Statement on 2022 Summer Study Abroad and COVID-19 Risk Mitigation Decisions

Studying abroad during the COVID-19 pandemic still involves many complicated and evolving factors that lead to the cancellation of a program. After careful consideration, we have decided to move forward with holding the UNO-Innsbruck International Summer School. Although the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has determined Austria still has a high level of COVID-19, the U.S. State Department has lowered its travel advisory from a Level 4 (highest) to a Level 1. Therefore, while COVID-19 continues to require vigilance, and some restrictions and health precautions are still in place in Austria, we deem that it is possible to effectively and safely operate our program at the present time. We have been in touch with all our local partners and have monitored ordinances and guidelines of Austrian authorities. Austria currently allows travel to and free movement in Austria, and our local partners are prepared and excited to welcome us. However, the situation remains fluid, and if the Travel Advisory for Austria is again heightened in the future, UNO may have to consider canceling the program at that time.

Regrettably, we have decided that we cannot move forward with our summer programs in France, Japan and Italy. We recognize this decision may disappoint our many enthusiastic students who had hoped for the opportunity to travel to those countries. Our goal is to offer these programs again in 2023. We will continue to stay vigilant and informed as we plan for travel to Austria, with the following in mind:

1. To minimize the health risk to all participants and our worldwide communities, we require all program participants, faculty, and staff to be fully vaccinated and boosted against COVID-19 and provide proof thereof.
2. We will monitor all guidance from the U.S. State Department, Centers for Disease Control, the World Health Organization, local host governments and partners, and the University of Louisiana System.
3. It must be possible for U.S. citizens to travel abroad and return safely.
4. We must be confident that the pandemic is being managed safely and responsibly in the host country.
5. We will continue to develop our administrative and academic protocols as the situation evolves.
6. We will keep all participants informed as we make decisions about these protocols, program design and delivery.
7. All cancellation policies are in effect, including penalties if students cancel their program participation.
8. We will immediately let participants know if it becomes clear that we must cancel the UNO-Innsbruck program for reasons beyond our control.
9. Finally, if we are forced to cancel the UNO-Innsbruck program for reasons beyond our control, students will be refunded all fees paid to UNO except those monies that cannot be recovered from vendors by the university (i.e. housing), less any credit card convenience fees charged.