

Communication about US Election for Onsite Students (Nov. 4, 2024)

Being abroad during the time of the US Presidential election is unique. We acknowledge how this time period could be a factor in your personal interactions, decisions, choices, and sensations including uncertainty.

Politics: Perhaps you have already had occasions where “politics” entered discussions in your current environment. It might even feel uncomfortable as you engage (while reminding yourself that you need not single-handedly provide interpretive information for a complex system). We would not want you to feel vulnerable either. As such, this email is to reiterate some practical information about both safety and engagement.

Safety: As with other intense situations, we urge you to rely on local leadership for both resources and guidance. Your questions undoubtedly are being considered by others. Furthermore, it is plausible that in your vicinity some will exhibit strong reactions conducive to rising tensions. We urge you to continue to make good choices by not putting yourself in escalating situations which could effectively make you a target for aggression. This is not unlike what we suggest during your entire time abroad for well-being (e.g. maintaining a low profile, not advertising yourself as a US American, avoiding disturbances and protests).

Engagement: We trust this historical time can also provide a tremendous opportunity for civil dialogue as part of your own growth in intercultural competence. The US elections will arguably have an impact all around the world and you will have opportunities to encounter diverse perspectives as you engage with others. A professional colleague recently shared “tips for stressful conversations” so I will refer to this [website](#) as well.

During this time of the US elections, we wish you all the best for a successful and safe session on study abroad. If you have questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Brian D. Harley, PhD

he/him/his

*Senior Director and Associate Dean, Office of Programs for Study Abroad
Global Partnerships and Programs, Purdue University*