

# Update to Whitman Policy for Spring 2020 Study Abroad Applicants

March 17, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. PST

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Dear Spring 2020 OCS Students,

We know this was not the semester abroad you had hoped for. These are trying times as we all deal with the uncertainty caused by COVID-19. Please know that we are here to support you, and we will continue to reach out to you this semester.

**Please read the following guidelines for Spring 20 OCS Students returning from study away:**

**Whitman College does not want Spring 20 OCS students to return to the Whitman campus this semester.** The Whitman campus is mostly shut down, with few resources available for students. Buildings are locked, and students may not be given swipe card access to campus buildings. All meetings between faculty and staff with students must be online without exception for the duration of this semester. While a few students will be living on campus (ie international students), students and the Walla Walla community are best served if you take shelter at home rather than in Walla Walla.

**If you are returning from an OCS Semester, it is very important that you follow closely the following CDC Guidelines.**

**If you are returning home from a Level 3 Travel Health Notice Country, including:**

- China
- Iran
- South Korea
- Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Monaco, San Marino, Vatican City

Then follow the instructions HERE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/after-travel-precautions.html>

This includes doing the following self-isolation upon return:

Stay home for 14 days from the time you left an area with widespread, ongoing community spread (Level 3 Travel Health Notice countries) and practice social distancing.

Take these steps to monitor your health and practice social distancing:

1. Take your temperature with a thermometer two times a day and monitor for fever. Also watch for cough or trouble breathing.
2. Stay home and avoid contact with others. Do not go to work or school for this 14-day period. Discuss your work situation with your employer before returning to work.
3. Do not take public transportation, taxis, or ride-shares during the time you are practicing social distancing.
4. Avoid crowded places (such as shopping centers and movie theaters) and limit your activities in public.
5. Keep your distance from others (about 6 feet or 2 meters).

**If you are traveling home from anywhere else (non-level 3 countries):**

See this important CDC information: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/alert/coronavirus-global>

**If you have traveled to any destination during the past 14 days:**

- **Monitor your health and practice social distancing. Social distancing means staying out of crowded places, avoiding group gatherings, and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others when possible.**
- **If you get sick with fever (100.4°F/38°C or higher), cough, or have trouble breathing:**
  - **Seek medical advice. Call ahead before going to a doctor's office or emergency room.**
  - **Tell your doctor about your recent travel and your symptoms.**
  - **Avoid contact with others.**
- **Do not travel while sick.**
- **Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.**
- **Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Soap and water should be used if hands are visibly dirty.**

Here is helpful information from the CDC regarding managing anxiety and stress in these trying times: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2Fcoping.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2Fcoping.html)

**Watch your email for more updates from OCS.** If you have questions or concerns, please contact me.

Stay well!

Barbara Hoffman

**Barbara Hoffman**

Associate Director, [Off-Campus Studies](#)  
Whitman College  
Memorial Building 205  
345 Boyer Avenue  
Walla Walla, WA 99362 USA  
Office Phone: 509-527-4911  
Cell: 509-301-1851

[hoffmabb@whitman.edu](mailto:hoffmabb@whitman.edu)