A Message About Cancelling Coastal Carolina University’s Education Abroad Programs through August 15, 2020

With the US Department of State having raised the travel advisory globally to Level 4 (Do Not Travel - the highest threat level), the threat to the immediate health and welfare of our students, faculty, and staff prompts us to cancel our education abroad programs into the immediate future. As such, all of our Maymester Education Abroad Programs are cancelled. As we cannot predict when these conditions will improve, all student, faculty, or staff travel abroad before August 15, 2020 is also cancelled. We know that our students have planned and worked to make this a part of their educational experience, and we know that this is a hard message to hear. We will be processing refunds of paid program fees to take place within the next two weeks. We encourage students to look to the regular Maymester and Summer offerings at Coastal Carolina University to fill the curricular holes that this cancellation of the Maymester Abroad and Summer Abroad programs will create and ask students reach out to their academic advisor to coordinate on that process. We have also developed a series of FAQs that should address many of the concerns students may have and these FAQs direct students where to reach out to seek support in identifying alternative educational offerings and seek specific answers to stay on course for graduation, compliance with scholarship, and/or maintenance of veterans benefits.

For questions beyond those addressed in the FAQ, please reach out to us via the studyabroad@coastal.edu email.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected every part of the world, and we are saddened by this decision, but believe it to be the right one given the continuing spread of the virus for our students, faculty, staff, and the communities around the world to which we would travel. We continue to process applications for education abroad programs for Fall 2020 programs leaving after August 15, 2020, and look forward to working with students to identify education abroad opportunities in the future.

With best wishes to each of you for your continued health and safety through this time,

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FAQs - Cancellation of Maymester Study Abroad Programs and Summer Abroad Programs by CCU for Summer 2020

Why is my program being canceled now?
Coastal Carolina University does not send students, faculty, staff or programs abroad to areas with the US Department of State Level 3 (Reconsider Travel) or 4 (Do Not Travel). Given that the US Department of State has raised the worldwide travel advisory to Level 4 (Do Not Travel), the expectation that COVID-19 will continue to expand its impact in the US and around the world for the near term and the increased exposure that such travel would promote, and the potential for heightened restrictions to enter countries, potential quarantine, etc. that could result from such travel, it was determined this decision was best to support the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff. Out of an abundance of caution and to enable all to plan more fully for their summers, especially as the CCU has now moved to fully online programs, all international travel for CCU is suspended until August 15, 2020.

What happens now? How do I get out of the classes? How do I get my money back? Will you reschedule?
If you are enrolled in a Maymester Faculty-led Program, we will be reaching out to remove each section of the education abroad courses by Thursday, March 26. As such, your registration will be automatically removed from all courses. We have been working with Finance, Student Accounts, and Financial Aid and Scholarships office to separate out the payments made by each student, scholarship contributions, etc. to prepare and verify the amount of funding you paid toward your Program Fee. Those monies paid toward Program Fees will be returned to each student. Our goal is to have that process complete and refunds processed within the next two weeks. Please see below for how those refunds will be made. We will not reschedule the programs because individuals initially committed to specific dates and often have made work or family commitments in the days/weeks following the education abroad program. In addition to the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19, coordinating a rescheduling that meets all students’ needs is infeasible at this time. If you are enrolled in an Faculty Travel With Students for Research, Competition or Conference program, your program advisors will share with you the process by which you will be able to seek and get refunds. If you are enrolled in an international internship or third party summer program, please reach out to your program advisor to determine how you can seek a refund or make adjustments to your program. Robert Bulsza (rbulsza@coastal.edu) can help you with international internship cancellation questions and Lori Patterson (studyabroad@coastal.edu) can help you if you had applied to a third party summer program. If you have any questions or concerns in regards to how this will impact your veterans education benefits, please contact Ashley Nance, the Director of Veteran Services at anance@coastal.edu.

Will I be able to take the course(s) I need from this program at CCU in order to graduate in May/August?
Each department will determine which courses it will choose to offer in online format in summer sessions (Maymester, Summer I and Summer II). We recognize that this decision could have an impact on your graduation, progress toward degree, or your compliance with terms of a scholarship. Should you experience any of these circumstances, you are asked to reach out to your academic advisor to work on a suitable academic solution. Academic departments will decide which courses are to be offered and will determine if exceptions to requirements can be made in individual circumstances.

In what format will the course(s) will offered of taught in Maymester? What format will they be provided in, how will assignments be conducted?
These decisions will be made by the academic department and communicated on Webadvisor as they are available. Please consult with your academic advisor to determine coursework and ask questions related to this for individual courses as they are made available on Webadvisor.

I am missing out on the abroad experience so how can faculty compensate me for the lost experience abroad?
It is unfortunate that COVID-19 has touched on every area of life in our communities locally and globally. We will continue to develop, support, and conduct high quality, safe, and supportive education abroad experiences as we move forward, and at this time, the right call for safety, security, and support is to cancel the programs through August 15, 2020. Each student will be receiving his/her/their program fee back. We hope that you will consider participating in one of the many high value education abroad programs CCU will be offering next year. If you will graduate next year, you are
invited to consider applying for a prestige international scholarship, such as Fulbright, Boren, or Critical Language Scholarship. If you are a Pell Grant recipient, we would be delighted to work with you to develop a Gilman Scholarship next year.

**Will I have to pay for these alternative course offerings?**
If you are registering for courses in Maymester, you will pay the regular rate for the respective course, in-state tuition if a distance learning course and whatever rate you normally pay if an in-person course.

**How will I see the reimbursements on my CCU student account or bill?**
Program fees will be refunded using the following means: (1) If you have made any payment on the program fee by credit card in the last 30 days, that amount will appear back on your credit card; (2) if you have a bank account on file with student accounts, the remainder of what you have paid will be paid out to you in direct deposit to that account; and (3) if you do not have a bank account on file with student accounts, then a check will be mailed to you at your permanent address. Processing of the refunds may take a few weeks, given the volume of refunds to be completed. If you have a balance you owe on your account presently, please be informed that the funds will first pay the respective account balance, and then the remainder will be refunded to you as noted above.

**I’ve taken out a FEDERAL loan OR accessed my VA loan in Spring 2020 and used the proceeds to pay for my program fee, how will this impact my loan debt and/or justify repayment/reconciliation?**
As Summer Financial Aid has not yet been awarded or processed, cancellation at this time does not have any effect on your financial aid, except if you were counting on receiving additional financial aid for summer session. For financial aid purposes, all summer sessions are combined into one processing term. To be considered for MOST financial aid, you must be enrolled at least halftime in required coursework for the Summer Session. Halftime enrollment is defined as six (6) credit hours for undergraduate students and three (3) credit hours for graduate students (during the summer sessions only). The total of these credit hours may be achieved through enrollment in one or more summer session (May, Summer I and/or Summer II). Qualified students enrolled less than halftime may be eligible for private student loans. Note that if enrolled in multiple summer sessions, financial aid funds may not be disbursed until enrollment has begun in all sessions. As such, if you hoped to get federal financial aid in Summer Sessions, you will have to be enrolled at least half time to get some. No financial aid will need to be returned to the lender/source for funds that remained from Spring Semester, though you will of course have to repay any loans you took out along the repayment cycle approved. For further specific questions, please reach out to the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (843-349-2313).