

# Guidelines for International Experiences:

A reference for University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS) School of Medicine students, faculty and staff

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UMMS International Medical Education Program (IMEP)

## 1. Introduction

This document is intended for medical students, staff and faculty at the University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS) who are interested in being involved with international experiences for UMMS School of Medicine (SOM) students. The information in this document is specifically applicable to UMMS medical students. For information specific to the Graduate School of Nursing, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, and Graduate Medical Education, interested students and faculty should contact those schools/departments.

This document is produced by the International Medical Education Program (IMEP), which is located within the UMMS Office of Undergraduate Medical Education (OUME). The IMEP oversees all international experiences for UMMS medical students.

For the purposes of this document, an international experience is one in which international travel is in the course and in the scope of a student's educational experience at UMMS, and one or more of the following applies:

- It is financed, in full or part, through UMMS funding, including departmental or unrestricted funds;
- It is credit-bearing or the travel is necessary for meeting a training or degree requirement;
- It is sponsored, arranged, or administered by UMMS, or by UMMS faculty or staff members;
- The travel is directly related to a UMMS sponsored grant or contract.

International travel is any travel outside of the 50 U.S. states, and therefore international travel includes travel to U.S. protectorates and territories.

Additional information about the IMEP can be found on the [IMEP web page](#). This document, and other key documents related to international experiences for UMMS medical students, can be found on the hyperlink for [Required Travel Forms](#), which is the first hyperlink on the left navigation bar of the IMEP web page. This hyperlink is indicated by a red box on the next page of this document, which shows an image of the IMEP web page.

Questions about international experiences are welcome. The best way to contact the IMEP is by email at: [IMEP-GHP@umassmed.edu](mailto:IMEP-GHP@umassmed.edu).

Image of the IMEP web page:

University of Massachusetts Medical School

Office of Undergraduate Medical Education

HOME OUME OUR CURRICULUM FACULTY STUDENT LEARNING COMMUNITIES INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS

**Required Travel Forms**

**Information for faculty & mentors**

- [Global Health Teaching Opportunities](#)

**Opportunities for UMMS students**

- [Global Health Opportunities](#)
- [Global Health FCEs](#)
- [International electives](#)
- [eScholarship page for the International Medical Education Program \(available only with UMMS credentials\)](#)

**Global Health Pathway (GHP)**

- [Selected GHP Sites](#)
- [GHP News & Achievements \(available only with UMMS credentials\)](#)

**Links of Interest**

- [International Support Services \(ISS\) at UMMS](#)
- [Global Health Resource Library](#)
- [International Healthcare Opportunities Clearinghouse \(IHOC\)](#)
- [Farm to Health Center Initiative](#)
- [MMS Committee on Global Health](#)
- [Global Health Articles](#)
- [UMMS SATHI Partnership \(India\)](#)
- [UMass International Relations](#)

**International Medical Education Program (IMEP)**

*Please note: The processes for UMMS medical students to obtain approval for proposed international experiences is currently being revised. A key step in the approval process is submitting required information to the International Medical Education Program (IMEP) at least three months prior to the proposed experience. Please see additional information at [Required Travel Forms](#) and return to this web page frequently for updates.*

Students from the UMass Medical School (UMMS) have opportunities to benefit from global health experiences in settings outside the United States throughout their time of enrollment. Global health experiences include opportunities in clinical medicine, research, public health, community service, as well as cultural and language training. Specific opportunities within the IMEP include service learning in the FOM1 year, Flexible Clinical Experiences (FCE) in the CCE year, and advanced studies electives.

**Global Health Pathway**

The [Global Health Pathway \(GHP\)](#) is an elective, four-year program at the University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS) that trains and supports medical students to be future leaders and providers in global health. The GHP selects medical students through an application process at the start of their medical school training and provides them with longitudinal curriculum and opportunities to gain experience in clinical, research, public health and cultural experiences with underserved populations in two major categories: those currently living *outside* of the U.S. or those that are living *inside* the U.S. with recent international origins, such as immigrant or refugee populations.

**Global Health Topics In Action (Optional Enrichment Elective)**

The [Global Health Topics In Action](#) is a student-led elective that introduces students to current topics in global health through a series of guest speakers and activities. Although the elective is targeted toward medical students and most attendees have historically been first and second year medical students, it is open to all members of the UMMS community, including medical, nursing and graduate students, residents and faculty members. Speaker sessions typically are held on weekday evenings.

**Contact Information**

- Email: [IMEP-GHP@umassmed.edu](mailto:IMEP-GHP@umassmed.edu)

**Information for international students visiting UMMS:**

- [International Visiting Students Elective Program](#)

Address of the IMEP web webpage: <https://www.umassmed.edu/oume/international-medical-education/>

## 2. Overview of process for proposing international experiences

Below is an overview of the process that students and their advisors follow in order to propose an international experience.

As mentioned in Step #1 (below), a key step of the process is determining if the proposed experience would be at a Partner Site, or if it would be at a location that is not a Partner Site. A Partner Site is an established international training and education site that has an existing umbrella agreement with UMMS. Because of the relationship between a Partner Site and UMMS, some of the details within the process of proposing an international experience is different for a Partner Site than for a site that is not a Partner Site. An important example of this, as mentioned in Step #2 (below), is that **required information must be submitted to IMEP at least 3 months in advance of proposed travel to a Partner Site, and at least 4 months in advance of proposed travel to any other site.**

### **Step 1: Student identifies a proposed international experience:**

- This step includes identifying core aspects of a proposed experience, which includes: dates of travel, learning objectives, Host Site, Host Supervisor, UMMS Faculty Advisor for the proposed international experience

### **Step 2: Student submits required information regarding the proposed international experience to IMEP:**

- Required information must be submitted at least **3 months prior** to a proposed experience to a Partner Site, and at least **4 months prior** to a proposed experience to other sites.
- Students can contact the IMEP (at [IMEP-GHP@umassmed.edu](mailto:IMEP-GHP@umassmed.edu)) to ask about what the required information is for the particular site they are proposing travel to. The required information typically includes an International Experience Form (IEF) for Partner Sites, and a Global Health Experience Request (GHER) Form for other sites.

### **Step 3: IMEP reviews the proposed international experience:**

- The IMEP reviews the proposed international experience which includes:
  - When indicated, working with the UMMS International Support Services (ISS) to review safety and security information for the Host Site
  - Confirming, updating, reviewing, or developing an agreement between UMMS and the Host Site that would cover the proposed experience. Typically, the agreement between UMMS and the Host Site is an International Partner Agreement (IPA) for a Partner Site, and an experience-specific Letter of Agreement (LOA) for other sites.
  - If a LOA is needed, but it is not able to be completed and signed by representatives of both UMMS and the Host Site within **2 months** prior to the start of the experience, then the proposed experience will not be approved.

- If the proposed international experience is conditionally approved by IMEP, then IMEP will notify the student and their UMMS Faculty Advisor that the experience is conditionally approved, pending the student's completion of all the pre-travel responsibilities.

**Step 4: Student completes final pre-travel responsibilities** at least 1 month prior to departure.

These responsibilities include reviewing safety & security information, and registering the student's travel with exact travel dates on the [UMMS Travel Registration](#), which is found within the [UMMS International Support Services web page](#).

**Step 5: If all of the previous steps are completed successfully, and there are no safety or security concerns that would prohibit UMMS approval of travel, then IMEP gives final approval of the experience**, and notifies the student via email.

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### 3. Partner Sites

A **Partner Site** is an established international training and education site that has an existing umbrella agreement with UMMS. UMMS and a Partner Site enter into an agreement because of the intention of having experiences available for UMMS medical students for the medium or long-term future, and typically at least for a three year period.

Below is a list of Partner Sites and UMMS faculty who have been involved in developing the partnerships with these sites.

- **Bolivia: Instituto para el Desarrollo Humano (IDH), Viedma Hospital**
    - *UMMS faculty:* Dr. Douglas Golenbock
    - *Partner Site website:* [IDH](#)
  
  - **China: West China School of Medicine, Tongji University, Peking University**
    - *UMMS faculty:* Dr. Guangping Gao, Dr. Hui Zo
    - *UMMS web page with additional information:* [UMMS China Program site](#)
    - *Partner Site website:* [West China Hospital](#), [Tongji University School of Medicine](#)
  
  - **Dominican Republic: Instituto Dominicano de Estudios Viroológicos (IDEV)**
    - *UMMS faculty:* Dr. Douglas Golenbock
    - *Partner Site website:* [IDEV Facebook page](#)
  
  - **Dominican Republic: Good Samaritan Mission Hospital**
    - *UMMS faculty:* Dr. Michele Pugnaire, Dr. Jean Boucher
  
  - **India: Charutar Arogya Mandal (CAM)**
    - *UMMS faculty:* Dr. Jeroan Allison, Dr. Anindita Deb
    - *UMMS web page with additional information:* [UMMS SATHI Partnership \(India\)](#)
    - *Partner Site website:* [Charutar Arogya Mandal \(CAM\)](#)
  
  - **Kenya: Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI), Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Teaching and Referral Hospital (JOOTRH), Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital (MTRH)**
    - *UMMS faculty:* Dr. Ann Moormann
  
  - **Nicaragua: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua (UNAN)**
    - *UMMS faculty:* Dr. Jorge Yarzebski, Sr.
    - *UMMS web page with additional information:* [UMMS UNAN Partnership](#)
    - *Partner Site website:* [UNAN - León](#)
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## 4. Language training experiences

International experiences focused on language training are available to UMMS medical students at a limited number of selected language training schools that have undergone a review process by IMEP. The review process is required in order to ensure that UMMS students' international language training is done in a safe and high-quality educational environment, and that both UMMS and the site for language training have the necessary agreements and lines of communication in place.

Students interested in proposing a language training experience in an international setting should contact the IMEP via email (at [IMEP-GHP@umassmed.edu](mailto:IMEP-GHP@umassmed.edu)) to learn about the selected language training schools that have gone through the review process and are available to UMMS students. Similar to proposed international experiences at other sites that are not Partner Sites, students must submit required documents to IMEP for a proposed experience to an international language training school **at least 4 months prior to the proposed experience.**

Students interested in non-English language training may be interested in the U.S.-based [Medical Language Training elective \(FC-460\)](#). This Advanced Studies elective is available to students while they are based in Worcester, Massachusetts. The elective does not involve international travel, and students enrolled in the elective can focus on a non-English language of their choice.

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## 5. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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9. When should students purchase airfare and other expenses related to travel?
10. How do students get assistance from a health care provider regarding pre-travel preparations, including information about vaccinations and other health information?



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

### 1. What is an “international experience”?

An international experience is one in which international travel is in the course and scope of a student’s educational experience at UMMS and one or more of the following applies:

- It is financed, in full or part, through UMMS funding, including departmental or unrestricted funds;
- It is credit-bearing or the travel is necessary for meeting a training or degree requirement;
- It is sponsored, arranged, or administered by UMMS, or by UMMS faculty or staff members;
- The travel is directly related to a UMMS sponsored grant or contract.

International travel is any travel outside of the 50 U.S. States, and therefore international travel includes travel to U.S. protectorates and territories.

International experiences include experiences that occur at any point during medical school, including summer experiences between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year of medical school, Flexible Clinical Experiences during 3<sup>rd</sup> year of medical school, and electives in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of medical school.

International experiences include all types of experiences including clinical, research, public health, community service, and language training experiences.

### 2. Must all proposed international experiences request IMEP approval?

All proposed international experiences for UMMS medical students, as described above in FAQ #1, must go through the IMEP approval process. If an international experience is not approved by IMEP, then the experience will not receive academic credit, UMMS funding or support, travel assistance and medical evacuation coverage, or malpractice/liability insurance coverage.

For more information about UMMS travel assistance, medical evacuation coverage, and malpractice/liability insurance, see the UMMS International Support Services’ web page for [International Insurances](#).

### 3. Does the UMMS insurance policy cover students if they extend travel to include personal activities such as personal vacation?

Travel assistance and medical evacuation coverage is provided only for approved travel.

If students are participating in personal travel (e.g., tourism and recreation during vacation time), they are highly advised to secure personal travel insurance. Many providers offer online purchase options (e.g., see <https://www.travelinsurance.com/>).

For more information about UMMS travel assistance, medical evacuation coverage, and malpractice/liability insurance, see the UMMS International Support Services’ web page for [International Insurances](#).

**4. Can UMMS students travel to locations that have a travel warning or travel alert?**

In January 2018, the U.S. State Department implemented a revised system of travel advisories. As a result of this revised system, instead of only certain countries having travel warnings or alters, every country now has a travel advisory.

UMMS personnel, including medical students, may not be approved for travel to locations where there are certain levels of warning, alert or advisory according the U.S. State Department, Centers for Disease Control (CDC), or the UMMS travel intelligence provider.

More information about travel warnings, alerts and advisories can be found on the [relevant web page for the U.S. State Department](#), and the [relevant web page for the CDC](#).

**5. What are the responsibilities of a UMMS faculty member who agrees to be a UMMS Faculty Advisor for a student's international experience?**

Any UMMS faculty member who agrees to the responsibilities can serve as a UMMS Faculty Advisor for a students' international experience. The responsibilities include:

- **Before the international experience:**
  - Review and approve the learning objectives of the proposed global health experience
  - Confirm that the description and learning objections are appropriate for the student's level of training
  - Review preparation and safety information
- **During the international experience:** Act as a contact person at UMMS for questions or concerns that cannot be addressed by the Host Supervisor; as such, the UMMS Faculty Advisor for a specific student's international experience must be available for contact by the traveling student.
- **At the conclusion of the international health experience:** Review the student's draft Global Health Trip Report and provide feedback to the student

**6. Who can serve as a UMMS Faculty Advisor for an international experience?**

Any UMMS faculty member can act as a UMMS Faculty Advisor for a student's international experience. Typically, residents and fellows at UMMS are not faculty members, and therefore do not serve in the capacity of being a UMMS Faculty Advisor. Adjunct UMMS faculty members can act as UMMS Faculty Advisor for an international experience.

**7. How does a UMMS student obtain a letter of good standing, if an institution that they will be visiting for an international experience requests such a letter?**

UMMS students can request a letter of good standing from the UMMS Office of Student Affairs.

**8. How do students complete a Pre-Travel Authorization form?**

Pre-Travel Authorization forms can be found by following the link for [Required Travel Forms](#), which is on [IMEP web page](#).

All UMMS-related domestic or international travel (for both students and faculty) requires a Pre-Travel Authorization form to be submitted to the UMMS Travel Compliance Administrator (in the Accounts Payable Office) after being signed and dated by both: (a) the employee or student, and (b) the department head.

The Pre-Travel Authorization form is required regardless of whether or not school funding is provided.

A medical student's "Home Department" is the Office of Undergraduate Medical Education (OUME), and the designee to sign this form is Dr. Melissa Fischer, who is the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education.

To obtain OUME's approval of the Pre-Travel Authorization form and Dr. Fischer's signature, students should enter information into the form, and then email the form to Kathy Moylan (at [Kathleen.Moylan@umassmed.edu](mailto:Kathleen.Moylan@umassmed.edu)). On the email to Kathy, students should use the following subject line: *"Pre-Travel Authorization form: requesting OUME approval."*

**9. When should students purchase airfare and other expenses related to travel?**

As per UMMS policy, students and faculty should not purchase airfare, tickets for train or bus travel, room reservations or other travel expenses, until a Pre-Travel Authorization form has been completed with all appropriate signatures.

**10. How do students get assistance from a health care provider regarding pre-travel preparations, including information about vaccinations and other health information?**

Students planning international travel can schedule appointments with UMMS Student Health (508-334-2818), UMMS Employee Health Services, the UMMS Travel Clinic (508-334 -5481), or their Primary Care Provider.

Prior to scheduling an appointment, a student should visit the [CDC web page with specific information for each country](#), and consider which, if any, vaccinations and other health preparations might be applicable to their travel. The IMEP recommends scheduling an appointment at least 6 weeks before departure, but this timeframe may vary depending on factors such as which country a student is travelling to, and which vaccinations they may be considering receiving.

## 6. Glossary

Below are terms and acronyms used in this document and on the IMEP web page.

- **Global Health Pathway (GHP):** The [Global Health Pathway](#) is a four-year elective program that prepares UMass Medical School (UMMS) students for cultural, clinical and research experiences with underserved populations both in the U.S. and around the globe.
  - **Host Site:** The Host Site is the institution, organization, agency, school or entity where the UMMS student intends to participate in an international experience.
  - **International Medical Education Program (IMEP):** The [International Medical Education Program](#) at UMMS is located within the UMMS Office of Undergraduate Medical Education (OUME), and oversees all international experiences for UMMS medical students.
  - **International Support Services (ISS):** [International Support Services](#) is a function within UMMS central administration tasked with supporting the administrative and risk management functions associated with outbound international travel and activities. Key areas of support provided by ISS include international travel, international agreements, and project planning.
  - **International Partner Agreement (IPA):** An IPA is an agreement that is signed by representatives of both UMMS and a Host Site, and typically is valid for more than a single year. An IPA typically includes a 2-page template **International Experience Form** that is used for specific student experiences that occur under that IPA.
  - **Partner Site:** A Partner Site is an established international training and education site that has an existing umbrella agreement with UMMS. The umbrella agreement for a Partner Site typically is an International Partner Agreement (IPA), which is signed by representatives of both UMMS and the Partner Site, and typically is valid for more than a single year.
  - **Host Supervisor:** The Host Supervisor is the individual at the Host Site who is aware of the student's learning objectives, is responsible for supervising the student during the global health experience, and is a contact person at the Host Site for questions that the student may have. The Host Supervisor also is likely to be the person to complete an evaluation towards the end of a student's experience in order to assess the student's performance.
  - **Office of Undergraduate Medical Education (OUME):** The [Office of Undergraduate Medical Education](#) at UMMS.
  - **University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS):** The University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester, Massachusetts, U.S.A.
  - **UMMS Faculty Advisor:** A UMMS faculty member who agrees to be the student's advisor for a proposed international experience.
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