

Message to Study Abroad Students 03/13/20

Dear Baruch Students Abroad,

I am sorry for the delay in sending this out, but we only received the final go ahead at 4:42 a.m. this morning (Friday, New York time).

You should have received an email message from Dr. Kim Holland, the University Director of Global Education and Initiatives at CUNY recommending that students return home. We are forwarding that email with our support.

Please understand: you are not being required to return. The situations in different countries in which you are located around the world vary significantly in terms of volume of reported cases of COVID-19, as do the extent and success of policies on the parts of governments to contain and mitigate the spread of the disease. This now applies to the New York metropolitan area as well. However, the continued spread of the disease, and the disruptions to international travel and potential restrictions on your ability to return later that might arise, and the uncertainty of how long it might take for this situation to change, makes it imperative that you think very seriously, and consult your family, about your decision to remain. **We recommend that you return**, but of course **we will offer our full support to any student who wishes to remain**.

If you wish to return, please note that this recall is being organized differently from the earlier recalls from Italy, Japan and South Korea. In particular:

- CUNY will be focusing on individual bookings for students, not on arranging charter flights
- CUNY will make available space in a dorm in Brooklyn for any student wanting a supported, “quartered” self-isolation option.
- CUNY is offering students returning, including those returning home as well as those opting for quartered self-isolation (also known as “self-quarantine”) car service to get safely from the airport to your destination.

As you may have heard, the Governor of New York earlier ordered the recall of students from China, Iran, Italy, Japan and South Korea. For that recall, Governor Cuomo authorized charter flights for the returning students, with funds allocated for that purpose by the Governor. Unfortunately, and somewhat unexpectedly, to date the Governor has not made the same commitment regarding the bookings for the flights home of students being recommended to return home now. As a consequence, your return flights are your financial responsibility. At Baruch we assume that many of you purchased a return ticket before you left. Moreover, the Weissman Center for International Business offered all students on semester programs a fellowship that was intended to cover things like airfare and related costs of study abroad. If you encounter rebooking fees, or similar charges, we will be able to help defray those, but I am afraid that this is the limit of our ability. CUNY has said that some “hardship funds” might become available, but there is no guarantee. So please make sure you keep all receipts for expenses incurred, both for the cost of the flight and any additional charges, for reimbursement purposes.

If you do decide to return, please complete the attached form and send it back to me via email, if at all possible before you depart.

As I wrote in a previous email to you, we understand that you are

rightly concerned about what impact your return will have on the credits you are hoping to earn during your semester abroad. In order to help you maintain your “academic continuity,” we have been discussing with our partner universities abroad plans they might have for allowing students who leave to continue their courses remotely, and those conversations will continue. On our end, CUNY has “asked faculty and staff to be prepared to accommodate, to the greatest reasonable extent, affected students, including, but not limited to, facilitating enrollment after the deadline, fast-tracking academic advising, permitting make-up exams and extending due dates of final assignments and projects.” We reiterate our commitment to use all means at our disposal to help you complete your academic work for this semester. Please understand: we cannot “guarantee” any student credit for study abroad in advance, if for no other reason than you must earn a high enough grade to be eligible for transfer credit. What we have done successfully for students who have already returned, and promise to any students who decide to return, is that we will do our utmost to find ways to give you the opportunity to earn the credits you would have earned abroad.

As you know, all instruction at CUNY has been moved to a remote, internet-based alternative learning platforms. We will be working within this framework to supplement the alternative remote learning options that have been provided by your host institution abroad.

Your health and safety are our principal concern, but we will help you continue your academic progress as well. In any event, we will support you, whatever decision you take.

With all good wishes,

Dr. Richard Mitten
Director of Study Abroad
Baruch College, City University of New York
One, Bernard Baruch Way Box J-0810
New York, NY 10010
Tel. +1 646 312-2076 Fax: +1 646 312-2071
www.baruch.cuny.edu/study-abroad/

This is the message you should have received from Dr. Holland at CUNY:

Dear Student,

You are receiving this because according to our records, you are currently abroad. In response to the spread of COVID-19 and uncertainty about how borders will be managed over the next few weeks, CUNY is strongly encouraging all students abroad to return to New York as soon as possible, and to follow DHHS guidance on self-isolation.

If you have not already booked a flight and would like support, please contact your CISI insurance service for these cases: crisis@culturalinsurance.com. Although pandemics are not covered as a security evacuation occurrence, they can be extremely helpful at helping you secure a flight on short notice, and when the airlines are hard to reach.

We are also preparing to:

(1) accommodate students who cannot safely self-isolate at home in a dormitory in Brooklyn, and

(2) to provide car service from the airport. Please note that you should avoid public transportation at all costs.

These resources will be offered on a space-available basis, with priority to students from the countries currently considered highest risk. An early response is in your best interest.

To let CUNY know about your plans and preferences, please take the following steps ASAP.

(1) fill in your information on this Dropbox spreadsheet. Please be careful not to change anyone else's data.

(2) confirm your plans with the study abroad office at the campus sponsoring your program, or at your home campus if you are doing a non-CUNY program. Please cc evac-support@cuny.edu.

(3) if you book or have booked a return flight, please send the confirmation to the same addresses, AND update the spreadsheet.

In order to reach everyone who is potentially impacted, you may have received this even if you have already told us that you have returned or are still in New York. If so, please send confirmation to evac-support@cuny.edu to ensure our records are updated.

We need your help to reach as many of you as possible with these support services. I appreciate your following up as soon as possible. All of us at CUNY look forward to your safe return, and to your return to campus as soon as you have been medically cleared.

Sincerely,

Kim Holland, Ph.D.
University Director of Global Education and Initiatives
The City University of New York