

Study Abroad to Resume in Madrid

Provost@slu.edu

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Dear Saint Louis University community,

With Dr. Paul Vita, Director and Academic Dean of SLU-Madrid, I am pleased to announce that Saint Louis University students will be permitted to study abroad at SLU's campus in Spain during the Spring 2021 semester.

Other Spring 2021 study abroad programs/destinations are under review; decisions to permit SLU student participation will be made on a case-by-case basis, based on the recommendations of the University's International Services Office and its International Travel Advisory Committee (ITAC).

The safety and security of our community are Saint Louis University's top priorities. This community extends to the students, faculty, and staff who study and work in Madrid. The University has the assurance that its Madrid campus is prepared to support all of its students (including those visiting for a single semester), due to the campus' rigorous health and safety plan, emergency response protocols, pre-departure and on-site orientations, academic contingency plans, and constant, transparent communication with St. Louis-based leadership.

Our decision is also based on the recommendation of the International Travel Advisory Committee (ITAC). The committee reviewed a joint petition submitted by the International Services Office and SLU-Madrid to grant an exception to the University's policy restricting travel. The committee voted unanimously to support SLU-St. Louis students' participation in study abroad on its own campus in Spain for Spring 2021. This recommendation was forwarded to President Pestello, who requested that Dean Vita and I make the final decision.

SLU is among very few U.S. universities that operates its own degree-granting center in Europe. Its Madrid campus opens semester-length, once-in-a-lifetime international experiences to students, including those pursuing degrees in engineering and the health sciences, such as physical therapy and nursing. There is ample evidence that study abroad is among college students' most beneficial experiences, not only for building language skills, but for providing them with new perspectives into their own culture and new understandings of their place in their world.

All members of the SLU-Madrid community will participate in mitigating the risks and preventing the spread of COVID-19, like students, faculty, and staff at SLU-St. Louis – indeed, like the students, faculty, and staff at all institutions of higher education around the world. Study abroad students will need to review and respect all protocols listed on [SLU-Madrid's COVID-19 webpages](#), which includes direct links to directives from regional and national health authorities. Students with pre-existing health conditions are strongly recommended to inform their decision on studying in Madrid in consultation with medical professionals.

The University will continue to monitor the U.S. State Department, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the World Health Organization, and Spain's Ministry of Health: circumstances outside of our control may arise that could prevent SLU students from traveling to Spain in January. Nonetheless, our Madrid Campus is open. It looks forward to welcoming its visiting students in January, supporting them through its health and safety protocols, and providing them with an international educational experience under the "new normal" that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about locally and globally.

Thank you,

Mike Lewis, Ph.D.
Interim Provost