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Communication to Semester Exchange Students Currently Abroad with newly updated Travel Advisory from DIRCO

Dear Student,

This email is sent to all semester exchange students currently abroad (including those still planning to go abroad in the first semester).

I have added the newly released travel advisory. See also the link here:

<https://www.gov.za/speeches/travel-advisory-response-covid-19-pandemic-17-mar-2020-0000>

Institutional Communication:

It is important to keep yourself abreast with the official Stellenbosch University Communication while you are abroad.

Stellenbosch University has the following designated COVID-19

website: <http://www.sun.ac.za/english/covid-19-coronavirus-disease-2019>

Two important announcements were released on Friday and Monday:

Friday, 13 March: <http://www.sun.ac.za/english/Lists/news/DispForm.aspx?ID=7184>

Monday, 16 March: <http://www.sun.ac.za/english/Lists/news/DispForm.aspx?ID=7185>

One of the most important announcements pertains to the *Travel Ban* - see specifically the section regarding returning students. Here follow official communication from Stellenbosch University: *"The University has imposed a temporary ban on all international travel for staff and students. This ban also extends to international guests visiting the University. The travel embargo will be in place until 30 June 2020. Staff and students who are abroad at the moment will have to self-quarantine for a period of 14 days when they return. While the University cannot prohibit staff and students from traveling in their private capacity, we urge individuals to please act responsibly in making plans that involve international travel. On your return you will also be expected to self-quarantine for a period of 14 days. To limit the risk of the spread of COVID-19, staff and students who do contract the virus due to private travel, will not be allowed to return to work, class or a residence until they are medically fit to do so."*

Government Travel Advice:

Please make sure to consult government travel advice.

- Travel Smart with Dirco: http://www.dirco.gov.za/department/consular_awareness_programme/index.html
- Please see the South African Government's travel advisories: http://www.dirco.gov.za/consular/travel_advice.htm
- Government Advisories specifically regarding COVID-19: http://www.dirco.gov.za/consular/corona_virus.html
- Also, remember to make use of ROSA (Registration of South Africans Abroad)

The Registration of South Africans Abroad (ROSA) is a service available to SA citizens. The information is confidential and will only be used by the Embassy and DIRCO to establish contact with citizens and next of kin in case of an emergency.



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Currently the ROSA website is off-line indefinitely and all SA citizens traveling abroad are hereby advised to register with their local SA Mission/s abroad directly. Below you will find the contact information of the respective South Africa Representatives abroad.

List of South African Representatives Abroad

Stellenbosch University Students Currently Abroad:

- It is very important to follow the instructions and recommendations of the host university. If you have specific questions about your exchange, *you first need to consult your host university because they are best acquainted with their local environment. Please follow their recommendations and advice.*
- If you decide to return home due a personal decision, request/recommendation from your host institution or the South African government, it is important to note that you will need to observe the 14 days of self-isolation. Entering South Africa from High Risk countries could mean that more steps will be required of you by the South African government.
- *If you are planning to return home, please send an email to exchange@sun.ac.za .*
- Students who are planning to return should carefully consult the travel information from the respective airlines and travel advisories of the South African government.
- This is a difficult and stressful time for everyone. The WHO recently brought out this guideline with suggestions and tips: https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af_8
- The CDC has also released the following suggestions and tips: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html>
- Please note that you can always reach out to us for support and we can schedule SKYPE sessions with you, if you have specific concerns you would like addressed or need any support. Your emotional well-being is also of importance to us.

Stellenbosch University Students who planned to go on exchange in the first semester, but have not departed yet:

Due to the current travel ban of Stellenbosch University you will not be able to go abroad during the first semester. We therefore recommend two things:

- You can cancel your exchange
- Explore the option of rescheduling your exchange to the next semester.

If you are still planning to travel (which we are discouraging you to do), please take note of the following Stellenbosch University announcement regarding private

travel: <http://www.sun.ac.za/english/Lists/notices/DispForm.aspx?ID=1502>

NB: The situation is fluid and information will be distributed as it becomes available.

Kind regards,

Sarah

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