Dear Study Abroad Fall 2020 Student:

The Newcomb-Tulane College Office of Study Abroad sincerely hopes that you are settling into a routine as you begin to prepare for final exams. We know that you are experiencing much uncertainty and ambiguity right now for your upcoming Fall study abroad semester.

Please know that OSA is currently working closely in coordination with your study abroad programs, host institutions, the Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response, and the Office of the Provost to provide as much information as possible regarding your options for study abroad for Fall 2020. The university will make a final determination about fall study abroad by early June. We continue to hope that study abroad will be possible for Tulane students in Fall 2020, though we expect that the realities of COVID-19 will continue to be present at home and abroad.

Program Continuance and Term Flexibility: OSA understands that it is difficult dealing with the ambiguity of the Fall semester. Please be reminded that Tulane’s OSA has waived any financial penalties and barriers for students that would like to postpone study abroad to Spring 2021 or beyond or to cancel completely. Study abroad providers and host institutions have also made similar adjustments to their refund and cancellation policies. Students interested in deferring or cancelling should reach out to their study abroad advisor as well as to their program provider or host institution to communicate their plans. In the case of a deferral of your Tulane application, there is no need to reapply.

Delays in Application Processing: At this time our office is not signing home school nominations or providing visa letters for study abroad in light of the global travel advisory issued by the CDC. You can still complete your secondary application to your program of choice. Your spot on the program will remain reserved. However, your host institution or provider will likely await the home school nomination before issuing final acceptance as this form indicates that Tulane authorizes your participation in the program. Processing of these forms will remain on hold while Newcomb Tulane College Office of Study Abroad considers the safest course of action for Fall 2020 in all of our program locations.

Deciding if a Deferral is Right for You: While unfortunately we do not have definitive and consistent guidance for all students at this time, the following are factors that every student should take into consideration when deciding if deferring to another semester may be right for them.

- **What is your level of tolerance for program ambiguity as we move closer to the start of the Fall term and beyond?**

  Tulane has yet to make a final decision on continuance of Fall programs, and students should realize they will also be awaiting a response from their chosen program or host institution. Different programs will have varying timelines for rendering final decisions on continuance or cancellation. Students should also be aware that a level of uncertainty will
likely persist beyond their program start date—as the Spring 2020 semester has taught us, cancellations could happen at the last moment or even after arrival onsite.

- **What are the local COVID-19 conditions and what is your willingness to follow program or host institution protocols around mandated quarantines or self-isolation should a pandemic plan become necessary during your study abroad semester?**
  Students should consider the possibility of encountering an emergency situation abroad or encountering host country health mandates which will vary widely depending on your intended destination.

- **What is your host institution’s academic continuity plan?**
  OSA will determine that all study abroad programs have an academic continuity plan as part of their overall pandemic emergency preparedness plan. However, students should remain in close contact with their program, paying attention to stated contingency plans about academics and potential quarantine scenarios. It may be possible that not all courses would remain available to you online in the case of an extended closure, or in the event of a second wave of the virus.

- **What are my expectations/goals for my semester abroad and will a modified program structure meet them?**
  You can expect that any program that runs during the Fall semester will be “localized” due to the realities of COVID-19. You will likely experience restricted mobility: **weekend travel both in and outside of your host country may be limited, organized group trips may be minimal, housing arrangements may be altered to ensure student safety and proper social distancing.**

- **What is the refund policy of your program provider/host institution?**
  Become familiar with the deadline set by your program/host institution for receiving a refund on your program fee should you decide that you do not want to travel or if you decide to depart the program early. Students should also consider refund policies for room and board and flight purchases made independently of the program.

- **How might my program be altered by COVID?**
  Some programs may be delayed due to suspensions in visa issuance, which may mean that your time abroad will be shortened (often to 89 days). Some programs are considering hybrid learning models where some instruction will be delivered online.

**OSA’s Current Recommendations: What should I be doing now?**

- **Visa Processes:** Many host countries have suspended long-term visa processing in light of the virus. We are currently working with our study abroad partners to identify solutions to these new challenges. If you intend to study abroad during the Fall term, we recommend that you familiarize yourself with the visa process and collect all necessary documents. If possible, students should wait for program confirmation from the Tulane study abroad office and their host institution before applying for your visa.

- **Should I purchase my flight?** We recommend that you do not purchase flight tickets at this time. However, if you feel the need to purchase now, it is in your best interest to
purchase a refundable ticket and travel insurance. Please read all airline and travel insurance policies carefully should you decide to book your flight as some policies may not cover cancellations due to COVID-19.

· **What about housing?** We recommend that you do not submit housing deposits until we know the status of Fall 2020 programs. However, housing on some programs is allocated on a first-come first-served basis. If you feel it is in your best interest to apply for housing now, please familiarize yourself with the refund policies in case of program cancellation.

· **Register for Fall Classes:** Given the exceptional circumstances, students registered to study abroad through a Tulane-approved program will be able to register in April for Fall 2020 on-campus classes as well as for your Fall study abroad program. This allows you to register for Tulane fall classes as if you were not planning to study abroad, while also preserving your study abroad option. Students will be permitted to register for 31 total credits: 12 study abroad “placeholder” credits and 19 on campus credits. Once you've decided whether you’re studying abroad or not, please drop either the on-campus classes or the study abroad classes, as appropriate.

We realize that for many of you, studying abroad in Fall 2020 remains a goal and you may not be deterred by the global pandemic. You may see this as a unique time to experience how the world is coping and managing a global health crisis. We are here to support these intercultural exchanges and global endeavors and will be monitoring to be sure that we are allowing this in a safe way.

We thank you for your patience and flexibility at this time as the COVID-19 situation unfolds. Should you have any questions or concerns about study abroad for Fall 2020 please do not hesitate to reach out to the Office of Study Abroad or schedule a remote meeting with a study abroad advisor [here](#).

Best,

The Office of Study Abroad
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Sincerely,

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