

# **IMSE STUDENT TRAVEL HANDBOOK**

## **Overview**

This handbook is designed to help Weill Cornell students prepare for their international electives. It includes useful checklists and tips before students depart, along with important information on resources, requirements, and safety protocols. The objective of this guide is to make your experience as safe, enjoyable, and stress-free as possible!

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## Pre-Travel Checklist for ALL students traveling internationally

- **MS1 Only:** Application for Research Credit (if applicable, through Dr. Anthony Brown's Office)
- Weill Cornell Waiver & Release Forms for Overseas Travel
- IMSE International Travel Information Sheet
- Weill Cornell Consent Form
- Weill Cornell Travel Advisory Form
- Register your travel with Terra Dotta (Central Cornell University Travel system) - a link will be provided upon approval by IMSE
- We encourage you to register your travel with the State Department to receive alerts (if you are a US citizen)  
(<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel.html>)
- Complete Required Online Ethics training
- Complete the IMSE Code of Conduct
- Complete IMSE Pre-Departure Worksheet
- Register your travel and elective dates with the Registrar's Office in Oasis. You will include your preceptor's name and contact information so that Registrar's Office can assign a Student Performance Evaluation
- **MS4 Only:** Take at least 3 copies of the Student Performance Evaluation Form. You are required to have your faculty sponsor submit one final evaluation directly to the Office of the Registrar within 2 weeks of elective completion to receive credit. If you rotate with multiple preceptors, you can collect multiple evaluations but please have your main faculty sponsor compile them into one form at the end of your rotation. The link to this form will be sent to you by Savita Birbal.
- **MS4 Only:** Once funds are allocated – send a THANK YOU note to Donor (Info will be provided)
- Register your travel with Risk Management / Travel Insurance Program (International SOS) Travel | Risk Management (cornell.edu)
- Student payment and Reimbursement procedures
- Book your flights and accommodation (keep all receipts)
- Ensure your passport and travel documents are up to date
- Obtain the appropriate visa (if necessary)
- Schedule a Travel Clinic Appointment to discuss vaccines and prophylaxis (if necessary)
- Attend Pre-Departure Workshop

## **Post-Travel Checklist**

- Poster Presentation for Fall/Spring International Fellows Receptions
- Submit Narrative Summary (due within 4 weeks of return)
- Student payment and Reimbursement procedures (see below)

**International Travel Requirements:  
MS1 Summer Projects + MS4 Clinical Electives**

1. Reimbursements – Keep all flight itineraries, receipts, credit card statements showing proof of purchases and complete the expense sheet provided on page. You will then upload them to your assigned OneDrive file. All reimbursements will be provided via direct deposit through Student Accounting.
  - Be sure to read and sign the Weill Cornell Agreement and Release Form and the Consent Form. No reimbursements will be made to any student who leaves the country without signing and submitting these forms.
2. Narrative Summary – A post-trip narrative summary of your experience is required within 4 weeks of the return date before final reimbursement will be authorized. Please upload the write-ups and photos to your assigned OneDrive folder.
3. All students are REQUIRED to complete the Johns Hopkins: “Ethical Challenges in Short-Term Global Health Training” and upload Certificates of Completion.
4. All students are required to attend a Pre-Departure Workshop with the Co-Directors.

### **MS1 students only (Summer Projects)**

1. Guidelines for Receiving Financial Support: IMSE Office will provide funding for approved projects in the form of reimbursement up to the amount of \$5000 per student for qualifying expenses (airfare, visas, pre-travel health, and accommodation). While we hope this will cover the vast majority of the expenses for our summer students, we want to recognize that you may incur some out-of-pocket costs. Please see MS1 Funding Policy below for more details.
2. Students are also encouraged to apply for the Atkins Scholar Award (from the Medical College) and any grants from outside agencies. If you are awarded outside funding – you are required to disclose this information to the IMSE Office as your reimbursement amount from IMSE will make up the difference between what you are awarded from your outside funding to a max of \$5k. (For Example: if you are awarded \$3000 of outside funding, you will qualify for reimbursement up to an additional \$2k from IMSE – to make a total of 5K). This ensures equity and sustainability of our program funding for all students.
3. Funding from IMSE Office is contingent upon the completion of the required submission of a Final Narrative Summary (Impact Statement). Student funding is also contingent upon participation in the International Fellows Event with a Poster Presentation of your work held in the Fall (October).
4. If you wish to receive research credit for this elective, please contact The Office of Medical Student Research and complete the required forms: <https://research.weill.cornell.edu/medical-student-research>
5. Student Poster Presentation – You are required to prepare a poster to be shown at an International Fellows Reception in October.

### **MS4 students only (Clinical Electives)**

1. Upon approval of your elective, enter the data, along with travel dates, into your schedule in OASIS.
2. Student Poster Presentation – You are required to prepare a poster to be shown at the Spring International Fellows Reception in May.



### **Global Health AOC Related International Travel**

1. All WCM students planning international travel as part of their AOC projects must complete the 'AOC Related Travel Request' form at least 1 month before travel AND the requirements listed on the form to obtain approval before travel. Students may request the link to this form by sending an email to [IMSEdirectors@med.cornell.edu](mailto:IMSEdirectors@med.cornell.edu).
2. Students must have an approved AOC project from the AOC Committee and be in good academic standing.
3. Students must read and sign the Weill Cornell Agreement and Release Form and the Consent Form as soon as your elective has been approved. No reimbursements will be made to any student who leaves the country without signing and submitting these forms. The link to these forms will be emailed to you upon approval of your elective.

## **Narrative Summary Write-Up: Guidelines**

Each student participating in an international elective experience that is approved by the International Electives Committee and funded by the Office of International Medical Student Education is required to submit a short write-up (500-1500 words) and up to three photos upon return to Weill Cornell. The objective of this write up is to have the student summarize the professional and personal impact of the experience as well as to serve as a guide for future students who are considering doing the same or similar elective at the host institution or organization. The photos and excerpts from the narrative summary may be used for the website, international reception brochures, slideshows, and other events to highlight student participation in international experiences at WCM.

Those students whose international experience focused on clinical service/observer ship, please follow the guidelines delineated in sections I, III and IV.

- I. General Description - Describe the general concept of your project/activity and the specific learning objectives. Include in your write up:
  - a. Name and location of host organization
  - b. Host Mentor
  - c. Date/duration of the elective
  - d. Responsibilities, i.e., description of what you did
- II. Research Projects (clinical, bench, quality improvement, surveys, etc.) – If you conducted research include the following sections:
  - a. Was IRB (Institutional Review Board) approval required for your project? (Yes/No/NA)
  - b. Background and Purpose of Study
    - Identify gaps of knowledge addressed by your project.
    - Explain the purpose of your study and how your work relates to the broader field of global health.
  - c. Objectives: i.e., What were you hoping to accomplish in this project?
  - d. Methods, i.e., Provide a clear description of study population and data collection/analysis.
  - e. Results & Conclusions
    - Report and discussion of results (can be qualitative or quantitative)
    - Discuss the impact of project/study on the study population.
    - Discuss future directions for your work, questions that you would like to pursue.

III. Clinical Observation/ Elective Rotation – If you participated in clinical observation/ rotation/ community service/ service-learning project, include the following sections:

a. Background:

- Discuss the unmet health needs in the community.
- Discuss the types of clinical/ service activities in the community.

b. Objectives

- What were you hoping to accomplish in this project?
- What were you hoping to learn from this experience?

c. Present a description of the following:

- Local community you served / patient population.
- Roles of care providers, and your roles within the healthcare team
- Healthcare resources on site, regionally, etc., including the community organizations you worked with
- Your clinical or service responsibilities – include scope and depth.

IV. Personal Impact

- a. How did your experience meet or not meet your learning objectives?
- b. Describe the best aspects of the experience.
- c. Discuss the obstacles and opportunities that emerged during your applied experience, and how you handle these situations.
- d. Describe the impact your experience has on personal and professional development, including future career goals.
- e. List three remaining questions you still have that you would like to pursue further.
- f. What advice would you give future students interested in doing a similar project or elective at the host organization?

## **International Fellows Reception Poster Guidelines**

### **MS1 Summer Project: Fall**

#### **What should my Poster look like?**

- The poster should look professional as if you are preparing a poster for a professional scientific conference. Poster dimensions should be ~ 30 x 40 inches.
- Here is some guidance on creating a poster:  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2049080116301303> and <https://guides.nyu.edu/posters>

#### **We suggest you include the following sections:**

- Name & Class Year
- Title of Project or Name of Program Site
- Background (to the research problem/project topic)
- Purpose of the project
- Methods (For research projects only - Describe Study Design and Sample)
- Student's Role (Your role in the project)
- Results (For research projects only - Tables, figures, etc.)
- Conclusions/Summary
- Photos (Not tourist photos! Site photos and with mentors/colleagues)
- Acknowledgements (WCM scholarship [if relevant] and host mentors)
- Optional: Contact Information (Program, Student, Host Mentor)

#### **Printing**

- You can use an online site, FedEx, Staples etc. to prepare your poster. You can submit poster printing costs for reimbursement to IMSE if your budget allows.
- Please print your posters in color. IMSE will provide the actual easel boards, tacks, and tape.

## International Fellows Reception Poster Guidelines

### MS4 Spring Elective: Spring

***\*MS4 Students who rotated at the same international site may collaborate to create a single poster. Be sure to include all your names and work together!***

#### **What should my Poster look like?**

- The poster should look professional as if you are preparing a poster for a professional scientific conference. Poster dimensions should be ~ 30 x 40 inches.

**We suggest you include the following sections:** These are not RIGID requirements - so please feel free to adjust as needed to suit your experiences! The **GOAL** of this poster session is to convey the highlights of your clinical international elective experience so that student/faculty/donor viewers can be 'transported there with you' and get an idea of what you did, your role on the clinical team, what you learned, how health care was delivered and how this rotation impacted you personally and professionally.

- Student Name(s) & Class Year
- Name of Program Site (Program name/Institution, location of elective rotation)
- Background (Brief Overview/Description of the elective/site (per student if different electives))
- Student Role (Your role in the project or in the elective) - give an idea of what a typical 'day' looked like
- Local Health Care System/ Health Care Delivery: You can briefly describe the local health care system and similarities/differences that you learned about compared to what we have in NYC/WCM. Feel free to share/discuss challenges, barriers to access care and creative solutions or unique aspects of health care delivery to overcome barriers.
- Personal & Professional Impact (suggested topics)
  - How did your experience meet or not meet your learning objectives?
  - Describe the best aspects/highlights about the experience.
  - Discuss the obstacles and opportunities that emerged during your experience, and how you handle these situations.
  - Describe the impact of your experience on personal and professional development, including future career goals - If you are planning a future career/research or other experiences in global health or global/local work in residency and beyond - please share!

- Photos (Not tourist photos! Site photos and with mentors/colleagues - please ensure these photos are taken with consent from subjects of photos - especially if of clinical settings. Include Photo captions describing photo & 'taken and printed with consent of subjects')
- Acknowledgements (Please mention thanks to whichever WCM scholarship (s) were awarded to the student authors on the poster and any WCM/host mentors)
- Optional: Contact Information (Program, Student, Host Mentor)

### **Printing**

- You can use an online site, FedEx, Staples etc., to prepare your poster. You can submit poster printing costs for reimbursement to IMSE if your budget allows.
- Please print your posters in color. IMSE will provide the actual easel boards, tacks, and tape.

## Cancellation Policy for International Electives

The organization and preparation for an international elective requires significant administrative resources and time. As the demand for spots often exceeds the supply, it is important that we optimize our use of these scarce resources. Students wishing to take an international elective must apply for approval to IMSE. Written notification of approval will be sent via email to the student. **Students will have 30 days (about 4 and a half weeks) from the date of approval notification to confirm or cancel the international elective.** This must be done in writing to the Directors of the Office of International Student Medical Education, Dr. Radhika Sundararajan and Dr. Laura Greisman ([IMSEdirectors@med.cornell.edu](mailto:IMSEdirectors@med.cornell.edu)). If the student does not respond 30 days after the date of the approval letter, they will be deemed to have declined the opportunity to take the elective and funding will be made available to another student if feasible.

Once a student has confirmed their intent to accept the opportunity for an approved international elective, they are expected to keep that commitment. If a student believes they need to cancel an international elective, they must provide a written request with justification to the Directors of the Office of International Medical Student Education and notify the host institution coordinator. Compelling reasons for cancellation of a prior commitment to an international elective would include, but are not limited to, a personal illness or a major illness in a close family member (child, sibling, spouse, partner, or parent). **Students who cancel the elective and are deemed to not have provided a compelling reason for their cancellation will be required to pay \$100 to cover the administrative costs incurred in preparing for that elective.**

## Travel, Health and Safety Logistics

### Flights

- Try to purchase your tickets 3 months in advance.
- Useful websites: Google Flights, Kayak, Expedia, Priceline, Travelocity, STA Travel, Student Universe
- Also check individual airline company's website. Purchasing directly from airlines provides more protection for you in case the flights are cancelled or rescheduled. If you purchase through a third-party vendor (i.e., Kayak), you may not receive notifications of any flight changes.
- We recommend buying flights that have flexibility to change dates, get credits or have free cancellation.
- Consider purchasing flight or travel insurance.

### Travel Documents

- Obtain up-to-date travel documents: passports and visas (if required)
- If your passport is due to expire within six months of your travel dates, you must renew it before you leave the country or risk denied entry to host country. <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports.html>
- Check the State Department website for country specific details (Visa requirements, currency, health conditions, etc.): <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country.html>
- **Travel on a Tourist Visa (unless you are otherwise directed by your host coordinator).** Be sure your passport has enough blank pages for visas and country stamps.
- Make copies of your passport, health insurance, credit cards, and other important documents, and keep these safely apart from your original passport & credit cards.
- **Print a copy of the International SOS card to always keep with you and download the Assistance App from Weill Cornell's Office of Risk Management's website:** <https://riskmanagement.weill.cornell.edu/>

### Housing

- Contact your host country mentor to finalize your schedule and inquire about housing options.

### Getting to the Airport in NYC

- Get to the airport on time! Some options to JFK (John F Kennedy) & Newark Airports include:



- Take the E train from Penn Station to Jamaica Station. From Jamaica, take AirTran to JFK. AirTran stops at all terminals.
- Airport shuttle bus to JFK and Newark leaves from Port Authority.
- Take NJ Transit Train from 34th Street Penn Station to Newark Liberty International Airport
- Take an Uber or taxi.

### **Learn about your destination.**

- Connect with students who have travelled to your destination before for firsthand perspective and tips.
- Buy a guidebook! Check out Lonely Planet (great pictures and cultural background of cities and attractions), Let's Go (great resource for hostel names and cheap restaurants/bars) or Rough Guide (consider copying pages that are specific for your destination).
- A Student's Guide to International Health and Funding Under Publications: <https://www.amsa.org/action-committee/global-health/>

### **Pre-Travel Health**

All students should make an appointment to see their primary care doctor or a travel medicine specialist prior to their departure to obtain necessary vaccinations, malaria prophylaxis (if indicated) and review other health and safety concerns.

- For questions please contact: <https://global.cornell.edu/travel/planning/247-travel-assistance>

### **Vaccinations**

- Visit the CDC website for required or recommended immunizations/vaccinations. <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list/>
- Contact WCM Student Health Services: <https://weillcornell.org/student-health-services> or your personal primary care provider to ask about the availability of travel-related immunizations or pre-travel health consultation.
- Most health insurance companies do not cover the cost of travel-related immunizations or medications.
- The Travel Medicine clinic at Weill Cornell provides vaccinations/immunizations.

### **Malaria prophylaxis (depending on travel destination)**

- CDC website lists malaria endemic areas; ask your host mentor about local prevalence.
- In addition to prophylactic medications – you should bring mosquito net, bug spray (with DEET) and long-sleeved clothing/pants to protect against bites.
- Mosquito nets can be found at: REI.com, EMS.com, or Amazon.
- If you are heading to a malaria-endemic region, we strongly recommend you take prophylaxis!
- Malaria infection can be very serious, even fatal, and we don't want you getting sick.

### **COVID19**

- All students must be fully COVID vaccinated and boosted before international travel.
- Speak with your host mentor before traveling to learn about the local COVID conditions, rules and regulations at the institution so you can abide by them. You should also inquire about your local host institution/program's protocol if you were to come down with COVID-like symptoms.
  - *It is your responsibility to monitor the local health department's entrance guidelines and requirements for your country of travel to ensure that you can safely enter.*
- For local Covid19 Advice by destination please visit CDC/WHO sites:  
<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel> OR  
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/travel-advice>
- Please bring copies of your COVID vaccination cards
- Pack a supply of N95 and surgical masks for personal use
- We recommend bringing a supply of at least 2 Rapid Antigen tests for personal use

### **Water Safety**

- Better safe than sorry! Avoid fresh fruits/vegetables that were likely washed in local water. Only eat fruits and vegetables with protective skin (i.e., bananas).
- Avoid mixed juice drinks, since they are also likely mixed with water.
- Avoid ice cubes in drinks.
- Consider buying water purification tablets, if traveling to rural areas.

- Ask about local ways of disinfecting water (filters and UV systems}.

### **Food Safety**

- Eating street food can be one of the favorite elements of a trip. It can remain a favorite element if a few considerations are made.
- Choose freshly fried and well-cooked foods.
- Some diseases and bugs don't get killed when food is simply reheated.
- Use common sense when eating from street/food vendors.

### **General Health**

- Seek medical care if you are not well.
- Practice safe sex.
- Be smart about traveling and don't take unnecessary risks while abroad.

### **Other Travel Health Considerations**

- If you take regular medications – please speak to your health care provider to ensure that you have any prescription medications (sufficient to last, you several weeks beyond your scheduled travel) along with a copy of prescription/letter from your doctor.
- We recommend that you pack basic over the counter medications– especially if you will be in a rural or remote location or a health care system with which you are not familiar.
- Remember in other countries common over the counter medications may have a different generic/brand name and formulation or dosing.
  - Consider taking: Acetaminophen, Ibuprofen (or NSAID of choice), Antihistamine (diphenhydramine or cetirizine), anti-diarrheal medication (pepto-bismol, immodium), oral rehydration salts, topical steroid cream, anti-fungal cream (clotrimazole), also consider clotrimazole troches for vaginal yeast infections (more common in tropical locations especially if taking certain anti-malarial prophylaxis).
  - If you are taking oral contraceptive pills – remember to take refills in case of changes in travel plans/duration of trip.
  - If you require injectable medications– ensure that you have a sufficient supply of sterile needles, syringes and a sharps container for safe disposal + alcohol swabs.
- **FIRST AID KIT:** Insect repellent, sunscreen, Purell, Band-Aids, pain medication (Tylenol, Advil), moleskin, tweezers, anti-diarrheal medication (Pepto-Bismol, Imodium), feminine hygiene products, N95 Masks, gloves.

- If you will be doing a clinical rotation – please bring your own box of GLOVES for routine use + if doing a surgical rotation – bring your own supply of sterile gloves in your size as well as surgical masks and N95 masks and alcohol swabs to avoid depleting the local supply.

### **Packing**

- **WORK CLOTHING:** Please pack professional modest clothing – especially for your clinical rotations. If you have questions about clothing that is culturally appropriate, please ask students who have previously participated in your planned rotation or ask your host mentor.
  - Please note that in many countries – professional dress in hospitals and clinics is more ‘formal’ than we typically see in our hospital.  
Note: SCRUBS are not typically worn unless you are in the OR.
- **WHITE COAT:** Some rotations may provide you with a ‘white coat’ to use from the local institution, while other places will expect that you bring your own. Better to bring your own just in case!
- **MEDICAL GEAR:** We recommend bringing a stethoscope, penlight, reflex hammer. Consider bringing portable pulse oximeter (can purchase for ~\$20 on Amazon.com), portable manual BP (Blood Pressure) cuff. Your own box of gloves and alcohol swabs, surgical masks, N95 masks (so as not to deplete local supplies). Any other medical supplies recommended by your in-country host. Remember that any large or expensive medical equipment may incur ‘import’ taxes or impose challenges with getting through customs (even if it’s for personal use).
- **GIFTS:** It is nice to travel with a few inexpensive ‘souvenir’ type gifts from NYC that you can use as small tokens of thanks to give people like your host mentor or preceptors with whom you’ve worked with etc. EX: stationary, pens/penlights, baseball caps, key chains, post cards, dish towels/potholders or household items – especially if you are staying with a family in a home stay.
- **Put all valuables** (prescription medication, camera, computer, jewelry, cash, etc.) in your carry-on bag, never in your checked luggage.
- Pack a small roll of Duct tape in case you need to repair tears in your luggage.
- Label all luggage.
- Note: most airlines charge for oversized or extra bags.

## Health Insurance

If you do not have the Cornell Student Health Plan (SHP), it is your responsibility to find out what coverage you have while you are abroad.

### For students on the Cornell Student Health Plan:

- Routine care and pre-existing conditions - Your SHP plan covers routine care (e.g., wellness, preventative care, physical exams, gynecological exams) as well as urgent and emergent medical care and mental health needs, substance abuse expenses, and more.
  - Unlike receiving medical care in the U.S., while abroad, you will need to pay in full when health services are provided, and then submit a claim to Aetna Student Health for reimbursement. Be sure to receive and keep an itemized bill and receipt, with the date care was received, the diagnosis or reason for treatment, and the dollar amount for the visit.
  - Within 90 days, [submit a claim for reimbursement](#) to Aetna Student Health and upload your itemized bill and receipt.
  - For benefits covered by SHP, any copays or co-insurance needed for care while abroad will be at the In-Network rate. Please see your [Summary of Benefits](#) or [Coverage and Certificate of Coverage](#) for details.
  - Once your claim is approved, Aetna will reimburse you the cost of any covered benefits minus any applicable co-payments or co-insurance and will mail you a check directly to your U.S. address.
  - To contact the Aetna Student Health Claims Administrators when you are outside of the United States, please call 617-218-8400 (collect calls are accepted).
  - Prior authorizations are not needed to receive health care outside of the U.S.

## **International Travel Assistance Program**

All Students in the event of an evacuation due to a medical emergency you are fully covered under the International SOS. A summary of benefits can be found using this link: [wcm isos benefits flyer - 2020.pdf](#)

Please refer to the WCM Risk Management website for directions to sign up for the program. It is important that you do this.

<https://riskmanagement.weill.cornell.edu/travel/international-travel-assistance-program>

## **Travel Clinics in New York City**

Students are encouraged to use WCM Travel Clinic (but it is not required). IMSE has partnered with Weill Cornell Medicine's Travel Clinic to provide services to students who are travelling abroad at no cost to the student. WCM's travel clinic will make special accommodations to help fit the student in based on their schedules. At least 4 weeks prior to traveling, students should contact Avi Bueno(aeb3001@med.cornell.edu) to arrange an appointment and indicate they are a student participating in an IMSE-sponsored international elective. Should the student receive any bills from the clinic, these should be submitted to Ms. Margaret Gubbins (mms2001@med.cornell.edu) for processing.

### **WEILL CORNELL MEDICINE TRAVEL CLINIC**

1305 York Avenue, 4th Floor, NY, NY 10021 Tel: 646-962-8747

Contact: Avi Bueno / aeb3001@med.cornell.edu

Other Travel Clinics around NYC include the following (but are not free to WCM Students):

### **TRAVEL CLINIC OF NEW YORK**

1550 York Avenue (near East 82nd Street) NY, NY

Tel: 212-380-3841

### **TRAVEL MEDICINE CONSULTANTS**

178 East 85th Street, 3rd Floor (near Third Avenue) NY, NY Tel: 646-780-7705

### **TRAVEL CLINICS OF AMERICA**

1317 Third Avenue (near East 75th Street, NY, NY 10021 Tel: 212-734-9705

### **TRAVELER'S MEDICAL SERVICE**

595 Madison Avenue, Suite 1200 (near East 57th Street), NY, NY 10022 Tel: 212-230-1020

**CityMD** <https://www.citymd.com/services/vaccinations/travel-vaccinations-immunizations>

**CVS MinuteClinic** <https://www.cvs.com/minuteclinic/services/travel-health/N-d8Z3a3jrZd5>

**New York Center for Travel and Tropical Medicine** <https://www.travelhealth.net/>  
(practice run by Dr. Bradley Connor, WCM voluntary faculty)

## Be Prepared for Emergencies

- Regardless of where one may be traveling, the need for an emergency evacuation plan cannot be more strongly stressed. Political strife and instability can occur anywhere in the world and at any time. As such, travelers should have an emergency plan in place before they leave the country.
- Weill Cornell Medicine offers travel assistance to all students traveling on university-sanctioned trips. No enrollment is necessary.
- Weill Cornell Medicine has international resources available for all of its travelers at: <https://riskmanagement.weill.cornell.edu/travel>.
- In the need arises for an emergency evacuation students are covered under the medical & travel security services company **"International SOS"** plan while they travel. In the event of an emergency please contact International SOS for assistance.
- Each student is responsible for downloading the International SOS card and the app. The student should keep the card as well as their website URL address in a safe place when traveling abroad. Have the app on your mobile devices and log in using the WCMC policy number.
- We recommend you keep a written log of important phone numbers/emergency contacts in case of power outages or stolen phones!
- If you need further assistance, please call WCM Risk Management at 646-962-7683.

## Know what to do in an emergency!

- Contact the Office of International Medical Student Education. In case of an emergency (including robbery, illness, lost documents), contact the Directors (IMSEdirectors@med.cornell.edu) and Ms. Savita Birbal ([sab2025@med.cornell.edu](mailto:sab2025@med.cornell.edu)) via email or cell phone
- Know the number and location of the U.S. Embassy and consider checking in with the embassy or consulate upon arrival to the host country.



## Emergency Protocol & Procedures Sexual Assault and Rape

Students traveling abroad may be a victim of sexual harassment or sexual assault. While sexual harassment (ranging from whistling, suggestive comments, standing too close, or unwelcome sexual advances) and sexual assault (e.g., mugging, sexual assault, rape) are rare, they can and do occur.

If you are a victim of sexually harassment, quickly get away from the individual/individuals harassing you. Call and/or scream for help. Screaming will probably scare away the individual(s) and will usually draw a crowd.

If you are involved in a sexual assault or rape while traveling abroad, the following guidelines should be followed:

- Immediately contact your WCM mentor and your host mentor to report the incident. If you are uncomfortable talking about the incident with your host mentor, contact your WCM mentor. Seek medical attention immediately.
- In addition to contacting your WCM mentor, also contact IMSE to report the incident (IMSEdirectors@med.cornell.edu) and Ms. Savita Birbal (sab2025@med.cornell.edu)
- **Do not** contact the local police unless your host mentor advises you to do so.
- Consider contacting the local United States Embassy or Consulate to report the assault or rape.
- If raped, seek emergency treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and follow instructions regarding HIV prophylaxis, pregnancy prevention, and prevention of STIs.
- If raped, or if the sexual assault results in injury, we recommend returning to the United States for emergency medical care and counseling. Student Health or the NYP (New York Presbyterian) emergency department can provide you with appropriate care and counseling. If you prefer to seek care from your own physician, do so. [Student Health Services](#) can be reached at 646- 962-6942.
- International SOS is also a good resource for help.

## **Emergency Protocol & Procedures: Prophylaxis after HIV Exposure**

The prevalence of HIV infection is high in most countries around the world. Potential risks to medical students doing electives would include injury from a sharp, mucous membrane exposure to blood and body fluids, exposure to blood or body fluids following an accident on the road, sexual exposure, and exposure during medical care involving injections or blood transfusions. To date, there are no reports of medical students becoming HIV positive during an elective abroad; however, it is prudent to take appropriate precautions.

Students engaging in activities where there is a reasonable risk of exposure to HIV should inquire with their sponsor whether they will have access to Post-exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) as part of available healthcare services and should receive training in the local exposure protocol once they arrive on location. Students may discuss appropriate PEP regimens with their personal physicians or set up a visit with Weill Cornell Medicine Student Health Services.

If significant exposure to blood or bodily fluids occurs, you should immediately follow local reporting and testing procedures at your medical host if these are available. You should immediately start post-exposure prophylaxis if you sustain a high-risk exposure. You should continue taking the prophylaxis until your re-evaluation from Student Health, or from your primary care physician after you return home. Notify Weill Cornell Medicine Student Health Services as soon as you can, for reporting and evaluation.

[Student Health Services](#): 646-962-6942

## Photography: Dos and Don'ts



# Picture This: Dos and Don'ts for Photography

Product of the Research & Information Support Center (RISC)

The following is based on open-source reporting.

March 13, 2015

### Summary

Just about everyone has a camera at his or her immediate disposal through a smartphone. It is not uncommon to want to immortalize certain individuals, experiences, sites, or scenery, especially when traveling abroad. However, individuals to be photographed might have religious or animist/indigenous beliefs that photographs steal the soul (particularly of children) or disrespect the spiritual world; gender roles may make photography difficult, precluding women from being photographed; and security apparatus (police and military) generally do not want to be photographed. Some people simply want to be paid for being photographed. However, foreign laws and customs governing what is permissible to photograph can vary vastly from U.S. norms.

### Dos & Don'ts for Photography Abroad

Behavior that might be deemed inappropriate includes: lewd or lascivious acts, kissing, drinking alcohol, and immodest skin exposure. Edifices that might be deemed sensitive might include: government buildings, voting centers and processes, embassies, military facilities and vehicles (including airplanes), religious structures, and palaces. Scenery might include: war zones, sacred grounds, archeological sites, and tribal artifacts.

The use of the "selfie stick," a telescoping rod to take photographs of oneself from approximately one meter's distance, is banned in many locations, to include museums and art galleries, particularly in Europe.

Villagers in rural areas are sometimes suspicious of strangers, especially if they are not prone to seeing many people from outside their own community or country. There have been several incidents of violence in rural areas of Kenya, for instance, against Kenyan and foreign adults suspected of stealing children. Be aware that close contact with children, including taking their pictures or giving them gifts, can be viewed with deep alarm in some cultures, and may provoke panic and/or violence.

In some cases, anti-photography laws exist but are generally not pursued. For example, photographing the Eiffel Tower in Paris at night is [technically](#) a copyright infringement and, thus, illegal. Or, in Romania and Bulgaria, public buildings can be photographed, but those images cannot be sold. Further, in March 2014, [Hungary](#) made taking a photograph of people illegal unless everyone included has given permission; however, vagaries in the civil code leave room for interpretation.

### Case Studies in 2014 and 2015

In mid-March 2015, OSAC staff members visited Turkmenistan and were told not to photograph government buildings, which are rarely clearly identified as such but are numerous in Ashgabat. After photographing carcasses in a meat market, they were approached and told not to do so again. The staff members left the stall but were overtly surveilled and followed by two men for some time.

Also in mid-March, [Thailand](#) made posting specific 'selfies' online, a trend common with female tourists, illegal under the Computer Crime Act, [punishable](#) by five years of jail time and a 100,000 baht (U.S.\$3,035) fine.

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*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this notice may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*

In early March, two U.S. citizens carved their names into Rome's [Coliseum](#) walls and then photographed themselves and their act of vandalism. The two were arrested for [aggravated damage](#) and may face fines and jail time. The Coliseum has [signage](#) in English and Italian that defacing the structure is prohibited.

In early February 2015, U.S. sisters were [arrested and deported](#) from Cambodia for taking inappropriate photographs of themselves in the Preah Khan Angkor temple, a World Heritage site. They were [charged](#) with "indecent trafficking of pornography and exposing sexual organs." The sisters were sentenced to a six-month suspended prison term, fined the equivalent of U.S.\$315, and banned from the country for four years.

In October 2014, a U.S. citizen was [arrested](#) in the United Arab Emirates and charged with charged with taking pictures of a restricted area. He was held in the al-Wathba prison, charged, fined the equivalent of U.S.\$135, and [released](#) after 29 days incarceration. The U.S. citizen was to speak at a conference and then travel on to Malaysia. However, as in many cases, the detention was allegedly not communicated to the Embassy or to his contacts, and only after the U.S. citizen did not appear in Malaysia days later did his friends become concerned and begin searching for him.

### Impact to Private Sector

Depending on what country is involved, visitors who violate local law or custom can be detained for lengthy periods, charged stiff fines, and/or be declared *persona non grata*. Not knowing local laws and customs is not excusable in the eyes of the court or police. Further, photographic [documentation](#) of illegal activities can be used in most judicial trials, as was the case when a fish poacher photographed himself with an illegal weapon in Wales, U.K. Prisons overseas are not kept to U.S. standards, and prolonged detainment under such conditions may lead to biological and psychological maladies. Further, should a detained individual be representing a corporate entity, an arrest could cause unwanted business tensions. The notoriety that would likely come, at least online if not in mainstream media, may be damaging personally, making future academic or professional pursuits challenging. For example, in March 2014, four U.S. citizens were arrested for 'streaking' at [Machu Picchu](#) in Peru, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. They were photographed by other tourists, and these and other 'streaking' photographs and videos have circulated online. Peruvian Ministry of Culture [authorities](#) are increasing surveillance measures, requiring guides and specific routes, and cracking down on a behavior that tarnishes the ancient citadel.

### Guidance



In tourist destinations, including museums or galleries, and near diplomatic buildings signs will often be posted if photography is not allowed. These signs generally have a traditional camera, or increasingly an image of a cell phone, with a red circle and single diagonal line (see right image). However, in other cases, there is no signage or it is unclear. A similar sign may restrict flash photography (see left image) or videography. When traveling overseas, it is always a good idea to ask an individual directly if he

or she is agreeable to being photographed or to ask the authorities if photography is permitted in the area. Perusing OSAC [Crime and Safety Reports](#) is a best practice, as they often include information on photography.

### For Further Information

For additional information on global diseases and pandemic outbreaks, please contact OSAC's [Health and Disease Analyst](#). For country-specific concerns, please contact the appropriate regional analyst.

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## IMSE Funding Policy

### MS1 Summer International Project

The purpose of IMSE funding for MS1 Summer International Project students who are conducting projects at international (non-US) sites is twofold:

1. to offset costs related to participating in international research or project programs, including international travel, visas, pre-travel health (when applicable); and
2. to encourage participation in global health related scholarship. Funding is generously provided by numerous endowed fellowships and scholarships from our donors.

Given that the MS1 Summer International Project is an ELECTIVE (non-required) component of the curriculum for Weill Cornell students, while we hope to offset the vast majority of expenses for our summer students, we want to recognize that there may still be some out-of-pocket cost to participation. The generous endowed funds and scholarships have been established to minimize this out-of-pocket cost and to support the next generation of physicians to attain a global perspective and understanding of the delivery of health care and global health research.

#### Reimbursable expenses include:

- Airfare (we strongly recommend you purchase refundable tickets\*)
- Taxi/Transport cost to/from Airport
- Airline Baggage Related Costs
- Pre-travel health costs (travel clinic, vaccines, malaria prophylaxis)
- Visas (if applicable)
- IMSE Fall International Fellows Reception Poster printing costs

**\*Regarding Flights:** We strongly recommend the purchase of refundable tickets because **if you are unable to travel/participate in the travel - you will be responsible for reimbursing the IMSE Office for the cost of your flight.** Note that if your travel plans change and you end up needing to change your flights/return date etc. - the IMSE Office will NOT reimburse you for **non-emergent** changes to your itinerary. In addition, IMSE Office will NOT reimburse flights/transportation costs for recreational/personal travel while you are within the country for your summer project.

Expenses that are NOT reimbursable:

- Food
- Recreational/Personal travel
- Cost of transport to/from clinic or hospital setting

**MS4 International Clinical Electives**

Students will be reimbursed up to \$3000 for four-week electives, and up to \$3500 for six-to-eight-week electives.

Reimbursable expenses include:

- Airfare and Personal Baggage Fees (we strongly recommend you purchase refundable tickets\*)
- Taxi/Transport cost to/from Airport
- Pre-travel health costs (travel clinic, vaccines, malaria prophylaxis)
- Visas (if applicable)
- Housing/Accommodation
- IMSE Spring International Fellows Reception Poster printing costs

**\*Regarding Flights:** We strongly recommend the purchase of refundable tickets because in the event that you are unable to travel/participate in the elective - you will be responsible for reimbursing the IMSE Office for the cost of your flight. Note that if your travel plans change and you end up needing to change your flights/return date etc. - the IMSE Office will NOT reimburse you for non- emergent changes to your itinerary. In addition, IMSE Office will NOT reimburse flights/transportation costs for recreational/personal travel while you are within country for your elective.

Expenses that are NOT reimbursable:

- Food
- Recreational/Personal travel
- Cost of transport to/from clinic or hospital setting. This includes car rentals, public transportation such as bus or train and taxis.

**\*\*Exceptions to this funding policy are the four-week electives where funding and housing is provided by our partner institutions (i.e., Max Kade Elective in Austria, WCM-Qatar Electives etc.). If you are participating in one of these rotations, you should receive instructions from your elective site on how to proceed with your housing and travel costs. Any additional funds**

*provided to students by the partner sites goes towards the IMSE maximum reimbursement (not in addition to).*

Up to half of the total reimbursement can be provided prior to travel, and the remaining after completion of the required deliverables (narrative reflection, proof of email/letter to donor, poster at the Spring IMSE Fellows reception in May).

### **AOC International Research Funding Policies**

The purpose of IMSE funding for AOC students who are conducting research at international (non-US) sites is twofold:

1. to offset costs related to participating in international research programs, including international travel, visas, pre-travel health (when applicable); and
2. to encourage participation in global health related scholarship and research dissemination. By helping to offset these costs, our goal is to ensure that Weill Cornell students do not face additional barriers when participating in international AOC projects, compared with domestic ones. Funding is generously provided by numerous endowed fellowships and scholarships from our donors.

Given that the AOC is a required component of medical education for Weill Cornell students, we believe that costs of participating in these research programs should be largely covered through a combination of funding from IMSE and AOC resources. However, there will still be some anticipated out-of-pocket cost to participation in an international AOC. The generous endowed funds and scholarships have been established to minimize this out-of-pocket cost and to support the next generation of physicians to attain a global perspective and understanding of the delivery of health care and global health research.

- AOC involves two dedicated research blocks in MS3 and MS4. Typically, research-related travel will occur during one of these blocks. The AOC office provides \$1000 per student to use towards the costs of research/travel related expenses.
- The IMSE Office will reimburse funds for pre-travel expenses for students completing AOC research at international sites (airline tickets, visas, pre-travel health) up to a maximum of \$1500 once. Reimbursable expenses and receipt submission will have to comply

with Medical College travel rules (please see reimbursable expenses below).

- Students will need to provide receipts and complete the IMSE predeparture paperwork and Global Health ethics training requirements to qualify for reimbursement. The AOC funds can be used to reimburse living expenses while abroad.
- We would also require proof of AOC approval for the proposed project to qualify for these IMSE funds, such as requiring students submit copy of the letter from AOC indicating approval of the project along with their predeparture paperwork. This ensures that students who receive this funding are travelling specifically for AOC-related fieldwork, and not for other purposes (international conferences, for example).
- Students must be in good academic standing, as determined by AOC Office/Student Affairs to qualify for any IMSE supplemental funds.

Reimbursable expenses include:

- Airfare (we strongly recommend you purchase refundable tickets\*)
- Taxi/Transport cost to/from Airport
- Airline Baggage Related Costs
- Pre-travel health costs (travel clinic, vaccines, malaria prophylaxis)
- Visas (if applicable)

**\*Regarding Flights:** We strongly recommend the purchase of refundable tickets because if you are unable to travel/participate in the AOC related travel - you will be responsible for reimbursing the IMSE Office for the cost of your flight. Note that if your travel plans change and you end up needing to change your flights/return date etc. - the IMSE Office will NOT reimburse you for non- emergent changes to your itinerary. In addition, IMSE Office will NOT reimburse flights/transportation costs for recreational/personal travel while you are within the country for your AOC project.

Expenses that are NOT reimbursable:

- Food
- Recreational/Personal travel
- Cost of transport to/from clinic or hospital setting