



ST. JOHN'S  
UNIVERSITY



# Study Abroad Pre-Departure Orientation Winter & Spring 2022

# Programming Notes

- Study abroad is a phenomenal opportunity. We'll cover some tough items up front, but don't lose sight: students' lives are transformed by international education, and even more so if they're thoughtful about what they hope to get out of them.
- This PPT is meant for students and families to help better understand our health and safety protocols

If you have any questions, please email us at  
[studyabroad@stjohns.edu](mailto:studyabroad@stjohns.edu)

# What our students need to know...

The content in this presentation is related to each student's process and preparation, as well as OIE's protocols for ensuring a safe and successful time abroad.

Deadlines for requirements are posted within each student's online study abroad portal.

- OIE Orientation Course
- Required Online Forms
- Cultural Mentorship Program
- Visa Application (Semester & Exchange Programs, and some Short-Term programs)

# What your students need to know...

## **The Repercussions of Missing Deadlines:**

- If students have questions about any requirements, they should contact our office as soon as possible.
- Failure to complete all OIE pre-departure requirements by the deadline can result in withdrawal from the program. We want to work with you and your students to avoid this if possible!

## **Why?**

- Many requirements (e.g., passports, visas, local COVID protocols) are well beyond St. John's control.
- Even though study abroad preparations can be complex, they're achievable by our motivated students. We trust them to keep on top of deadlines and requirements as preparation for the responsibility they'll take for their experience abroad.

# Safety and Study Abroad

# Safety on SJU's Programs and Locations

## OIE Partners and Resources

- St. John's own team of resident experts in Public Safety, Student Affairs, Legal Counsel, the Provost's Office and in each of the college divisions
- Itinerary review with Department of State (for locations with heightened security concerns)
- Overseas Advisory Council (OSAC) Contacts & Guidelines
- Department of State & the U.S. Embassies Abroad
- The Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization
- Best practices followed by other top study abroad universities and education abroad organizations
- Local ministries of health, education and foreign affairs in each of our destination countries
- ACUUPI and APUAF – associations of American universities in Italy and France

# Safety Abroad

## How Does SJU Prepare?

- **Public Safety (PS) and OIE Partnership:** PS/OIE maintain updated, comprehensive protocols or processes for emergencies. PS/OIE also review worldwide news 24/7, focused on program locations. PS also keeps itineraries and traveler/contact info for all programs in case of emergency.
- **Department of State (DOS) Review:** OIE/PS reviews itineraries in locations that have security concerns with local U.S. Consulate officers and with an organization called OSAC, to help ensure program safety. DOS is also on-call 24/7.
- **DOS Registration:** All U.S. citizens are registered before departure with the DOS Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP).
- **Insurance:** We maintain comprehensive study abroad insurance for all travelers covering physical and mental health
- **24/7 On-Call Help:** OIE is always available with on-call numbers in the U.S. and abroad. All student participants are required to have a working cell phone abroad.

**Tip:** Be prepared, but don't worry—we're a phone call away, and we're always here to help!

# Safety Abroad

## How Can Families Prepare?

- **Research Study & Travel Locations—including Independent Travel Locations—as a Family:** Check reliable resources to learn more, like the U.S. Department of State, the Overseas Security Advisory Council, and the Centers for Disease Control, for safety, health, weather, and other important details..
  - [studentsabroad.state.gov](https://studentsabroad.state.gov)
  - [travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov)
  - [www.osac.gov](https://www.osac.gov)
  - [www.cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)
- **Ensure Your Student Participates Fully in Pre-Departure and On-Site Orientation Activities:** We may review tips more than once, but that's because they're essential to minimizing risk and making the most of the experience.
- **Make a Communication Plan:** Know how you'll reach each other, during normal times and in the event of issues or emergencies. Ensure that your student has a phone on and charged at all times, and discloses their phone number—and independent travel plans—to you and to us.
- **Ensure Your Student Fulfills Program Requirements:** Online forms such as emergency contact info, flight details, international cell phone and independent travel plans help local teams connect with your students



# Safety Abroad

## How Do Students Prepare?

- Pre-Departure Orientation
- On-Site Orientation(s)
- Weekly meetings (Semester programs)
- Weekly Travel Email with up-to-date guidance and tips
- Online Form Submissions including:
  - Emergency Contact Information
  - International Cell Phone numbers
  - Weekly Independent Travel Form (or, waiver)
- **Encourage Your Students to Register Independent Travel** during, before and after their study abroad program with the **DOS STEP program**. STEP is a free service to allow U.S. citizens traveling abroad to enroll their trip with the nearest U.S. Embassy. Benefits include:
  - Receiving important information about safety conditions in your destination country, Allowing the U.S. Embassy contact you in an emergency
  - Helping family and friends get in touch with you in an emergency.

# Safety Abroad: Risks

**Inherent risks** are those that are unavoidable and outside of your control. Examples include:

- Illness
- Traffic accidents
- Inclement weather/natural disasters

**Avoidable Risks** are the ones that you can drastically reduce or even eliminate entirely just by using your head and taking the right measures. Examples include:

- Alcohol/Drug-related incidents.
- Illegal Cabs
- Pick pocketing

**Unavoidable Risks** are the ones that are unfortunately part of today's society and natural life. Examples include:

- Terrorist Attacks
- Natural Disasters

# Safety Abroad:

## Minimizing Risk & Maximizing Safety

### Keep a Low Profile

- Don't flaunt expensive items (e.g., phones, jewelry, digital cameras)
- Avoid "expected" tourist behavior, such as being loud in English, etc.
- Pick-pocketing is a common, opportunistic crime – don't make yourself a target!

### Be Aware of Your Surroundings

- Be wary of unsolicited help and overly friendly strangers; it may be a scam
- Beware of people bumping and pushing you (a common pickpocket scheme)
- Check to make sure you have all of your belongings before leaving anywhere (e.g., cab, bus, train, restaurant, etc.)
- Pay attention to what people around you are saying and doing
  - You don't need to understand the language to do this – if everyone is running from the bull, you should too! (fyi, we are **not** condoning the "running with the bulls" tradition)

# Safety Abroad:

## Minimizing Risk & Maximizing Safety

### Take Precautions

- Before you travel abroad:
  - Clean out your wallet (e.g., MetroCards)
  - Notify your banks and credit companies of the countries you'll be traveling to
  - Make copies (or scans, or take photos) of important documents, such as credit and debit cards and IDs (e.g., passport, visa)
- Leave anything you don't need at home (e.g., heirlooms)
- Limit how much cash you carry; use a credit card as much as possible
- Never keep all your documents and money in one place or in one suitcase
- Avoid dark, unsafe places and walking alone
- Find out which areas of the city are less safe than others

### Protect your friends

- Always keep an eye on each other and on each other's beverages, especially in unfamiliar settings
- Don't leave friends alone in strange places, even if they've made new friends.

# Safety Abroad: Getting Help for Individual Issues

## **(1) Contact Emergency Services (Ambulance, Police, Fire)**

- This should **always** be your first step in the event of a serious emergency. Should you need additional immediate assistance, contact on-site staff.
- Local emergency numbers are provided during on-site orientations

## **(2) Contact the on-site staff and/or the faculty/program leaders**

- On-site staff or program leader will instruct you on the next steps

## **(3) If you can't reach someone locally, call the Office of Public Safety in New York**

- Available 24/7 at +1-718-990-5252

## **Special note for parents:**

- During business hours, call OIE +1-718-990-6105: Mon.-Thurs. (8:30am-4:30pm), Fri (8:30am-3:00pm)
- Outside of business hours, call Public Safety +1-718-990-5252
- Someone from the Office of International Education in New York and abroad will always be on call in the event of an emergency.

# Safety Abroad: Emergency Protocol Communication Plan

## Students

1. If not at your program location/with St. John's staff or faculty: students check the cell phone number on file with Public Safety (make sure to update the number registered with UIS with your abroad number!). When relevant, St. John's will provide details on what to do next (e.g., where to go)
2. Call your abroad program location or program leader: students provide location and follow instructions (if any) on what to do next.
3. Students contact parents/emergency contacts to let them know that they are safe.

## Parents

1. Call your student & Public Safety
2. Check our Website & Your Email

# Study Abroad & COVID

# What to expect in this new world of travel!

- COVID restrictions of various kinds exist in every country at the moment making life abroad not dissimilar to the U.S.
- In Europe, access to indoor dining and public venues, including cultural sites and museums, is limited to visitors who can show their “green pass” or CDC card.
- Vaccinations rates are more than 10% above the U.S. vaccination rate in most of the countries we are working with (and keep in mind that we have canceled programs to destinations that we did not feel provided sufficient safety to our students!).
- Testing is required for international mobility by most countries around the world – and is required for return to the United States.
- The restrictions and guidelines change regularly – country by country - and OIE will communicate any import updates to all participants both prior to departure and on site.
- OIE can only allow vaccinated students to participate at this time.
- OIE strongly recommends getting your booster prior to departure – Italy has just announced a 6-month limit on vaccine validity and we expect other countries to follow suit.



## Prior to departure

- Check with your airlines about their own requirements and recommendations.
- Get a COVID test 48-72 hours before departure, depending on the test. Ireland differentiates between the PCR test (72 hours) and the antigen test (48 hours).
- Carry your CDC vaccination card with you (both the physical copy and a photo of your card on your phone).
- Most countries will require a digital passenger locator form to be completed ahead of departure.
- Watch for OIE emails, our Worldwide Wednesday and Program Welcome Letters!

# Once Abroad

- Stay informed on local mask mandates and protocols, and be sure to carry a copy of your ID and vaccination card wherever you go.
- In Paris, students will be required to obtain a digital green pass, available online for students with French visas and in-person upon arrival for students traveling without the French visa (short-term or WES students).
- No quarantine requirement currently for vaccinated travelers.
- Fall 2021: no issues with student arrivals! Only one breakthrough case that was handled following local guidance. St. John's has reserved space on each campus to handle such situations.

**Vaccinations and boosters are not currently available to U.S. citizens abroad. Students whose proof of vaccination “expires” while they are abroad may be subject to more heightened restrictions and stricter testing protocols. **Get your booster!!****

# Travel and Returning Home

- All students traveling on our programs abroad have been recommended not to travel to other countries during their time abroad.
- Students who are unable to return to campus due to exposure to COVID in another country will be financially responsible for their housing and meals during any period of quarantine or self-isolation.
- Students will be required to be tested within 24 hours of returning to the United States.
- For short-term program participants: check with your airline if they accept a CDC-approved home-test kit for your return!
- St. John's is prepared to assist in all cases of required self-isolation or quarantine beyond the program's end date.

# Student Conduct Expectations

# Expectations: Student Conduct

## Expectations for Student Behavior

- All students in a Study Abroad program are bound by the St. John's Student Code of Conduct and are held to an even higher standard when **representing St. John's** in another country
  - Fewer "chances" before major sanctions are levied
  - Slightly different adjudication process than on the home campus
- Sanctions are determined as a collaboration between the local staff and the Office of Student Conduct in New York
- Serious or repeated violations of the Code of Conduct may lead to immediate dismissal from your study abroad program
- Most sanctions are educational and will involve learning opportunities, though some sanctions involve restrictions on travel or group activities

# Expectations: Student Conduct

## University Alcohol Policy

The following behaviors are all violations:

- Sale, use, distribution, consumption or procurement of alcohol beverages for anyone who is under the age of 21.
- Being in the presence of alcohol on campus.
- Suspicion of alcohol intoxication
- Public disruption due to intoxication or drunkenness.

# Expectations: Student Conduct

## University Drugs Policy

- If a drug is illegal in the United States, it is considered illegal for use, possession or distribution by a student in a study abroad program
- Drug violations may lead to a dismissal from the program
- Purchasing drugs in foreign countries is especially risky due to legal implications

# Health and Wellness



# Health Abroad: Health Insurance

(We've got you covered!)

- Automatically provided to all students going abroad through CHUBB Health Insurance
- Acts as your primary health insurance outside the U.S.
- Will assist you with making doctor appointments while abroad & provides instructions on pharmacies and how to fill prescriptions
- If you must bring medication with you, contact your prescribing doctor to determine ...
  - what the medication is called in that country and whether or not it is legal
  - we recommend bringing a full supply with you – by requesting a “vacation override” if possible
  - always bring prescriptions in the original container and with a copy of the written prescription
  - If your prescribing doctor needs assistance making this determination, you can email Gallagher ([GallagherGlobalAssistance@ajg.com](mailto:GallagherGlobalAssistance@ajg.com)) and indicate that you are a St. John's student studying abroad on an upcoming program who needs assistance with pre-trip planning.

# Using CHUBB Insurance Abroad

- Insurance cards will be emailed from CHUBB directly to students' SJU email address shortly before departure. More info on how to use the insurance and app abroad will be provided during on-site orientation.
  - The insurance card should be saved on your phone or printed and kept in your wallet.
- On-site staff can assist with locating a hospital or doctor. They can recommend doctors who speak English and are used to working with our students.
- In some locations, we have been able to arrange for direct billing with CHUBB. For others, students will need to pay out of pocket and submit for reimbursement. Please keep all receipts if reimbursement is needed and submit them directly to CHUBB.

# Health Abroad: Continuity of Care

- If you have:
  - A chronic medical condition
  - Ongoing psychiatric or psychological condition

It is very important that you continue any treatment you are receiving while you are abroad.

- Discuss your treatment needs with your healthcare provider and consider whether or not studying abroad is appropriate for you at this time.

# Resources for Mental Health Concerns

- CHUBB Insurance – can arrange appointments with local providers that are fluent in English and comfortable working with students from U.S. institutions.
- On-site staff – can connect you with the same local providers, and are also someone you can speak with (though they are not counselors).
- Pre-departure resources – work with your current counselor or therapist to discuss coping strategies abroad, and whether they are open to continuing sessions by Skype/phone while you are abroad
- St. John's After-Hours Mental Health Helpline – (718) 990 6352 – For immediate support when a local in-country mental health providers is not available, St. John's students who may have anxiety, depression, relationship issues and more serious concerns. Only available when St. John's offices in New York are not open.

# Health Abroad: Diet & Exercise

## Nutrition

- Be aware of your specific dietary needs, especially with new cuisine and foreign language menus.
  - Create a local language “cheat sheet” for yourself as a note on your phone.
  - The on-site staff are an excellent resource
- Eat new foods in moderation giving your stomach time to adjust to new foods.
- Try a new dish every week
- Drink plenty of water
- Avoid American fast-food joints



## Exercise

- Walk around and explore
- Find a jogging buddy
- Bring a resistance band with you
- Research fun YouTube workout videos





# Remember to be extra sensitive to your friends

# Living Abroad: Culture Shock

- Recognize symptoms:
  - Sadness / Homesickness / Loneliness
  - Anger / Irritability / Resentment
  - Anxiety/Depression
- Coping mechanism and strategies:
  - Become familiar with cultural norms
  - Keep an open mind
  - Talk to someone, a friend or any of the on-site staff
  - Get adequate sleep
  - Allow time to relax at the end of the day or in between events
  - Engage in conversations and activities with others on the program
  - Set aside time for yourself.
- Don't let the little things get you down!
  - Recognize that what you are experiencing is culture shock and that the feelings are temporary.



# What to Expect Abroad



# Arrival: Calling Home

- Set up a communication plan with family and friends.
  - Discuss how and how frequently you'll communicate while abroad.
  - A plan manages expectations and avoids needless worry.
- Discuss how you'll communicate while abroad.
  - E-mail, WhatsApp, FaceTime/Skype, Facebook, and other online voice and video services are good options for longer talks.
  - All students are required to have a cell phone while abroad and to keep it turned on and charged at all times – for emergency use and quick calls.
  - Know country and dialing codes (e.g., 011 from the U.S.)



# Cell Phones Abroad

**All students are required to have a cell phone that will work in their host country and remain charged and on at all times in case of an emergency.** Study abroad students are **required to submit the cell phone number they intend to use abroad *prior* to departure**, just to ensure we have a way to reach the students (and vice versa) in the event of urgent issues or emergencies. This phone must be able to place and receive voice phone calls (not over WiFi/data) in the host country and the countries where students plan to travel independently during their study abroad program, and remain charged and on at all times.

Many students choose to use their U.S. phones while abroad, largely because they only use the phone itself for emergencies, while using WiFi – rather than data – for all the phone's smartphone functions to keep in touch with family and friends. Check with your carrier for details.

# Cell Phones Abroad

Additional tips for staying in contact with friends and family both in the U.S. and abroad:

- **Check with your carrier** – if this option sounds good to you, be sure to find out how much it would cost if you received or made a call or SMS text from abroad (simply having the phone turned on, with data roaming off, costs nothing).
- **Keep cellular coverage on, data off** – this will prevent exorbitant roaming charges while still enabling you to make and receive calls. It is important that you check with your carrier to find out how much it would cost if you made or received a call or text.
- **Use WiFi and embrace messaging apps** – though it may be slower than what you are used to in the U.S., WiFi is available at the Rome campus and Paris and Limerick locations as well as some local coffee shops. Be sure to tell your friends and family which apps you will be using abroad so that they can download the applications before you leave.
- **Purchase a Local Pre-Paid Cell Phone** – pay as you go phones or SIM cards are generally cheap and easy to find in each location and can give you peace of mind that you won't rack up a large phone bill by the end of the semester. If you want to place a local SIM in your U.S. cell phone it must be **unlocked** and be able to function using a **GSM SIM card**.

## Arrival: Transportation

- Information about traveling to the program location will be provided to students the week prior to the program's start date in their "Welcome Letter." Note that St. John's does not provide transportation from the airport to the program location.
- Exception: Students on the Global Passport Program group flight will be provided transportation between the airport and our Paris location, upon both arrival and departure.
- Rome no longer permits group pick-up at the airports.

# Preparing to Go: Baggage

## Luggage Requirements

- Baggage allowances vary based on airline, destination and class of ticket booked
- Check with your airline for specific details – you are responsible for knowing the restrictions on your baggage
- For **transatlantic international flights** (e.g. *New York to Rome* or *New York to Paris*.) most airlines generally allow:
  - One bag per person with 1 carry-on and 1 personal item
  - Checked baggage cannot be over 50 lbs. – airlines will charge fees for any baggage over the weight limit.
- **Remember to leave room for souvenirs!**
- **Shipping/Mailing Packages to/from the U.S.**
  - Don't do it!
  - If you do, St. John's will not be responsible for lost items, items detained by customs, or any other issues encountered.
  - Postcards and letters are great!



## Preparing to Go: Baggage

- **WES, Ozanam & Catholic Scholars:** Flights between European cities limit your luggage allowance for the Semester to:
  - **One checked bag under 44 lbs;** no larger than 62 linear inches (height + length + width needs to total 62 inches or less),
  - **One carry-on bag under 20 lbs;** no larger than 21 inches long x 13 inches wide x 7 inches high).
  - **Excess baggage will not be allowed on the plane.**



# Preparing to Go: Finances

## Money Abroad

- Multiple methods
  - ATM: Check with your bank to make sure your card will work overseas (e.g., Plus, Cirrus, Visa Check Card, etc.)
  - Credit Cards: Visa or MasterCard; avoid Discover and American Express
  - Visa TravelMoney (Prepaid Card)
- Know the exchange rate
  - Visit sites like [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com); [gocurrency.com](http://gocurrency.com)
- Utilize Online Banking
- We recommend bringing *some* local currency with you – the equivalent of \$100
- Make a money management plan



# Additional Semester Program Finances

**Airfare to and from Europe:** \$1,000-\$1,500

**Total Estimated Additional While in Europe Expenses:** ~\$4,000

**Meals not covered by fee:** \$800-\$1,000

Each location has a different meal plan and relies on local cuisine

**Books & Course Excursions:** \$150-\$200

**Personal Spending:** \$2,000-\$4,000

Cell phone, laundry, toiletries, weekend travel





# Living Abroad: Meals (Semester Programs)

- Meal plans, like the food, are different in each location; the food is *local*, so you generally will not find traditional American staples.
- Food options will be more limited than what you would find at a U.S. college cafeteria.
- Details concerning food options and meal times will be provided during on-site orientations.
- St. John's provides roughly 4 breakfasts + 4 other meals per week, on average. (Meals are not provided during university breaks/only provided when classes are in session).
- Consult the on-site staff if you have special dietary needs – they're an excellent resource!



# Living Abroad: Information Technology

- Nearly all students take their SJU or personal laptops with them to Europe.
- A small computer lab is available within the Rome and Paris locations. In Paris it's more like a "printing station." In Limerick, students can print on campus and use the MIC computer lab facilities.
- IT support services are available abroad if need be – students should contact on-site staff for assistance.

# Living Abroad: Local Transportation

You will be given more detailed information about local public transportation services at each of the on-site orientations.

- Use public transportation whenever possible
  - Planes, trains, and no automobiles – take the bus!
  - Students should never rent a car or other vehicle and drive during a study abroad program or independent travel.
- More Americans are injured in traffic accidents abroad than by any other incident. Make sure that you stay alert!

**You will be responsible for local transportation.  
Be sure to budget!**

# What Parents Need to Know Before They Go

- Get a passport or make sure your current passport is valid for the duration of your son/daughter's program
- Visit your student, but avoid visiting at the beginning of the program:
  - Transitioning into his/her new (temporary) home
  - May hinder decision making, problem solving and adjustment to the new situation
- The best time to visit is the end or after the program
  - S/he will be able to show you around, demonstrate their savvy travel and foreign language skill – and focus on enjoying your company!

Keep in mind that U.S. citizens may only spend **89 days or fewer** in the Schengen territory within a 180 day period without a visa. Students participating in the Western Europe Semester program will have very few additional days to travel in Schengen either before or after the program.

# Let us know if you have any questions!

Phone: 718-990-6105

Email: [studyabroad@stjohns.edu](mailto:studyabroad@stjohns.edu)





# Office of International Education

## Queens Campus:

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Queens, NY 11439  
Phone 718-990-6105  
Fax 718-990-2321  
[studyabroad@stjohns.edu](mailto:studyabroad@stjohns.edu)

## Hours

Monday-Thursday: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

## Staten Island Campus:

Office of International Education  
Campus Center, Room B18  
St. John's University  
300 Howard Avenue  
Staten Island, NY 10301  
Phone (718) 390-4035  
[studyabroad@stjohns.edu](mailto:studyabroad@stjohns.edu)

## Hours

Fall 2019: Mondays & Tuesdays  
8:30am-4:30pm until finals

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