



COVID-19 FAQs

(updated as of October 13, 2020)

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATION

1. How will I receive updates about programs?

The Programs Abroad Office will contact students that that are pending, accepted, or committed to programs directly via email with updates as soon as they become available. The FAQs document will be updated frequently throughout each semester as more information becomes available.

2. Who can I contact at the University of Tennessee about the Coronavirus, or Covid-19, as it relates to my education abroad program?

Students with questions about the status of their education abroad program should contact their Programs Abroad Office Coordinator at volsabroad@utk.edu, or 865-974-3177.

DECISION-MAKING

3. How is the University of Tennessee, Knoxville monitoring the Covid-19 situation worldwide?

UT is monitoring Covid-19 in close cooperation with the Overseas Security Advisory Council (an office of the US Department of State), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and our private health, safety and security partners. University updates can be found on this webpage: <https://utk.edu/coronavirus>.

4. How does UT make decisions about its education abroad program statuses?

UT consults the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the US Department of State, and our private health, safety, and security partners. When making decisions about specific programs, UT also considers local conditions, important dates and deadlines, and input from peer institutions and overseas partners.

5. When will I know if my education abroad program is running as planned or if it will be canceled?

Program plans will move forward unless you receive notification of a suspension or cancellation decision. Students should avoid making financial commitments on items such as flights or housing. The Programs Abroad Office will communicate with applicants regularly and provide program information and status updates directly via email.

We anticipate any necessary cancellation decisions to be made in October for spring programs and in March for May, mini-term and summer programs. Fall and academic year programs will have varying timelines during late spring and summer for possible cancellation.

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6. What are reliable resources about Covid-19 that I can use to stay up-to-date and make informed decisions?

- [University of Tennessee Covid-19 Information and Support Webpage](#)
- [UTK Student Health Center](#)
- [U.S. Department of State](#)
- [Center for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)
- [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#)
- [European Centre for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

STATUS OF FUTURE PROGRAMS

7. What is the status of future education abroad programs?

Education Abroad programs for spring, mini-term, and summer 2021 are proceeding as planned, with some exceptions. Spring break 2021 programs have been moved to the beginning of May. Although education abroad programs were canceled for 2020, we are cautiously optimistic that conditions in some or all of our program locations will improve. The pandemic has affected cities, countries, and regions of the world differently. The Programs Abroad Office will continue monitoring situations and communicating status updates and further developments to applicants directly via email.

See Appendix below for academic year 2020-2021 programs that have been canceled.

8. If I applied to a non-UT sponsored program with a UT affiliate (i.e. CEA, CIEE, IES, ISA, etc.), am I eligible to participate in one of their education abroad programs?

You may be eligible to study abroad if your program provider has not canceled your program and there is not a [CDC](#) Level 3 Health Notice or a [Department of State](#) Level 4 Travel Advisory for the host country when the program begins. Depending on your program start date, your program may or may not be affected. Please stay in communication with the Programs Abroad Office about your program status.

Check UT affiliate providers' websites for updates on how COVID-19 is affecting their programs:

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| • API Abroad | • IES Abroad |
| • CEA Study Abroad | • ISA |
| • CET Study Abroad | • SAI |
| • CIEE | • Semester at Sea |
| • DIS Study Abroad in Scandinavia | • SIT Study Abroad |
| | • USAC |

PROGRAM CANCELATIONS

9. What's the difference between program cancellations and program suspensions?

If your program is canceled, it is no longer running for the term. It may be offered again in the future. If your program is suspended, it is on hold. The Programs Abroad Office will communicate status updates and offer alternatives to students.

10. What happens if an education abroad program is canceled?

Academic Information

If programs are canceled, UT will work with students to identify alternative academic options. The University is committed to supporting our students' academic success. In all cases, the Programs Abroad Office will work with our partner institutions and organizations, as well as the student's academic department at UT to identify appropriate academic solutions. Online/remote coursework or other opportunities may be available as an alternative for you. The Programs Abroad Office will communicate such possibilities directly to students.

We will also work closely with the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships to provide support and guidance where appropriate. Moreover, students should always consult with their academic advisors regarding their academic plans.

Financial Information

If you plan to participate on a UT Faculty-directed, Academic Internship or Exchange program and it is canceled prior to the start date, you will **not** be charged tuition or any fees associated with the program.

If you are participating in a UT Affiliate or Direct program, you would need to contact those organizations to learn what costs are refundable. In most cases UT partner organizations such as affiliates and direct programs will make every effort to waive or reduce fees associated with study abroad in emergency situations.

WITHDRAWALS

11. What happens if a student withdraws from a future education program out of concern for Covid-19?

UT understands that personal tolerance for risk may vary, and that final decisions will be made between a student and their family/financial supporters. If a student chooses to withdraw from a future education abroad program after committing to participate, the student will be subject to the terms of the applicable withdrawal policy which can be found in the students' Vols Abroad portal and, if applicable, their program provider's documentation. Should the Programs Abroad Office ultimately cancel a UT Faculty-Directed, Academic Internship or Exchange program prior to the start date (even after the student has withdrawn), the student will receive a full refund of the program fee, tuition (if applicable), and study abroad administrative fee.

12. What happens if I want to leave a current program early due to Covid-19?

UT will make every effort to assist any student that wishes to leave their host country/program early. They should understand important policies and procedures prior to their withdrawal or departure. Please email volsabroad@utk.edu or contact the Programs Abroad Office at (865) 974-3177 if this decision is made.

INSURANCE

13. Where can I find information about UT's education abroad policies and coverage?

Please visit the Programs Abroad Office's [Health Insurance webpage](#) for more information.

14. Should I purchase trip cancellation or interruption insurance and/or refundable airfare?

The Programs Abroad Office strongly recommends that students purchase fully refundable airline tickets and trip protection insurance to safeguard against losses or penalties associated with withdrawal or program cancellation. The Programs Abroad Office assumes no responsibility for such losses or penalties.

Please visit the Programs Abroad Office's [Health Insurance webpage](#) for more information.

15. Is medical care for Covid-19 covered by insurance?

Education abroad insurance coverages typically include medical care if you become ill for a wide variety of reasons, including a Covid-19 diagnosis. Students would consult with their program contacts on-site, local medical professionals, and the insurance provider to determine the best course of action, in the event of infection. This could include receiving care locally or a medical evacuation if deemed necessary.

GUIDANCE and COVID-19

16. What is the protocol for Covid-19 in my host country?

The protocol for traveling to and from international destinations, and that country's Covid-19 information and data reporting, is country-specific. The best place to find information on COVID-19 in a specific country is through that country's Ministry of Health and government websites, US Embassies and Consulates overseas, the [Center for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), and the [U.S. Department of State](#).

Students should expect to follow all guidelines for Covid-19 in their host country. These can change prior to or during a program. Your program contacts will maintain regular communication with you and share important information as soon as it becomes available.

17. Will the program I choose be different compared to previous programs because of Covid-19?

Programs are designed to give students great academic experiences and provide opportunities to see their subject area in a new way with local immersion. Although immersion may look different and adjustments may be necessary, programs always strive to include rewarding, hands-on experience with coursework and out-of-class experiences. The Programs Abroad Office is working closely with our program leaders and providers to best understand and implement all the ways this is possible.

18. Who can I contact at the University of Tennessee about Covid-19 guidance as it relates to my education abroad program?

Students with questions about the status of their education abroad program should contact their Programs Abroad Office Coordinator, volsabroad@utk.edu, or 865-974-3177.

Appendix – Canceled UT education abroad programs for the 2020-2021 academic year (as of October 13, 2020)

- Fall 2020: ALL programs in ALL locations
 - Academic year 2020-2021 programs may be deferred until spring semester 2021
 - UT Architecture Fall Semester in Tokyo has been postponed until spring semester 2021
- Spring 2021:
 - Macquarie University
 - Massey University
 - University of Canberra
 - University of New South Wales
 - CCI Global Communication Scholars Semester in Sydney has been postponed to (anticipated) fall 2021