

Dear Study Abroad Family:

Please take the opportunity to understand the study abroad bill for the estimated \$36,305 comprehensive fee. In addition to the [Finance](#) page on our [website](#), let us offer four distinct *concepts* for understanding the financial structure.

### 1. Robust Options

Perhaps the most important way to understand the value your student receives is to consider that your student, like every single Occidental College student pays for every single one of our robust array of college programs whether or not they participate. Tuition pays for the entire academic program including labs, studios and classes, for the entire athletics program, for undergraduate research, for activities such as Oxypreneurs, TEDx, Dance Production, the Bike Share program, music events and speakers, etc. As such, every enrolled student, not just those on study abroad, contributes about \$1,915 per semester into the IPO semester abroad budget (about \$3.9 million/year) whether they participate or not even in their four years at Oxy. We are so glad your student is taking advantage of this option!

### 2. Overhead

Another distinct way to conceptualize the comprehensive fee is to consider our operations overhead. As a small, tuition driven college, we have to continue to collect college overhead (which constitutes about 33% of a standard semester tuition, room and board at Oxy), for every student whether or not they are on campus. We do not turn off lights in the library or lay off your student's professors/adviser or cancel athletic events or speakers just because half of our juniors spend half of the year away from campus. Thirty-three percent of the study abroad comprehensive fee is about \$11,981. Add to this real cost the actual bill IPO pays to your program and we're about even. If we were a college with a bigger endowment (and therefore higher earnings contributed to the operating budget), we might not have to charge overhead.

### 3. Discount Rate

Certainly you are aware that some families have the ability to afford the full cost of an Occidental education every semester. They subsidize other students not so fortunate. This is how liberal arts colleges work. This is how we attract and retain the diverse, dynamic student body that makes Oxy the kind of place your student chose. In reality, we actually collect about fifty-three cents on the dollar. That means across the study abroad class we only collect in real income \$19,242 on average. That amount just falls short of the average, actual check IPO writes to each student's program.

### 4. The student is earning in-residence, Oxy credits, so the student pays Oxy tuition!

All the best for a wonderful semester abroad,

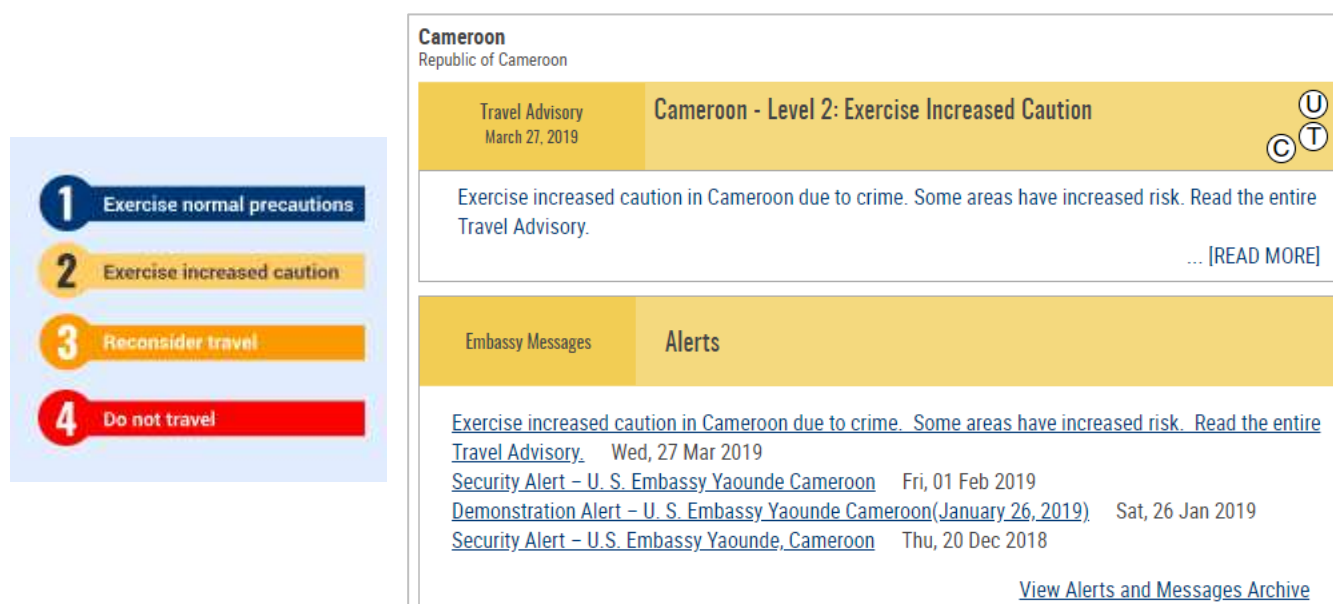
International Programs Office, Occidental College

## Travel Advisory Information for all Study Abroad Families:

On January 10, 2018, the United States Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs changed the system by which they rate and communicate health and safety conditions in countries or specific regions of countries. This letter alerts you to the new ratings and outlines Occidental's responses.

**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:** As students know from the application process, "Travel Advisory Questionnaire," each study abroad location now has a numeric ["Travel Advisory"](#) level. Each country is rated 1 – 4 for overall safety; see the grey box below.

In many cases, the overall country may have one numeric rating, but certain regions have higher advisory levels either indicated by regional numeric ratings or in the text describing such regions, such as this example from Cameroon. While Cameroon's overall rating is a level 2, the text indicates "Do not travel to North, Far North.....due to armed conflict," the narrative equivalent to a "4."



The image shows a screenshot of the U.S. State Department's Travel Advisory for Cameroon. On the left, there is a legend for the advisory levels: 1 (Exercise normal precautions), 2 (Exercise increased caution), 3 (Reconsider travel), and 4 (Do not travel). The main advisory for Cameroon is Level 2: Exercise Increased Caution, dated March 27, 2019. The text states: "Exercise increased caution in Cameroon due to crime. Some areas have increased risk. Read the entire Travel Advisory." Below this, there is a section for Alerts, which includes a link to the full advisory and a list of recent alerts: "Security Alert – U. S. Embassy Yaounde Cameroon" (Fri, 01 Feb 2019), "Demonstration Alert – U. S. Embassy Yaounde Cameroon (January 26, 2019)" (Sat, 26 Jan 2019), and "Security Alert – U.S. Embassy Yaounde, Cameroon" (Thu, 20 Dec 2018). A link to "View Alerts and Messages Archive" is also present.

**WHAT OCCIDENTAL & IPO HAVE DONE:** Occidental has adjusted our [Student Travel Policy accordingly](#). IPO has participated in a State Department training webinar, a NAFSA: Association of International Educators webinar (with 147 colleges and universities), hosted a face-to-face meeting with local colleges and universities and *reviewed the specific details in the advisory for each program site and consulted with in-country program staff for locations as appropriate*. While neither Occidental nor your student's program can guarantee safety and security, our determination at this time is that it is not necessary to rescind approval for any specific program site as our policy allows.

**WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:** Tigers and their families EVERYWHERE need to review the new details for their location at [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov) as they agreed to do when they signed the "Agreement to Participate" in the IPO portal. While abroad, they must follow the advice of their program staff and commit themselves to adhere to the recommendations in the Advisory, see the Cameroon example above. Depending on the destination, some students and families will complete additional documentation agreeing to specific instructions in the Advisory.

Call us or email with questions and have a meaningful and safe semester abroad.

Sincerely,

Robin Craggs, Executive Director