

COVID-19 & Study Abroad: FAQ

Last updated Wednesday, March 25, 2020

Has SJU cancelled any study abroad programs due to COVID-19?

As of March 24, 2020, SJU postponed the summer programs departing in June: SJU Summer in Rome and South Africa.

As of March 17, 2020 SJU postponed all Study Tours and Summer programs departing in May. This includes: SJU Summer Program in Greece, Study Tour in Northern Ireland, Study Tour in Cuba, and Study Tour in China.

As of March 12, 2020 SJU recommended that all students participating in a semester abroad make plans to return home.

As of March 4, 2020, SJU suspended all University-sponsored international travel through the end of the semester, May 7, 2020. This included the cancelation of two spring break study tours and one study tour departing in early May. The University strongly recommended that students return to the United States if they are studying abroad in a CDC Level 2 or 3 location.

All affected students have been contacted through SJU email.

At this time, Fall 2020 study tours and semester abroad programs are scheduled to take place as planned. The University continues to monitor conditions and communicate any changes or recommendations directly to participants.

How will I know if my program is cancelled or postponed?

SJU will directly contact students with updates via email. SJU reaches out to students' designated emergency contacts only in specific situations, such as when a student has been incapacitated or when we cannot reach the student. All members of the SJU community can find updates related to COVID-19 on this page, and at <https://www.sju.edu/status/coronavirus>

How does SJU make decisions about its study abroad programs?

SJU takes guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the U.S. Department of State, and the WHO. When making decisions about specific programs, we also consider local conditions as well as input from peer institutions and our overseas partners.

Prior to cancelling a Study Tour or Summer Program, we first explore all viable alternatives, such as postponing a program. For those programs that are postponed, the details of what a postponement will look like have not yet been determined, and the outcome for each program could be different. We are in the early stages of exploring the viable alternatives on a program by program basis.

What would happen if an SJU study abroad program was cancelled?

SJU Study Tours/Summer Programs:

Students on cancelled or postponed programs will receive a full refund of program fees, including their \$300 deposit. If the airline is issuing a credit instead of a refund, students will receive a refund except the amount of the airline credit. In this scenario, students will receive instructions on how to utilize their airline credit. Individual airlines are determining crediting/cancellation policies.

SJU Approved Semester Abroad Programs:

Most students returning from a semester abroad are able to continue their coursework remotely, so tuition will not be refunded. We are working with students who are not able to continue their abroad coursework remotely to address these questions individually. Non-tuition fees for a semester abroad are paid by students directly to their programs, so refund policies vary.

Although student safety is our top priority, SJU is also committed to supporting our students' academic progress. In all cases, the CIP will work with our partner institutions and organizations, as well as the student's academic department at SJU, to identify appropriate academic solutions.

If a future semester abroad program were cancelled prior to the start of the SJU semester, students would be able to enroll in SJU courses. No tuition refund would be issued, as tuition remains the same for students participating in a semester abroad and students taking classes full-time on campus. Again, as non-tuition fees are paid directly by students to their abroad programs, refund policies will vary. Many programs have updated their refund and cancellation policies in light of COVID-19. Students are advised to be aware of these policies before making any payments.

I am a senior and I need the Summer Program credits in order to graduate, what are my options?

The CIP recommends that you speak with your academic advisor and/or Dean to discuss your options.

My Study Tour/SJU Summer Program is postponed to 2021 and I want to be a part of it, will I need to reapply?

Yes. If a program is postponed to 2021, it is possible that the terms of the program (dates, itinerary, etc.) and cost will change. You will need to submit a new application to confirm that you wish to participate and that you accept the new program terms and cost.

Students who were previously confirmed participants on a 2020 Study Tour or SJU Summer Program will be given priority if they reapply.

What would happen if a student withdraws from a future study abroad program (fall semester and onward) out of concern for COVID-19?

SJU understands that personal tolerance for risk may vary, and that final decisions will be made between students and families. All enrolled study abroad students may voluntarily withdraw from a study abroad program at any time. Currently, students are held to the CIP's withdrawal policy as captured in the Terms of Participation Agreement (Study Tours and Summer Programs) or Academic, Disciplinary and Financial Waiver (Semester/Year Abroad), on which students sign off as part of their application.

Semester abroad students pay non-tuition fees directly to their programs abroad, and non-SJU summer & winter program students pay *all* fees directly to their programs abroad. For this reason, future students are advised to be aware of refund and cancellation policies for any non-SJU fees, such as housing costs or airfare. Many programs have published information on their websites for future students. If you are not sure how to contact a program representative, the CIP will be happy to assist.

If my fall 2020 semester abroad is cancelled, or I voluntarily withdraw, are there on-campus housing options for me?

Yes, if a semester abroad program is cancelled or a student opts to withdraw, the impacted students may live in campus housing. Housing in a particular location would not be guaranteed.

Who can I contact about study abroad and the coronavirus situation?

For questions about a semester abroad program, non-SJU summer program, or a student on one of these programs, contact Sara Haines at shaines@sju.edu or 610-660-1675

For questions about a Study Tour, SJU Summer Program, or a student on one of these programs, contact Ilana Egert at iegert@sju.edu or 610-660-3479.

For general inquiries or concerns please reach out to Tom Kesaris at tkesaris@sju.edu or 610-660-1836.

Please note that this page will be updated frequently as new information becomes available. All are encouraged to refer back regularly for the latest information.

What resources does SJU recommend for reliable updates regarding COVID-19?

- [SJU Coronavirus information](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)

- U.S. Department of State - Travel Advisories