Managing COVID-19 in the Student Abroad Universe: What Works, How to Plan for it

Presented by: Maureen Gordon, Magda Bernaus and Bill Bull
TODAY’S AGENDA

1. Introduction- Speakers and audience
2. Zoom Polling throughout session
3. What the data has told us about running programs and what the data says about risks to students
4. Realities of Running Programs this past year
5. Experiences in getting programs approved
6. Tools and Resources
7. Q&A
CIEE COUNTRIES FALL 2020 – FALL 2021 (20)

- Denmark
- England
- France
- Germany
- Italy
- Netherlands
- Portugal
- China
- South Africa
- Ghana
- Costa Rica
- South Korea
- Thailand
- Jordan
- Czech Republic
- Ireland
- Sweden
- Mexico
- Morocco
- Spain

5400 participants
CIEE HEALTH CASES (2020-2021) – COVID IN PERSPECTIVE

- ~11% of Pax reported a Health Case
- 0.7% (<1%) of Pax tested positive COVID-19
- ~7% of all Health Cases were COVID-19
- ~35% of COVID-19 cases were in a single TEACH post-grad group in the quarantine arrival hotel where an unauthorized party was held.
- 17 Hospitalizations – none linked to COVID-19 (<3% of health cases)
- 37 students were quarantined or tested as close contacts (~6% of health cases)
- Emotional Distress/Serious Emotional Distress = 9.5% of health cases.
- 63% of health cases were for other illnesses or injuries
- *15 cases were community transmitted

5,400 PAX: 01 AUG 20 – 19 OCT 21 – 0 Hospitalizations due to COVID-19
COVID-19 CASES & QUARANTINES BY SEMESTER

- **Fall 2020:**
  - 1,713 pax
  - 5 x COVID-19 cases (3 on arrival)
  - 8 x Close Contact Quarantines
  - 0.7% pax impacted

- **Spring 2021:**
  - 1,247 pax
  - 5 x cases (4 on arrival) (+15 in hotel post grad program)
  - 9 x Close Contact Quarantines
  - 2.4% pax impacted

- **Summer 2021:**
  - 1,452 pax
  - 11 x COVID-19 cases (1 on arrival)
  - 17 x Close Contact Quarantines
  - 1.8% pax impacted

- **Fall 2021 (in progress):**
  - 1,596 pax
  - 8 x COVID-19 cases (3 were on arrival)
  - 4 x Close Contact Quarantines
  - 0.7% pax impacted
ACTIVE CIEE LOCATIONS WITH ZERO LOCAL COVID-19 IMPACTS SO FAR

- Portugal
- South Africa
- United Kingdom
- Ireland
- Czech Republic
- Jordan
- Costa Rica
- Thailand
- (Sweden)
- (Netherlands)
CIEE RISK MANAGEMENT IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

- **CIEE RISK MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**
  - Full-time Health, Safety, & Security team with over 65-years of collective experience in risk management
  - CIEE Health Risk Index (HRI) on our web measuring COVID-19 risk bi-weekly – a free public resource
  - Annually updated Country/City Emergency Action Plans, Risk Assessments, and Sexual Assault Response Plans
  - Paid Intelligence & Evacuation Provider Alerts and Analysis
  - OSAC Crime & Safety Reviews, Johns Hopkins, DOMO, US Department of State, and CDC monitoring
  - Housing HSS Checklists/Inspections (were also modified for COVID-19)
  - Online Traveler Tracking/Emergency Notification System (text, email, phone)
  - Web/RSS based Emergency Alerts for stakeholders
  - Online Pre-departure Orientation & In-person safety orientation for students
  - Bystander Intervention Training (BIT)
  - Online Mental Health counseling for students
  - Online Safety and COVID-19 training for staff
  - COVID-19 Vaccine Mandate (1 OCT 2021)

- **Students Supported:** Post-Grads/Teachers, College Students, GAP, and High School Students (5,400+ this past year)
RISK IN PERSPECTIVE (14 OCT 2021)

- The US is assigned Level 4 by the CDC and would be considered “Do Not Travel – Level 4” by the DOS.
  - The US is currently at 403 new cases per 100k over 14 days.
  - Alaska is the highest state at 1,660 per 100k.
  - CIEE’s highest country is the UK at 732 per 100k.
  - Only 6 CIEE countries are higher than lowest US State (Connecticut - 161).
  - Gilman has started approving Level 3 countries

- 16 CIEE countries have a higher rate of vaccination than the US (67% one-dose vax)

- The US is 48th in the world for vaccinations.

- With a few exceptions at certain times during the pandemic thus far, the US has mostly trended worse than most any country in the world.

- However, risk is not born equally either in location or by populations in a location.
- The situation on this chart measuring current infection has remained an almost constant picture of disparity of response during the pandemic between US and others.

- The US has consistently underperformed in controlling infection vs. both CIEE countries and much of the world.

- The blanket belief that “studying abroad is more dangerous than being on campus during the pandemic” is incorrect, problematic, and ignores the risks of staying in place.

- Despite an earlier 2019 assessment by the Global Health Survey rating the US as the #1 country prepared for a pandemic – the exact opposite has come true. We need to reassess how we measure risk at US universities, across the board.

- It is clear after COVID-19, the US is certainly not the country to benchmark safety vs. all other countries. (See CIEE’s blog back in April 2021 to this effect.)

- (The US also had a coup attempt in Jan 2021.)
Realities of running programs this past year: the case of Barcelona
Mitigating risks: using diverse sets of guidelines and restrictions

Restrictions throughout Catalonia (COVID-19)

When to wear a mask

- When a minimum distance of 1.5 m cannot be maintained among non-cohabiting people.
- In any enclosed public space or space for public use.
- In a car with non-cohabitants and on public or private means of transport.
- At crowded, standing, outdoor events, or where there is less than 1.5 m distance between seats.
- By workers and visitors to residences.

MEASURES TO COMBAT COVID-19 IN BARCELONA

In view of the good progress seen in the epidemiological data, the Catalan government is easing its Covid-19 restrictions along the steady path back to normal.

Restrictions and recommendations in force from October 22

- All activities are resuming their usual public opening times
- No limit on number of people for social gatherings. It is recommended that people gather in groups of no more than ten
- Face masks obligatory for indoor spaces

CIEE COVID-19 GUIDELINES FOR PROGRAM DELIVERY

BEGIN COURSE
Mitigating risks: adjusting program delivery

- Arrival and Orientation
- Housing
- Academics
- Cultural activities and excursions
Has it worked? Supporting students and staff

- Positive cases and close contacts.

- Essential partnerships: health centers and housing providers.

- Logistical accommodations.

- Psychological impact.
Has it worked? Student perspective

On a 5-point scale, how happy are you overall that you decided to study abroad this semester in spite of COVID-19? (5: very happy; 1: not happy at all)

25 responses

Would you recommend to a friend that they study abroad NOW in spite of the COVID-19 situation and restrictions? (5: yes, absolutely; 1: not at all).

25 responses
Has it worked? Student perspective

COVID-19 restrictions have negatively impacted my experience in the following aspects:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NO NEGATIVE IMPACT</th>
<th>LITTLE NEGATIVE IMPACT</th>
<th>SOMEBHAT NEGATIVE IMPACT</th>
<th>NEGATIVE IMPACT</th>
<th>VERY NEGATIVE IMPACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ORIENTATION</td>
<td>38,9%</td>
<td>26,9%</td>
<td>26,9%</td>
<td>7,7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACADEMICS</td>
<td>42,3%</td>
<td>26,9%</td>
<td>30,8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXTRACURRICULARS</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>23,1%</td>
<td>11,5%</td>
<td>11,5%</td>
<td>3,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOUSING</td>
<td>61,5%</td>
<td>15,4%</td>
<td>11,5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>11,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERSONAL/SOCIAL</td>
<td>19,2%</td>
<td>26,9%</td>
<td>23,1%</td>
<td>23,1%</td>
<td>7,7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Zoom

Masks (disconnection, hard to understand)

Distancing
No eating

No guest policy

Curfews
Capacity limits
Personal travel strongly advised against
Student Feedback

that everything is pretty much normal besides mask-wearing and you can still do everything you want to do, it just requires a bit more documentation and verification for example when traveling.

I would recommend that they do it! I am personally so glad that I decided to come here, as it’s a great way to safely “travel” and experience new things while also being able to adhere to guidelines etc. I think that this experience is fairly adaptable to the circumstances we’re in, so it’s a great option

Understand the covid restrictions before arrival and that masks are still necessary in many places here

Additional planning ahead is needed, but as long as you’re prepared all the opportunities of a regular study abroad experience are available.

Get a comfortable mask

Contracting COVID-19 while abroad was very scary (being in a new country and isolating alone) and be mindful of that before you go abroad.
Gaining initial support to resume study abroad

The Year Without Study Abroad
Covid-19 could lead to lasting change in international learning.

The pandemic has grounded study abroad.

In a typical year, American colleges send tens of thousands of students overseas — 347,099 in the 2018-19 academic year, to be exact — to learn about
Getting Approvals

- Intersection between destination assessment and program provider or institution
- Nuance of program “sponsor” and assumption of risk
- Elevated/High Risk Committee
  - Provost, Student Health, Legal, International Risk, Study Abroad
- Vaccination policy and exemptions
Looking ahead

- Faculty-led programs and on-site support
  - Summer 2022 planning
- Mitigating, not eliminating, risk
- Continue approach of transparency and informed consent with students
- Considering staff workloads, re-evaluating processes for efficiency, and sanity!
- Setting best practice throughout the university
RESOURCES AND (WE THINK) SOME USEFUL READINGS

- CIEE Health Risk Index (HRI) - [https://www.ciee.org/about/blog/health-risk-index-report](https://www.ciee.org/about/blog/health-risk-index-report). Or Google “CIEE HRI”
- CIEE Response to Department of State Travel Advisories - [https://www.ciee.org/about/blog/ciee-response-department-state-travel-advisories](https://www.ciee.org/about/blog/ciee-response-department-state-travel-advisories)
CIEE HEALTH RISK INDEX 2.0

First report started in April of 2020

**Multiple Sources (but not limited to):**
- Johns Hopkins
- Oxford
- Drum Cussac / Crisis 24
- Our World in Data
- US CDC

**Measurements (but not limited to):**
- 28-day and 14-day cases/deaths rate adjusted for population (HRR)
- Positivity Rate
- Healthcare readiness
- Governmental Responsiveness
- Vaccine rate

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>24-Jun</th>
<th>7-Jul</th>
<th>21-Jul</th>
<th>4-Aug</th>
<th>18-Aug</th>
<th>1-Sep</th>
<th>15-Sep</th>
<th>28-Sep</th>
<th>8-Oct</th>
<th>24-Oct</th>
<th>Change since last report</th>
<th>Percent of population with at least 1 dose of vaccine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa &amp; Middle East</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botswana</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>increase 6%</td>
<td>increase 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>increase 4%</td>
<td>increase 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>increase 8%</td>
<td>increase 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>increase 12%</td>
<td>increase 12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia Pacific</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>decrease 3%</td>
<td>decrease 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>increase 4%</td>
<td>increase 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>increase 2%</td>
<td>increase 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>decrease 3%</td>
<td>decrease 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>decrease 2%</td>
<td>decrease 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
<td>decrease 1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
High-quality & safe international education is achievable in this pandemic and even more so as the virus becomes endemic. 1-year, 5400 pax, 20 countries with in-person learning, <1% tested positive for COVID-19, 0 x serious illness, 0 x Hospitalizations.

Homestays are very safe during the pandemic, and most likely safer than even the best controlled congregate housing. ~1,200 High School Students utilized homestays exclusively in Summer 2021. 4 x COVID positive cases (0.3%), 0 x serious illness, 0 x Hospitalizations.

Vaccinated students are VERY safe from the pandemic and make others around them safer. Very few “breakthrough cases”, 0 x serious illness, 0 x hospitalizations, and very little transmission among roommates who are all vaccinated.

COVID-19, it’s NOT all unknown. MUCH IS KNOWN.

Outdoor activities/classes are best and masks are generally not needed
- Masks and other mitigations reduce risk in the classroom – no observed transmission in the classroom
- Ventilation is very important – it’s airborne
- The vaccinated do not become infected as easily or transmit as easily as the unvaccinated
- 95% of hospitalizations in the US were UNVACCINATED
WHAT DOES THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE?

- **COVID-19 is endemic.** Occasional spikes in various countries (including the US) due to variants and/or diminishing vaccinations and/or their effectiveness. Disruptions are localized and not country-wide; CIEE’s vaccine mandate will continue to reduce any risk to our students or staff. FALL 2021 numbers reveal less likely to spread. But still a risk.

- **The Roaring 20’s.** We need to be mindful that our students are “born to be wild”, especially after being isolated in the pandemic.

- **Mental Health.** Observed slight increase in student mental distress pre-pandemic. Fear, isolation, uncertainty, missed experiences, and loss due to COVID-19 has led to individual and societal trauma.
That's all Folks!
QUESTIONS

Please use the Q&A feature