FSU International Programs FYA
Spring 2021 Frequently Asked Questions

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Spring 2021 Plan

Will Spring 2021 programs proceed as planned?
Yes! After an extensive planning process, International Programs received approval from the President and the Provost to reopen the Florence, London, and Valencia study centers.

With that in mind, you should be doing the following at this time:

- Thoroughly reviewing all information provided in this document
- Completing all checklist items currently listed in the IP Student Portal under your Spring 21 record
- Completing all immigration tasks as indicated via email and through the IP Student Portal
  - If you do not currently have a passport valid until 6 months after your program end date, you should contact IP-Visas@fsu.edu ASAP
- Making payments for your program by the corresponding payment dates
- Frequently checking your IP Student Portal notifications for updates from our office

How could COVID-19 impact my program?
Due to the uncertain nature of the pandemic, all program elements including the program calendar, weekly schedule, classroom environment, course delivery, housing arrangements, transportation policies, and international or in-country travel restrictions, are subject to modification at any time in order to comply with local public health recommendations as well as the policies and practices of Florida State University.

What policies will be put in place to mitigate the spread of COVID-19?
Students will be required to follow all guidance and regulations required by FSU and local host authorities regarding COVID-19, including but not limited to:

Testing, Screening, and Contact Tracing
All students will be required to submit proof of a negative COVID-19 test in the days leading up to departure. All students should expect to be tested at least once upon arrival to their study center location; some students may be required to test more than once if required by their host country.

Students may be required to undergo additional testing, screening, or contact tracing during the program, for a variety of reasons including following a positive COVID-19 test, suspected exposure to a COVID-19 positive or presumptive positive individual, display of COVID-19 symptoms, or as required by the host country or University.

All program participants will be enrolled in an international insurance policy through Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI). The policy will cover COVID-19 testing during the dates of coverage for those who are symptomatic, or those who have had a known exposure to a person who tested positive.

Self-Quarantine or Isolation
All students should expect to self-quarantine or isolate in their apartments upon arrival, though exact periods differ across study center locations. IP will notify students of their specific requirements closer to departure, as host country rules, regulations, and expectations surrounding self-quarantine or isolation requirements can change rapidly.

Students may be required to self-quarantine or isolate at other points during the program, including due to a positive COVID-19 test, suspected exposure to a COVID-19 positive or presumptive positive individual, display of COVID-19 symptoms, or as required by the host country or University.
Study Center staff will provide support during these periods in various ways, including through support for arranging meal/food delivery and virtual services. Study center faculty and staff will ensure that students can continue their studies remotely if they are able to do so.

Masks
Students must always wear masks, except when inside their individual apartment interacting with their own roommates. This includes during classes, site visits & excursions, when visiting students in other apartments, and whenever directed by study center staff or required under local regulations.

Study Center Facilities
Social distancing guidelines will be in place at each study center. All study center facilities will be cleaned, sanitized, and disinfected according to local guidance for educational institutions. Consistent hygiene and social distancing signage will be displayed throughout each study center. Preventative measures such as hand sanitizing stations and plexiglass barriers will be installed.

Socially Distanced Housing
Students will be assigned beds within multi-occupancy, socially distanced apartments. Students are not allowed to change beds/apartments or to move the furniture within the apartments, as it will be measured specifically according to social distancing guidelines.

Students will be prohibited from gathering in large groups within the accommodation. Students are not permitted non-program visitors within program facilities at any time, and no more than two non-resident students on the program may visit another apartment at a given time.

At least 5% of program housing in each location has been set aside for quarantine/isolation purposes as needed during the program.

Socially Distanced Classes
Class sizes will be reduced to allow students to sit in socially distanced desks. Further, students will have assigned desks for each class to minimize the amount of high traffic surfaces they are touching. Instructors will use locally appropriate physical distancing and other mitigating strategies, including masks, face shields and physical barriers.

Laboratory facilities will also follow local requirements for physical distancing and other mitigating strategies.

Independent Travel
FSU’s President and Provost approved the reopening of the European Study Centers based on the specific condition that program participants must not travel independently outside their host city. More details about this policy, including what constitutes the boundary of your “host city,” will be provided soon according to students’ study center locations.

Compliance with this requirement is expected of all students who wish to continue participating in the program. Failure to do so could have significant consequences, including potential removal from the program.

Program Planned Excursions
Excursions within the host country planned by study center staff will be offered. A calendar of social and cultural events for your study center location will be provided in the coming weeks.
Updated Waiver and Contractual Agreement
International Programs has updated the contractual agreement and waiver for your program to reflect these and other policy changes related to COVID-19. These documents are available in the IP Student Portal, and all participants must review, sign, and upload a completed copy to your IP Student Portal in order to participate in Spring 2021 programs.

Will the Spring 2021 program calendar include a Spring Break?
No. In keeping with the main campus decision cancelling spring break to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, Spring 2021 IP programs will not have a spring break. We believe this adjustment will reduce the potential for members of our study center communities to return with the virus after traveling during spring break.

What if I test positive for COVID-19?
Students who suspect or have tested positive for COVID-19 must isolate immediately, regardless of symptoms or lack thereof, and notify the appropriate member of study center staff, who can support tracing the COVID-19 impact on our community.

Study center staff will connect symptomatic students with local physicians or clinics as needed/requested, and students may also utilize main campus telehealth monitoring and case management services if needed. Study center staff will provide support in various other ways, including through support for arranging meal/food delivery and virtual services. Study center faculty and staff will ensure that students can continue their studies remotely if they are able to do so.

All program participants are enrolled in an international insurance policy through Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI) covering international medical expenses, medical reunion, medical evacuation, and repatriation. The policy includes coverage for treatment of ill students, including those with COVID-19.

Airfare
When should I purchase airfare?
You should refrain from purchasing airfare until International Programs indicates you may do so. You will receive a notification under your Spring 21 portal record with “Airfare” in the subject line in the coming weeks. This notification will include detailed instructions for purchasing airfare in accordance with guidance related to immigration/arrival circumstances unique to COVID.

What if I already purchased my flights?
If you already purchased your airfare, it is crucial you review and make changes to your itinerary as needed once IP provides detailed instructions about purchasing airfare. You should also consider contacting your airline to purchase travel insurance or research other travel insurance providers. Travel insurance typically covers flight cancellation fees, lost luggage, or other losses incurred while traveling, etc. Click here for additional information about travel insurance and resources.

Immigration
Are there steps I need to take related to immigration and visas?
Visa application processes must occur on a very specific timeline, so it is vital to begin the process as soon as you are prompted and to monitor your IP Student Portal regularly for location specific immigration tasks, deadlines, and updates.

Valencia: Students should have already begun the visa process; if you have not started the visa process, contact IP-Visas@fsu.edu immediately for guidance.
Florence: Students should have already begun the visa process; reach out to IP-Visas@fsu.edu with any questions.

London: Students will receive instructions in their IP Student Portal on the visa application process in mid-October. Please begin the process as soon as instructed. FYA London students who do not intend to remain abroad for the summer term must notify IP-Visas@fsu.edu by October 9th and should NOT apply for a visa.

All locations: If you have not applied for a passport yet, you must immediately notify IP-Visas@fsu.edu. Failure to do so could jeopardize your ability to participate on the program, but it likely is not grounds for release from fee liability.

Payments

Can I choose not to participate in Spring 2021 programs?
Students who no longer wish to participate in the FYA program must notify IP-Cancel@fsu.edu of their intent to cancel no later than Friday, October 9th.

Students who cancel by October 9th will receive a refund of the $2,500 commitment fee and all other fees paid, excluding the $100 application fee. Out-of-state FYA participants who cancel from the FYA program will not be eligible to earn an out-of-state tuition waiver.

Should I make a payment for my program by the corresponding payment date(s)?
You should continue to make payments toward your program by the specified payment dates. It is imperative that you review the Fee Liability Policy for your program before making any payments or deferments. Click here to view the FYA payment dates for the Spring 21 term. Click here for instructions on how to make a payment online or by check. Visit the Money Matters section of the IP Student Portal to submit a Fee Deferment if you anticipate receiving financial aid.

Will I get a refund if spring programs are cancelled prior to departure?
We have every expectation that Spring 2021 programs will proceed. However, we have all learned that COVID-19 can cause unpredictable circumstances. In the unlikely event that we are unable to offer Spring programs, we will follow a process similar to that implemented following the cancellation of Fall programs as outlined in the Fall 20 FAQ sheet. Students would have 2 options:

1. Continue with the FYA program by transferring their admission & fees to the FYA Summer 21 term
2. Cancel from the FYA program and request a refund of fees, excluding the $100 application fee

In the unlikely event that we are unable to offer spring programs face to face, we plan to offer remote IP coursework during the Spring 2021 term. Regardless of which of the above options they selected, students would be able to pursue remote IP coursework, as they did in the Fall 2020 semester. In this scenario, Out-of-State students who wish to earn an FYA Tuition waiver must choose Option 1 and take a minimum of 12 credit hours of International Programs coursework during the Spring 2021 Semester.

Will I get a refund if I am forced to leave my program after it begins?
In the unlikely event that you are asked to depart from your study center prior to your program’s end date due to a deterioration of public health conditions, IP would attempt to issue a refund that represents the unused or recoverable portions of the social cultural calendar and housing components of the Spring program fee, if possible. In this scenario, courses would be transitioned to remote delivery for the remainder of the semester in order to minimize the impact on students’ progression toward their degree.
As stated in the FYA Fee Liability Policy, refunds or release of liability cannot be granted, under any circumstances, in instances of withdrawal after a program has begun.

**What if I am separated from the program as a result of a student conduct process?**

If your participation in the program is terminated before the end of the regularly scheduled session because of a violation on your part of one or more program rules, regulations, instructions, and/or standards of conduct and behavior, you must make travel arrangements home at your own expense and will not be eligible for any refund of program fees.

**FYA Summer 2021**

**What will Summer programs look like?**

FYA students normally spend their first two terms (fall and spring) at the same study center and then have the option to switch to a different study center for the summer term.

After careful consideration and in light of complications posed by current and potential COVID-19 related immigration restrictions, IP has determined all **FYA students must spend both the Spring and Summer terms at the same study center** to minimize the risk of not being able to complete your FYA program. Many other factors also contributed to this decision, including course offerings, visa timelines, FYA tuition waivers & fee liability, and travel limitations. We are also confident the longer immersion at one study center location results in broader and deeper engagement with the host culture.

If this change causes you concern, you must contact IP-Freshmen@fsu.edu **immediately** as our ability to address your concerns may be limited.

*Last updated 10/1/2020*