Given the rapid pace of change of the worldwide coronavirus (COVID-19) situation, the University at Albany is taking steps to address safety and potential future travel issues for all UAlbany spring study abroad programs in highly affected areas. As such, the University at Albany is strongly recommending that all students participating in UAlbany study abroad programs in Italy, Japan and South Korea return to the United States as soon as possible.

The University does not make this recommendation lightly; however, the safety of our students must be our primary concern. At this time, the New York State Department of Health is recommending that all students in Italy, Japan and South Korea return to the US immediately. For those of you who are not UAlbany students, your home study abroad advisor has been notified of this decision.

Action steps

1) We recommend that you update your return airline ticket as soon as possible as finding flights home from abroad may become more difficult over time. UAlbany will reimburse you for any change fees, with proper receipt.

2) We are asking that you return to your permanent home, follow the health advice recommended below, and not return to UAlbany campuses at this time. Please adjust your travel plans accordingly. If you believe that it is inadvisable for you to return home for any reason, please contact your study abroad advisor immediately and we will work with you to devise an alternative plan. In any case, no returning students may return to any UAlbany campus without first contacting your study abroad advisor and University Health Services.

3) When you have booked your return flight, please provide your flight itinerary to your study abroad advisor, Jay Stokes for programs in Italy or Carmeisha Huckleby for programs in Japan and South Korea.

4) As of March 2, 2020, the New York State Department of Health is requiring all travelers returning from Italy, Japan, and South Korea to self-isolate for 14 days to insure that you have not been affected by novel coronavirus COVID-19 and to insure the safety of others around you.

5) Please provide your study abroad advisor with the address of where you plan to self-isolate as we are required to report this information to the New York State
Department of Health. Your advisor is either Jay Stokes for programs in Italy or Carmeisha Huckleby for programs in Japan and South Korea.

**Academic Options**

We are not suspending the academic aspects of the UAlbany study abroad programs in Italy, Japan, and South Korea as we are working with the respective universities about students continuing their studies online at these institutions for the remainder of the spring semester, if possible. Your host institutions recognize that many U.S. students will be departing in the coming days and are working quickly to determine which, if any, of your classes can continue online through the rest of the semester. However, should the host institutions abroad not be able to arrange continued online study for the remainder of the spring 2020 semester, UAlbany would need to formally suspend the academic piece of the study abroad programs and students seek other academic options. In addition, there may be courses at the host institution that cannot be continued online, such as those with laboratory components.

As described in last week’s email, UAlbany is ready to assist you with available course options at home. While UAlbany cannot guarantee all necessary courses needed or wanted by returning students this semester, we are already working to identify options both at UAlbany and at other Albany area institutions of higher education.

For UAlbany students, your contact to explore academic options domestically is John Donoghue. Additionally, you can also explore summer course offerings at UAlbany or for transfer credit at other universities, or return to UAlbany in the fall by contacting Anna Karlsson. Please include the subject line “Study Abroad Urgent Request” in your email.

**Financial Aid**

Any academic decision you make outside of continuing in your study abroad program courses as available or other courses for the spring 2020 semester may carry financial aid implications. These implications will vary by individual situation. Again, UAlbany cannot guarantee that all financial aid implications can be mitigated, but we are already working to address these concerns. Please contact either Earl Tretheway, Rachael Cofresi, Meryl Schwab, or Stephen Kudzin and include the subject line “Study Abroad Urgent Request” in your email.

**Upon returning home**

1) You should self-isolate and contact University at Albany Student Health Services (SHS) at 518-442-5229 during regular business hours for further guidance regarding the 14-day quarantine.

2) If you exhibit symptoms associated with the novel coronavirus, self-isolate and contact SHS or your personal physician immediately (or your local health
department after hours), to discuss next steps before proceeding to any medical facility.

The University understands this is a difficult situation and we are here to support you throughout this transition. Thank you for your patience and understanding. We will continue to update you regularly as efforts to find academic solutions for impacted students continue.