

MISTI trip leader resources: student travel abroad



Are you ready to lead a student trip?

- 1 Know **WHERE** students can go
- 2 Know how students can go **SAFELY**
- 3 Know how students can go **HEALTHY**
- 4 Know how to get **HELP** when students go
- 5 Let us **KNOW** students are going

Should I
stay or
should I go?



FRESITAS.
2X1 EN ARETES
Y ANILLOS
NOVEDADES.
BISUTERÍA.
BOLSAS Y MOCHILAS.
CARTERAS.
MONEDEROS.
ACCESORIOS.
BEAUTY.

ÓPTICA
1er piso

OPTISERV
Plaza Fénix 1er piso. Al lado
Frente al café "El Jarro"
ARMAZÓN ULTRA LIGERO
TRIPLO
NICAS GRADUADAS
ANTIRREFLEJANTES
CLIP ON PARA
POLARIZADO

CALZADO

BO

1 Know **where** students can go

MIT Covid Travel Policy (as of May 2022)

MIT-related student (undergraduate AND graduate) travel to DoS Level 3 and 4 countries **for reasons other than Covid** requires a [high-risk travel waiver](#).

2 Know how students can go **healthy**

Students should

- Make an appointment at the [MIT Travel Clinic](#) or another healthcare provider six to eight weeks before travel for advice on:
 - vaccinations
 - food and water safety
 - allergies
 - traveling during Covid
- Review the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) website for health advice.

Staying **healthy** while abroad

Pre-trip planning

- Plan for continuity of care while abroad.
 - Make appointment with health care provider prior to trip.
 - Establish a plan to continue taking any medications and/or continue therapy while abroad.
 - Not all medications are legal abroad.
- Identify the appropriate healthcare resources of the destination together with ISOS.
- Assemble a travel health kit containing basic first aid and medical supplies: thermometer, bandages, Ibuprofen/Acetaminophen, and an alcohol-based hand gel.
- All MIT students have access to a *travel health insurance* while traveling abroad on an MIT trip (Cigna managed through ISOS).

Staying **healthy** while abroad

Travelers with allergies

- Make an appointment at the MIT Travel Clinic and/or create a wellness plan with their personal doctor(s).
- Carry a doctor's letter describing the condition and any instructions for emergency care.
- Consider packing non-perishable snacks they are used to eating.
- Make a notecard that explains their allergies in the native language of the country.
- When dining out avoid consuming anything for which they are unsure about ingredients.

Staying **healthy** while abroad

Food and water safety

- Contaminated food or drinks can cause [travelers' diarrhea](#) and other diseases.
- Travelers to developing countries are especially at risk.
- Students should stick to safe eating and drinking habits in order to reduce risk.
- Students should be advised to review CDC's [website](#) on food and water safety for recommendations and considerations.

3 Know how students can go **safely**

Students should

- Review the [US State Department](#) travel advisories of the country they are traveling to.
- Review [International SOS](#) for country specific information.
- Meet with the relevant [MISTI Program Manager](#).

Staying **safe** while abroad

Managing personal security


- Be **aware** of the threats in the travel destination and act accordingly (e.g., pickpockets in public transport).
- Keep a **low profile**. Don't walk distracted; avoid overt signs of wealth; practice common sense at ATMs; avoid protests.
- Avoid **driving**. Consider prohibiting students from driving while abroad.
- **Communicate**. Keep cell phone fully charged and a hard copy of contacts. Ask students to check in in case of emergency. Create a WhatsApp group.

4 Know how students can get help

- [International SOS \(ISOS\)](#) provides emergency medical, security, and natural disaster evacuation and other support services to faculty, staff, and students who are traveling abroad on MIT business 24/7.
- ISOS can get travelers the help they need, from assisting with medical providers and lost passports to evacuating travelers from the country.
- Students should download the ISOS app: <https://www.internationalsos.com/assistance-app> and call ISOS in case of emergency: +1-215-942-8478.
- ISOS will notify MIT's Program Manager, International Safety and Security, who can provide follow-up assistance.

5 Let us **know** students are traveling

- Students must register their participation in [MISTI's student portal](#).
- Students must register travel at travel.mit.edu (in fact, **ALL TRAVELERS** must).
 - includes signing of MIT's Travel Risk Acknowledgment
- Students should register travel plans with the [STEP](#) program of the U.S. Department of State if they are U.S. citizens.
 - If not a U.S. citizen students can also enroll to receive messages and register with their local consulate or embassy upon arrival in country.

A young man and woman are in a factory setting, looking up at a piece of machinery. The woman is on the right, and the man is on the left. A speech bubble is positioned between them, containing text. The background is filled with industrial equipment and metal structures.

**I wonder if
there are
guidelines we
should follow?**

Other general guidelines

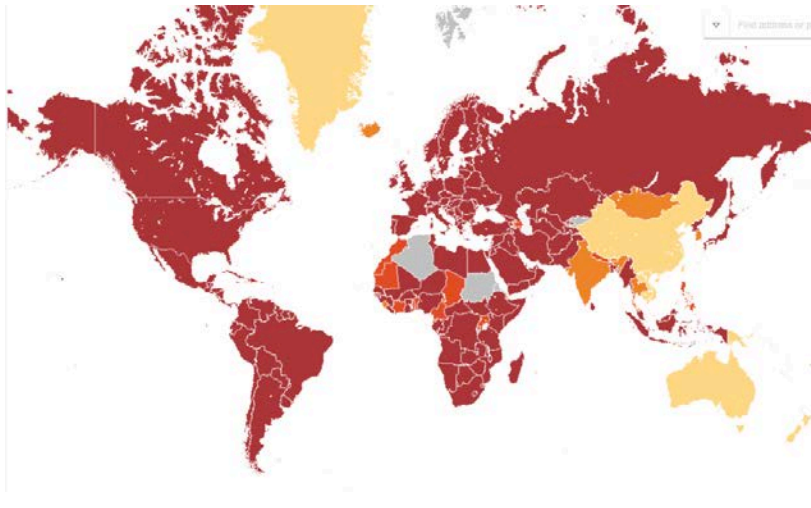
- Students may not make side trips to locations not permitted by MIT travel policy; consider prohibiting students from side trips altogether.
- Students must comply with all local laws.

Covid-specific:

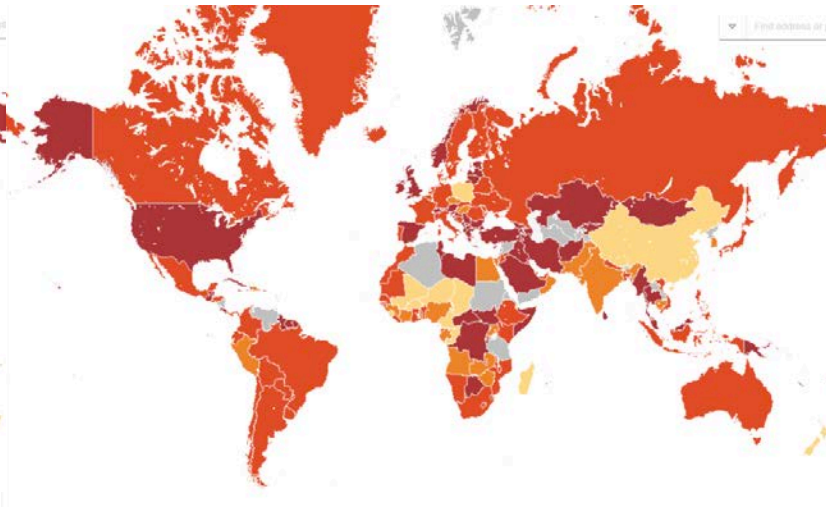
- Students must be prepared for possible program cancellation before or during the trip.
- Students must be willing to follow local Covid-19 protocols, such as quarantining or testing.

The world under Covid

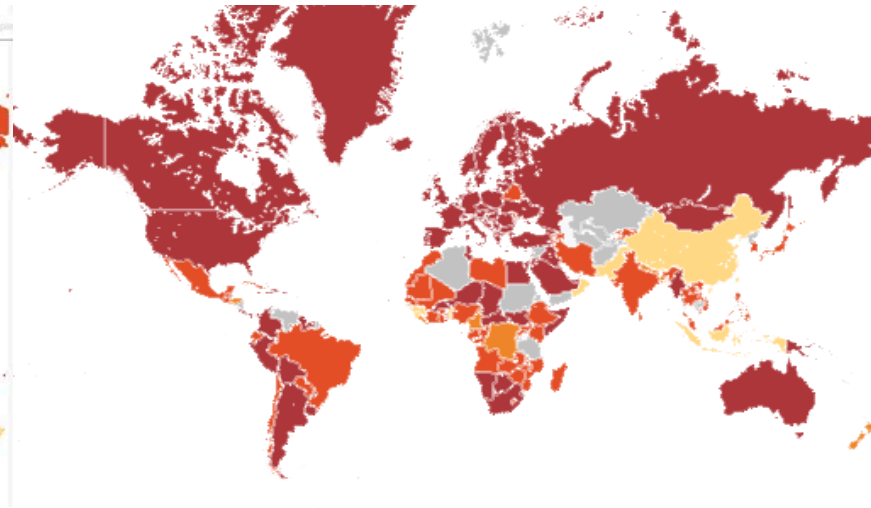
Spring 2021



Fall 2021



Winter 2022



Deciding whether to send students

MISTI criteria: student safety relative to Boston

- Current 14-day average of Covid cases per 100,000 people in the area you wish to send students. Should be no more than 25% higher than the [rate in Middlesex County](#).
- Stable or decreasing positivity rate over the last 14 days in the area you wish to send students, not to exceed 5% positivity
- Medical care equivalent to or exceeding that available in the Boston area in the event of a serious case or other illness requiring hospitalization
- Local vaccination rates. Should be the [same or higher than in Middlesex County](#).
- Capacity of the host organization to provide support in the event of a serious case
- Host organization Covid protocols

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Is it feasible?

Covid-related laws, guidelines and restrictions abroad

- Is a visa required for entry to the country? If so, is the country currently issuing visas in a timely manner?
- Are flights to/from the country operating on a regular schedule? Are they affordable?
- Is the host organization willing and able to host students? Are they operating in-person or remotely? Are you able to identify a local contact who can help provide or point to resources in case of need?
- Is adequate lodging available? Is it safe and affordable?
- Is a “Covid Pass” required to conduct daily life in the country? Is it possible for our students to obtain a “Covid Pass”? Are there any related costs and, if so, how will those be covered?
- Travel to some locations might be unfeasible for unvaccinated students.



**What's
the
plan?**

Available at
MIT Now in
Travel Policy
section



Resources for MIT student travel during Covid-19

Deciding whether to offer a program

MIT policy and MISTI practices

Any MIT program wishing to send MIT students (undergraduate and graduate) to countries under a [CDC Covid Level 4](#) warning are required per [MIT policy](#) to complete a [program approval application](#).

Individual student travelers not affiliated with programs who wish to travel to countries under a [CDC Covid Level 4](#) warning must submit a [request for an exception for travel deemed essential](#).

For anyone making decisions about whether to offer or pursue student travel, regardless of CDC Covid Levels, the following criteria may be useful to consider:

1. Current 14-day average rate of Covid cases per 100,000 people in the area you wish to send students. Ideally, the rate is no more than 25% higher than the [rate in Middlesex County](#).
2. Stable or decreasing positivity rate over the last 14 days in the area you wish to send

Quarantine

What are the protocols?

- What are the quarantine requirements upon entry? In case of symptoms/exposure?
- How much does it cost, and who will cover the cost?
- Where does the quarantine take place and under what conditions?
- How will student be transported to and from the quarantine location, and who will cover the cost?
- Will the student be able to continue the program while quarantined?
- Communicate to students that they must let you know immediately upon being informed they must quarantine; develop a plan to check in with students regularly.

In case of a positive test

Plan in advance

- Identify alternative lodging in case traveler can no longer stay with their host family/roommates.
- Identify nearby hospitals in case treatment is required.
- Explore alternate arrangements for student to be able to continue program.
- Communicate to students that they must let you know immediately upon receiving a Covid-19 diagnosis; develop a plan to check in with students regularly.
- If diagnosis comes at the end of the trip, students/trip leaders must be prepared to remain in the country longer than planned. Additional lodging must be arranged and airline tickets must be changed, involving additional costs.

International students

Special considerations

- Some international students, depending on their citizenship, might not be able to enter some countries due to Covid restrictions.
- Some Embassies/Consulates are issuing visas on a delayed timeline or not at all.
- International students needing visas to travel might also need a new U.S. student entry visa to return to the U.S.
- U.S. visa status for international students may be impacted if a student needs to stay longer due to testing positive to Covid-19.
- Visa processing at U.S. Embassies/Consulates abroad is unpredictable and can take many weeks (and even months) to get the visa issued after a visa interview.
- International students have an ISO Advisor assigned to them based on their academic level or program (<https://iso.mit.edu/about-iso/student-advisors-by-program/>).

I wish there
were an
app for that



MISTI Health and Safety resources and training

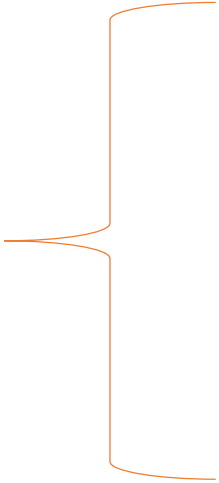
Robust health and safety resources for students

- Pre-Departure Checklist for Faculty Traveling through MISTI Global Seed Funds Grant
- Pre-Departure Checklist for Students Traveling through MISTI Global Seed Funds Grant
- MISTI Health and Safety Guidelines for Students
- Student-friendly app version: <https://mistitraining.goodbarber.com> (password: misti)
- Articles, country-specific info and MISTI Health and Safety Quiz
- In-person and/or virtual training sessions by country

MISTI Prep and Training

Country-specific resources for navigating other cultures

- Travel and logistics
- Intercultural communication
- Workplace expectations
- Values, norms and behaviors
- History, geopolitics and religion
- Identity abroad



In-person and
virtual sessions
and reflective
practices

Identity abroad

- While planning travel abroad, students should consider the various facets of their identity and how those may impact their time in a new culture, new country, and new community.
- For students with disabilities, accommodations that they may not need at home may be necessary in the host country.
- While abroad, students may face different interpretations of their race, ethnicity, and other characteristics that are quite different from what they are used to in the U.S.
- In some countries, LGBTQ+ communities are not openly embraced and welcomed.
- Contact misti-dei@mit.edu for more information and advice.



Email
misti@mit.edu

Africa

Arab World

Australia and New Zealand

Belgium

Brazil

Chile, Peru, Uruguay

China

Denmark

France

Germany

India

Israel

Italy

Japan

Korea

Mexico, Colombia

Netherlands

Portugal

Russia and Eurasia

Singapore

Spain

Switzerland

United Kingdom

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International Safety and Security
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A young man with dark hair, wearing a light blue patterned button-down shirt and dark pants, is sitting on a dark green park bench. He is smiling broadly at the camera. The background is a lush green park with large trees and a building in the distance. A white speech bubble is positioned to the right of the man, containing text in orange font.

**Any questions?
Email
misti@mit.edu**