

December 11, 2017

To: UVA Students with Plans to Travel Abroad for University Related Purposes – J-Term & Spring 2018

From: Dudley J. Doane, Director

Re: Health, Safety, and Security Abroad

Beginning late this month and continuing through the spring 2018 semester, over 1,000 UVA students will depart for an education abroad experience – for study, research, service, an internship or a combination of these activities. In light of recent civil unrest and terrorist attacks, the emergence of health challenges such as the Zika and Chikungunya viruses, and the ongoing possibility of natural disasters in locations where UVA students travel, we want to assure you that the University monitors health, safety, and security conditions where our students travel for University related purposes. Our exchange university partners and the provider organizations that offer programs open to UVA students also monitor those conditions. If risks are identified, students are advised on how to respond and directed to support services.

UVA has an emergency and communication plan that includes the services of an evacuation assistance provider and security intelligence services which furnish us with regular and emergency updates. We are also members of the Overseas Security Advisory Council, a division of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security in the U.S. Department of State. UVA students who travel outside the borders of the United States are subject to the [University's Policy on Student International Travel](#). All students, along with the faculty and staff who advise them, are expected to comply with the requirements of the policy, which includes enrollment for international health and emergency assistance insurance for use during the time abroad for university related purposes. The ISO recommends that travelers also consider trip insurance that can be tapped either in the event that travel to or from the education abroad destination is interrupted or in the event that a change in itinerary is required.

Pre-departure, please stay well informed of events in your destination(s) and the surrounding region(s) and encourage family members and others interested in your time abroad to do the same. This will help you prepare for your sojourn and begin the engagement with your new environment. U.S. Embassy web sites are good sources of information as is www.state.gov/travel/; the U.S. Department of State has urged all international travelers to review its [Worldwide Caution](#) (renewed 12/6/17). U.S. government and UVA Travel Alerts, Notices, and Warnings can be accessed at <http://iso.virginia.edu/travel-alerts-notice-warnings>. Students traveling to Europe should review the recently updated U.S. Dept. of State [Travel Alert for Europe](#) (renewed 11/16/17). This is also a good time for you and your family to review the [ISO's Health & Safety Abroad web page](#), the [Education Abroad Handbook](#), and the University's [Policy on Student International Travel](#).

While you are abroad it is important to practice situational awareness, maintain a low profile, communicate proactively, and attend to updates from your hosts, local authorities, and the nearest U.S. Consulate. Make sure that you have contact information for emergency assistance in your destination(s) – local equivalent(s) of 911, your international health and emergency insurance provider (generally [CISI](#)), your program/university/local host, and the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

You and your family are welcome to direct questions to the International Studies Office ([ISO](#)). Please note that in the event of an emergency, **the ISO can be reached 24/7 at +1 434 982 3010**. Those of you enrolling at one of our exchange partner universities or in a program offered by an organization such as IES or SIT should feel free to direct your questions to the host university or study abroad organization.

Your time abroad is likely to be both exciting and challenging – a unique opportunity to learn more about the world and yourself. Good preparation pre-departure and mindful behaviors while you are abroad will help you gain the most from it.