (ITC) will recommend that the Provost approve the travel petition request.

Once the petition is submitted to the International Travel Risk Analyst, it will take about two weeks for a decision to be reached either to approve or deny the travel petition request.

Petition Requirements

- Travel Proposal
- Student Mitigation Plan
- Letter of Recommendation from Sending Unit (i.e. faculty sponsor, department chair, or academic adviser) – **OIE students do not need to submit a letter of recommendation*
- Additional Materials

Travel Proposal — The travel proposal should provide responses to the following:

1. Student Information –
 - Major
 - Student status
2. Program Details –
 - Name of program
 - Name of host institution abroad (if different from program name)
 - Location (country, city, region)
 - Proposed dates of travel
 - Program overview in terms of academics and housing
 - Name and contact details for program emergency contacts
3. Why do you want to participate in this international experience?
 - a. Describe in detail how this international experience will fit into your academic plan and how it will contribute to fulfilling your degree requirements (cite specific courses, proposed areas of study, and learning opportunities available through the experience).
 - b. Are there any other reasons for your proposed travel?
4. Why is it academically essential for you to study abroad during the COVID-19 pandemic?
Can this travel be delayed or postponed?

5. Describe your previous experience traveling within this country, region, or area. How well do you speak the local language? Are there opportunities to further your understanding of this language while in-country?

Student Mitigation Plan — Students should work with host program officials, other in-country support structures, International SOS, sponsoring academic department, and other resources to answer the questions outlined below. The mitigation plan should include detailed responses to the following questions:

1. Medical and COVID-19

- a. What is the current COVID-19 situation in your intended host country?
- b. What are the host government's and program's arrival and quarantine requirements required for entry? Have you budgeted for quarantine plans (e.g. hotel, private room, etc.)?
- c. Does your host country have any specific regulations or compliance policies to control COVID-19 (curfew, in-country restrictions, etc.)?
- d. Is there availability of PPE (masks, hand sanitizer, etc.) for purchase in your host city?
- e. Do you have any pre-existing conditions that put you at greater risk? *Just a yes or no response is fine. If yes, please note if you've already spoken with your physician and the general recommendation given.*
- f. Do you have access to any medications you take for the duration (as well any possible extension), and/or can you gain access while abroad?
- g. Will your health insurance cover pandemic-related sickness and treatment?
- h. Have you received or scheduled a complete vaccination against COVID-19? If you have not yet received a vaccination, ensure that your travel plans do not interfere with its administration and consider the increased risk of exposure that travel presents. What progress is your destination country making in fully vaccinating their population? (See the U.S. Embassy [website](#) for your host country for information on approved vaccine[s]; see Our World in Data [website](#) for vaccine distribution)
- i. How robust is the health infrastructure and your support network in your host country, should you get sick?
- j. Will you have safe and effective access to high quality care for general medical issues and emergencies like appendicitis, broken bones, or gastrointestinal issues?
- k. What are the preferred local hospitals or on-call doctors for COVID-19 and other medical issues? Are these centers of medical excellence with English-speaking staff?
- l. Describe your responses to the following potential scenarios; be sure to have conversations with your loved ones and emergency contacts about these issues:
 - i. Last minute cancellation of your program
 - ii. If you test positive for COVID-19 prior to departure and need to delay travel (or if you test positive on arrival), how will this affect your arrival, class schedule, etc.?
 - iii. Developing COVID-like symptoms while on your program. How readily available is COVID testing, and what are the associated costs?
 - iv. Cancellation while in country. Consider the additional costs of a last-minute flight, additional housing costs, and non-refundable fees
 - v. Any associated costs back home if you must return early or quarantine separately
 - vi. Additional costs for being required to remain in country beyond your program dates. This can include, but is not limited to:
 1. Rapid changes in entry/exit requirements requiring that you shelter in place until you are able to return home, and/or
 2. Not being cleared to travel per CDC requirements for entry to the U.S.
 - vii. What are the requirements for returning to the U.S. after the conclusion of your program?

2. Program Support

- a. What are your program's protocols and plans regarding:
 - i. general COVID-19 safety plan including hygiene and sanitizing policies?
 - ii. social distancing and other requirements in classrooms and housing?
 - iii. housing and classrooms protocols?
 - iv. transportation?
 - v. field trips, site visits, and cultural experiences?
 - vi. isolation and quarantine housing for affected students, including beyond the program end date and to include provisions for meals, WIFI access?
 - vii. testing and contact tracing access and policies?
- b. Do you have access to a private room to reduce the spread and use for self-isolation?
- c. What would trigger the program's cancellation and/or evacuation? How would students be supported in the process?

3. Security & Safety

- a. Describe the program's instructions for how you are to respond in the event of a mass security incident (bombing, active shooter, violent protests) or a natural disaster incident (hurricane, earthquake, etc.)?
- b. Describe the program's instructions for how you are to respond in the event of a personal security incident, such as an assault or burglary?
- c. What is the local sentiment regarding visitors? Are there xenophobic views toward certain ethnicities and/or races?
- d. What is the political and social situation? Note that those areas more economically impacted by lockdowns may see an increase in crime rates.
- e. Are there multiple, daily international flights out of the country direct to the U.S.?

4. In-Country Considerations

- a. What do you anticipate your day-to-day life in your host country will look like given COVID-19?
- b. Will you have reliable and safe access to groceries, transportation, banking, etc.?
- c. If you get sick, how will your in-country contacts be able to support you? If they are limited in their support, what other support structures do you have access to?
- d. What are your travel plans while in-country? Are you prepared for travel to be significantly impacted or restricted?
- e. What would be your plans if you were traveling away from your host country, and you were unable to return?
- f. If your host country were to go back to a lockdown or curfew situation, are you prepared to shelter in place?
- g. How would you maintain access to food, healthcare, etc. while sheltering in place?
- h. If unable to return to the U.S. or your home country due to sheltering in place requirements, can any applicable visas be easily extended?

5. Academic Continuity

- a. What are the plans for remote learning if a you need to self-isolate or quarantine?
- b. If the program is canceled or a you need to withdraw before the end of the term, what are the arrangements for receiving remote instruction and credit for the program?
- c. Have you worked with your sending DU academic unit to discuss contingency plans regarding DU credits?
- d. Have you considered the possible academic and financial loss should your studies be disrupted (e.g. no refunds for housing, program fees, additional last minute flights, academic continuity, etc.)?

6. Travel Documents

- a. Is your passport current and valid at 6+ months beyond your return date?
- b. Is a visa required for your stay? If yes, where are you in the visa process?
- c. If an international student, you will need to research your visa allowances. Can you easily enter/exit the host country, home country, and U.S.?

Letter of Recommendation — ask that a faculty sponsor, department chair, or academic adviser send a letter to risk@du.edu. This letter should describe why the selected study abroad experience is a good and necessary academic fit for the student at this time. The recommender is not expected to comment on the relative health, safety, or security risk of the experience. – **OIE students do not need to submit a letter of recommendation.*

Additional Materials — feel free to compile any additional supporting documentation that supports the petition and will provide the International Travel Committee with a more complete understanding of the nature of the activity, plans to mitigate the risks, or prior relationships that have been established with your program or in-country contacts.

Resources

- Program/in-country support – these individuals will likely have procedures and information regarding health, safety, security, and evacuation.
- Contact International SOS to learn about their assessment of the health and safety risks in your intended destination country and city. You can contact International SOS by calling 215-942-8478 and providing DU's International SOS membership number: 11BSGC000067. You can also visit their [website](#) for country-specific information.
- Review the U.S. State Department [travel advisory](#) for your destination country.
- Review the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [traveler's health notices](#) for your destination country.
- Contact DU's International Travel Risk Analyst – courtney.niebrzydowski@du.edu - with any questions or concerns relating to the petition.