



March 12, 2021

Dear Faculty and Students,

Almost exactly one year ago, in the face of a growing pandemic, the university sprang into action to repatriate our study abroad students and to cancel summer study abroad programs. Over the past year, the OU Travel and Screening Committee, comprised of medical and public health professionals and university administrators, has met on a regular basis to monitor the state of COVID-19 around the world, and to make recommendations for our study abroad programs. It is with great pleasure that I can announce that study abroad to select locations will resume in the summer of 2021. The specific destinations that have been approved at present are in: Costa Rica, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Kenya, the Netherlands, Spain, South Korea, Taiwan, United Kingdom, and Zimbabwe. (A separate decision about programs in Mexico will be made in two weeks.) These locations were selected and approved based on a careful analysis of conditions on the ground as well as program-specific arrangements.

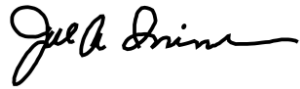
Two caveats should be noted. First, we anticipate that participation in programs of study to the above locations will be contingent on participating students, faculty, and staff completing the full vaccination protocols (which can take as long as six weeks from the first shot if receiving the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine). This is in line with decisions by a growing number of countries to require a vaccination before entry. Therefore, it is imperative that participants begin actively working to become vaccinated. As the state of Oklahoma just entered into Phase 3 of its vaccination rollout, OU students, faculty, and staff are now eligible for the vaccination, and supply continues to ramp up in Oklahoma and at OU. We expect more announcements about vaccination events on or near campus in the coming days, though others off campus may also be available currently.

Second, various program and country-specific contingencies, many outside the control of the university, may lead to the necessity of cancelling programs at a later date, a possibility that always exists in study abroad. The College of International Studies and the OU Travel and Screening Committee will continue to closely monitor the situation and update the community and any programs affected.

For now, though, this announcement should serve as a welcome reminder of the better times that are within reach. I would like to thank all who worked to bring us to this point – academic and study abroad advisers, the Education Abroad team, our overseas study center staff, and the OU Travel and Screening Committee, among others. Faculty, staff, and students planning to

participate in study abroad this summer will receive communications from OU Education Abroad shortly that will provide specifics on their program.

Warm wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jill Irvine". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

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