
Uganda Winter Session 2018

**African Politics: Politics and Instability in Uganda
(PSC 370)**



Study Abroad Program Guide

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DESTINATION: UGANDA

Climate

Straddling the equator, there is little year-round fluctuation in temperature and no real winter or summer in Uganda. The hottest months are January and February when the average daytime range is 52-91°F with peaks of up to 104°F in the far north. The south has two wet seasons: from mid- September to November and March to May. The Dry season from December to February means only that it rains less during this period. The second Dry season - from June and July - is considerably drier. Still, with 1,000 to 2,000mm (39.4-78.7in) of rain every year, it can rain at almost any time. The north has one continuous wet season from March to November and a more obvious Dry season from December to February.

Local transportation

As our group travels among site visits in diverse regions of Uganda, we use a privately chartered bus for transport.

Food

Be prepared to eat simply during your time in Uganda. Breakfast usually consists of bread and tea, while rice and beans are the staples for lunch and dinner. Meat should only be expected once a week. Although you will always have enough to fill your stomach! Students often supplement meals with trips to one of the canteens (snack shops) on campus for a little variety. Be prepared to adjust your diet and eating patterns to fit in with our Ugandan hosts. Keep in mind that tensions sometimes arise between Ugandans and U.S. students when students come with the idea that meals will be similar to those back home or that they will be able to pick and choose what they want. Rejecting food can be taken as rejection of hospitality and Ugandan culture (sharing food is an important way to connect)

Alcohol

All participants in the program will be of legal drinking age while in Uganda. It is absolutely mandatory that every participant behave responsibly in choices involving alcohol, as the abuse of alcohol endangers not only the individual, but also other participants. Alcohol abuse is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program, at the discretion of the program director.

USEFUL WEBSITES (IN ENGLISH)

- Official Site of Uganda: <http://www.gou.go.ug/>
- Uganda Tourism and Travel Bureau: <http://www.visituganda.com/index.php>

PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Dr. Jake Kathman is an Assistant Professor in Comparative Politics and International Relations. He joined UB in 2012. Dr. Kathman studies conflict processes, including issues of civil war, interstate conflict, civilian victimization, and the various means of conflict management. Dr. Kathman received his PhD from UNC-Chapel Hill. He received his MA from George Washington University and his BA from the University of Rochester.

Dr. Kathman can be reached at kathman@buffalo.edu.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

This course will provide students with field experience in a country with a rich history, reflecting the more general experience of states in the less developed world. Uganda is a stable country. Its last political revolution and transition was over thirty years ago. However, Uganda has a long history of various forms of instability, including civil war, violent regime turnover, and foreign interventionism. Further, Uganda's history is dotted with additional struggles, including child soldiering, foreign debt, economic development, natural resource exploitation, and democratic progress and regress. In this study abroad course, we will seek a theoretical understanding of these phenomena via classroom lectures/discussions that educate students about explanations of various forms of political instability. In addition, the course will provide first-hand experience with people and organizations in the field that have directly confronted these challenges.

PROGRAM ITINERARY

You will receive a detailed itinerary for our trip in the coming weeks. Our program itinerary will include a blend of classroom instruction, site-visits in diverse regions of the country, and hands-on engagement of experiences that expose us to the topic of politics and instability in Uganda. You can look forward to meeting leading Ugandan experts, exploring local sites that illuminate course content, and reflecting on these experiences under the guidance of seasoned faculty.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

During this experience, you will be in close contact with Ugandans. It is important to remember that we are guests in their country as well as ambassadors for the U.S. Our behavior should reflect that. It is we, not they, who must be flexible and willing to do things a different way. We must be sensitive to their cultural and social mores and respect their way of doing things. Try to develop an attitude of acceptance and understanding, and be slow to criticize. Learning to see and do things in a different way is a crucial aspect of this program.

SAFETY IN UGANDA

Given the news that reaches North America from the developing world, you and your family might be concerned about safety. Be assured that Uganda is a very pleasant place with a hospitable population. When thinking about coming to Uganda it is helpful to make an analogy with a trip to any major city in the US, in that there are many great things to do and there is no particular danger if one behaves wisely. On the other hand, there are places that are not safe and where a visitor should not go. The same is true of Kampala and Uganda. In general, if one stays away from problematic areas and practices preventative measures (about which you will receive instruction during both pre-departure orientation and on-site training in Uganda), the risk of danger is reduced. **As an added safety precaution, the program will provide activated cell phones for all students upon arrival to Uganda.**

Each semester, in order to avoid unnecessary risks, our host institution (Uganda Christian University) monitors the conditions of the regions we hope to visit. Hundreds of thousands of tourists visit Uganda annually and several thousand U.S. citizens live in the country permanently. Statistically, Americans are more likely to be in a car accident or injure themselves in the U.S. than they are to be involved in a politically motivated incident while spending time in Uganda. The country and people are very pro-West, and the U.S. government has identified Uganda as a key ally in the region. Still, negative encounters can occur in any populated setting anywhere in the world. As part of our multiple orientation sessions (pre-departure and on-site), students are taught the basic dos and don'ts of living in Uganda.

HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS

General: Your body will be going through various changes coming into a new culture. If you are prone to certain ailments in the U.S., we strongly recommend you bring antidotes—inhalers, antacids, emergency epi pens, painkillers, vitamins, and whatever over-the-counter drugs you take most often. Minor stomach issues are quite common; so bring the things that help you feel better when you are a bit under the weather. A supply of Imodium or Pepto-Bismol, for example, will counteract most of the intestinal discomforts that travelers face.

Water: There is running water at Ugandan Christian University and at most of the other sites we will visit. However, the water is not potable (drinkable). Safe drinking water will be readily available to students whether they are on campus, at a home stay, or traveling.

Malaria: Malaria is prevalent throughout sub-Saharan Africa. As such, please speak to your doctor about the appropriateness of taking a prophylaxis. While in Uganda, we will reduce exposure to mosquitoes by sleeping under a mosquito net (provided by the program). Malaria-carrying mosquitoes are most active at dusk and dawn. As such, when out at night, we will wear long pants and sleeves and use insect repellent that contains DEET. Following these precautions will significantly decrease the risk of contracting malaria; however, nothing can completely eliminate the risk. Many Westerners have resided at Uganda Christian University for years without contracting malaria, but they have done so by taking precautions. You should also be aware that although the symptoms of malaria are often severe and can be fatal, it is easy to diagnose and treatment most often results in complete recovery.

HIV/AIDS: The AIDS epidemic has had a devastating effect on sub-Saharan Africa, and Uganda is no exception. However, Uganda is internationally recognized for its successful campaign to limit the spread of HIV/AIDS. As is the case in the U.S., AIDS is most commonly spread in Africa through sexual activity and exposure to infected blood or medical materials. Chances of any student requiring a blood transfusion are extremely slim. Nevertheless, Uganda Christian University (UCU) staff is familiar with the practices of the medical facilities near UCU and in Kampala, which has the best medical facilities in Uganda. Safety is our top priority and full attention will be given to any situation that necessitates medical care.

IMMUNIZATIONS

UB follows the recommendations of the Center for Disease Control (www.cdc.org). Some basic points related to travel in Uganda are: 1. **Ugandan law requires proof of Yellow Fever vaccination for entry.** 2. **Malaria medication is recommended by the CDC.** Please speak to your doctor about the appropriateness of such medication for you (many have strong side effects). Please contact the Office of Study Abroad if you need guidance on receiving the required Yellow Fever Vaccination.

If you have further questions about health issues in the East African region, you might wish to contact the CDC hotline in Atlanta at 800-CDC-INFO | (800-232-4636). You can also contact your local public health clinic.

PASSPORT AND VISA CONSIDERATIONS

You need a passport for travel to Uganda and to re-enter the United States. **Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months beyond your return date.** During international travel you should carry your passport in a safe and convenient place on your person – NOT in your checked luggage. You will need your passport to fill out forms and go through immigration.

Bring two photocopies of your passport bio page with you to Uganda. While in Uganda you will carry a copy instead of your actual passport.

YOU will need to apply for a **Ugandan Visa to participate in the program**. The program director—Dr. Jake Kathman—will inform you of the steps required to complete this process (this can often be completed online). Please be certain to adhere rigidly to all deadlines that Dr. Kathman provides in this regard.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE INFORMATION

The program begins on Saturday, January 6, 2018 and ends on Saturday, January 20, 2018. Dr. Kathman will contact you regarding the purchase of flights (you will pay for your flights out-of-pocket) as soon as possible. It is Dr. Kathman's aim to encourage all participants to book the same arrival and departure flight to/from Uganda. This will facilitate smooth passage through immigration/customs as well as efficient and safe transport to our host institution—Uganda Christian University.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Life in Uganda can be challenging for Westerners who are used to convenience and abundance. There are many contrasts to American life. This makes Uganda an exciting and attractive location for students who seek a personal cross-cultural study experience. Accommodations during the trip will include dormitory-style lodging at Uganda Christian University, a brief experience living with a Ugandan host family, and hotel/hostel arrangements during off-campus site visits. In each of these scenarios, you can expect simple yet clean living space that will most often be double occupancy. Please keep in mind that Uganda is an under-resourced country. Expect to experience a simple—and sometimes challenging—lifestyle while in Uganda. All lodging and meals will be provided during the trip and are included in the program fee.

ADVICE ON MONEY AND COMPUTERS

Money

To cover personal expenses, we recommend that you bring a debit card (VISA is most widely accepted) that can draw on an account in the US. Money is distributed from ATMs in Ugandan shillings. Be sure you have communicated with your bank regarding overseas use of your card and the withdrawal limit. There are ATMS in Mukono town, near campus that will accept both VISA and MasterCard, but be sure to check with your bank regarding international ATM withdrawal charges.

Computers

You are welcome to bring a laptop, but it is not required. Wi-fi internet will be regularly available at lodging locations, but participants should NOT expect daily connectivity. Daily journal assignments will be written by hand.

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

Please attempt to pack in a **single piece of luggage**. Don't Bring Too Much! Keep in mind that you are going into a culture where people live fulfilled lives with far less than what we are accustomed to.

Below you will find a list of suggested items to pack, from toiletries to footwear. We have intentionally provided a generic packing list, since each person's preferences, needs, and packing styles are different.

GENERAL ITEMS

- Backpack or small bag to be used for site visits
- Protection from the sun (Uganda is located on the equator and is sunny year round)

- Small gifts for host family that will remind recipients of you.
- Good, sturdy water bottle that is easy to clean
- Toiletries (soap, toothpaste/brush, razor, etc).
- Mosquito repellent (pump bottles are more reliable than spray bottles.)
- Any necessary prescription medication and relevant information from your doctor
- Meds for allergies you have (inhalers, antihistamines, epipen, etc.)
- Over the counter meds you often use at home, such as Tylenol/Advil for headaches, Imodium and Pepto-Bismol for diarrhea and other stomach, Antihistamine (Benedryl, etc.) for skin irritations, bug bites or other allergies o Cold medication (Dayquil, etc
- Umbrella
- A hat if you would like additional protection from the sun
- Towel
- Headlamp or flashlight

CLOTHING

Dress in Uganda is a matter of cultural respect, not style! In the U.S. & Canada dress is often used to express individual identity; but within the context of Ugandan community you should consider clothing as a means of fitting in, rather than sticking out. Your choices on dress will play a large role in communicating to Ugandans how much you value them and their culture. It communicates respect, which is usually reciprocated and opens more doors for the students. It is important to keep in mind that the Ugandan sense of propriety and modesty in dress is different and much more significant than American culture. Below are general recommendations. We will discuss this in greater detail during the pre-departure orientation.

Think: internship/professional wear. Ugandans tend to dress more formally than we do in the U.S. It is not possible to overdress, so feel free to bring nicer clothes.

Men: dress slacks, button down dress shirt (short or long-sleeve), dress shoes or closed-toed leather sandals, belt. A suit or sport coat is optional, but you should definitely bring a tie.

Women: skirts at least to the knees when walking/standing (pencil skirts of the appropriate length are great); dressy, modest tops/blouses (no writing on them); dress slacks that reach your ankles; dresses at least to the knees (especially for church/more formal occasions); comfortable dress shoes/sandals.

What NOT to wear for normal dress: Women: should not wear tank/sleeveless tops without a cardigan, capris, or tops that do not always cover stomach/midriff, leggings. Everyone: jeans, shorts, foam/plastic or casual flip-flops, sports caps.

Casual Dress: You can wear these when traveling to some site visits and relaxing in the evenings: t-shirts, jeans, capris and hats Ugandan students generally dress in a similar way to fashionable, modest Americans, other than the fact that shorts are very rare and only worn outside for sporting activities.

What NOT to wear for casual dress: Plastic or foam flip-flops (as they are considered shower shoes and inappropriate to wear in public). Tight clothing (i.e. leggings/yoga pants without dress over). Shorts are not appropriate to wear in public unless for short exercise / sporting events.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

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In Uganda:

Program Director: Dr. Jake Kathman

Tel. to be provided at later date

Police/Fire/Ambulance emergencies:

Police
Fire
Ambulance/Medical Emergency

Tel. 112 or 999
Tel. 911 or 999
Tel. 112

Embassy:

U.S. Embassy Kampala
1577 Ggaba Road
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<https://ug.usembassy.gov/>