In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, the official School of Medicine decision is to suspend all student international educational experiences (IEE) through December 2021. Based on the evolving threat and available mitigation strategies, this date could be extended. This decision is driven by the health and safety risks to our students and to those in the countries we would visit, the reduced capacity for effective clinical observation and training in our own institution and in healthcare settings around the world, and the complex logistics of fluctuating travel policies and restrictions.

Until an effective Covid-19 vaccine is developed and made equitably available worldwide, we will support local learning opportunities for medical students to work with underserved communities in our state and region. These may include, but are not limited to, working with refugee populations, native American populations, and underserved communities in urban and rural parts of Kansas and the Midwest. We would also encourage students to engage in virtual global health learning and training opportunities as made available by our faculty and through the Office of International Programs.

All inquiries regarding the resumption of IEEs and alternative global health programming or activities should be directed to the Office of International Programs to Kimberly Connelly at kconnelly@kumc.edu. This pandemic has highlighted the importance of global health training, and while we remain committed to this goal, our current priority is the safety of our students and ethical responsibility as global citizens.

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