

Student Rotation Information

University of Rwanda

Kigali, Rwanda

Updated August 2017

General Information

This site can accept DO, MPH and MHA students. They may also accept some students from other programs. If you are in another program and interested in this site, please contact the Department of Global Health (globalhealth@dmu.edu) for more information. Patients and residents typically speak native Kinyarwanda, but most are also more or less fluent in either English or French. At the University of Rwanda as well as its two university hospitals in Kigali (CHUK) and Butare (CHUB) where students will rotate, most faculty, doctors and administrators speak reasonable English.

Visa

You can get your visa for Rwanda upon arrival only if you are a citizen of one of the following countries: Australia, Germany, Israel, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden, the UK or the USA. It will cost US \$30 and is valid for a period of up to 30 days. Citizens of Hong Kong, the Philippines, Mauritius, Singapore and the DR Congo may visit Rwanda without a visa for a period of up to 90 days. Citizens from any other country are required to obtain a visa in advance, which can be secured at any Rwandan diplomatic mission or online (www.migration.gov.rw/index.php?id=75). When applying online, you will receive a PDF entry facility via email within 3 business days. You must print this file and take a hard copy with you to Rwanda where you can pay the US \$30 fee for a 30-day visa at the airport or any other point of entry. Please note that this process is mandatory and you are likely to be refused entry into Rwanda if you do not carry a hard copy of the PDF file.

For longer stays or multiple entries into the country, you must apply for an appropriate visa. This can be done in advance at your nearest Rwandan consulate or after arrival at the Immigration office in Kigali where the process can take between 3 and 5 business days and incurs additional costs (typically RWF 30,000 for a 90-day T2 visa).

An East African Community visa is a good option if you are also doing a rotation in Uganda or if you plan to travel to Kenya and/or Uganda. It is a multiple entry visa for which you can apply online (<https://www.migration.gov.rw/index.php?id=233>), and it is valid for 90 days and costs US \$100.

Site Information/ Health Care Environment

The University of Rwanda is a full (general hospital) university with two hospitals, CHUK and CHUB. CHUK is the University teaching hospital of Kigali and is in the Center of Kigali City. It is the main public health institution in the country with over 300 beds. The two hospitals also have multispecialty departments including orthopedics, general surgery, heart services, emergency medicine, internal medicine, neonatology, obstetrics and gynecology. All the district hospitals work with CHUK and CHUB for patient referral. This means that students from DMU will have an opportunity to treat patients who come from all around the country.

Website: <http://www.ur.ac.rw/>

Contact Information

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In case of emergency – phone numbers are listed below:

- Emergency/Police: 112 (Police); 0788-690438/0788-530351 (King Faisal Hospital ambulance)
- Global Engagement Institute facilitator: +250 (0)788-618538
- U.S. Embassy (Ask for American Citizen Services): + 250 (0)252-596400

- DMU Emergency phone line which is answered 24 hrs./7 days a week 1-515-271-1471

Estimated Costs

A round trip flight from Des Moines to Kigali is approximately US \$1,500-2,000. The flight will be cheaper from larger airports in the US. A car will usually be arranged by your Global Engagement Institute facilitator to meet you at the airport holding a signboard with your name on it. For rotations in Kigali, the transfer typically takes between 10 and 30 minutes, depending on traffic, and costs US \$15; for rotations in Butare, the transfer typically takes 2-3 hours and costs US \$100. Housing is US \$200 per week, including breakfast and dinner in carefully selected homestay arrangements with a host family – or about US \$30 per night, including breakfast, in single rooms at guesthouses like Discover Rwanda or Centre Saint Paul in Kigali (about US \$20 per night at Motel du Mont Huye or US \$25 per night at Emmaus Hostel in Butare).

Global Engagement Institute charges an administrative fee of US \$400 to help facilitate the rotation and associated logistics. The latter includes the pre-rotation liaison with the university rotation coordinator and the hospital, accommodation booking, airport meet & greet and transfer to the chosen accommodation, an informal orientation day to learn about do's & don'ts and to become familiar with the city and how to get around, and general emergency support throughout the rotation.

Money

The currency in Rwanda is the Rwandan franc. US \$1.00 is equal to approximately RWF 830. Credit cards are increasingly accepted at many restaurants and hotels, as well as some of the better supermarkets. You can also find an increasing number of ATM machines to withdraw cash in local currency by credit card. Visa is the credit card of choice in Rwanda – most machines will not accept any other cards such as Mastercard or American Express. They will also not accept debit cards. Where credit cards are not accepted, make sure to bring enough cash for personal spending. Forex bureaus and banks are available in most major cities. It is advisable to only have US \$50 and US \$100 bills (smaller amounts attract lower exchange rates) that been printed during or after 2009 (older bills are frequently not accepted).

Accommodations

Unless you desire other types of accommodation, students choose between a homestay option in a carefully selected host family and a guesthouse option.

About the homestays: Global Engagement Institute works with various host families in Kigali and Butare. Each family is carefully vetted and prepared. You will have a clean bedroom equipped with a bed and storage for your clothes, access to a bathroom, fresh towels and bed linen every week, and access to Wi-Fi. At least one family member is fluent in English, and at least one female family member lives in the household permanently. The host family welcomes you as a member of theirs and you are therefore expected to behave as if you were part of the family and not as a tourist or guest. Certain typical rules apply. The family invites you to join them for breakfasts as well as dinners, and you will also have access to the kitchen for your own meals. Your hosts will also show you where and how you can wash your clothes, and where to reach the nearest public transport options. Cost is US \$200 per week.

About the guesthouses in Kigali: Cost is US \$30 per night for a simple single room with bathroom, breakfast and Wi-Fi. Discover Rwanda is an NGO-run youth hostel that is open to all guests. Located in the green residential area of Kimihurura, it has a relaxing and nicely decorated patio as well as a beautiful garden area. Restaurants, small shops and public transport stops are nearby. Similarly, Centre St. Paul is a large church-run guesthouse with spacious garden area at the bottom of the Kiyovu hill, the main city center where CHUK is located. UTC Shopping Center as well as a variety of restaurants, cafes and supermarkets are in walking distance.

About the guesthouse in Butare: Hotel Mont Huye is a small and simple boutique hotel located in the city center of Butare. A variety of restaurants and shops are in easy walking distance. Cost is US \$20 per night for a simple single room with bathroom, breakfast and Wi-Fi. The distance to CHUB is a bit over 2 miles, so that it should take about 40-45 minutes to walk. Significantly closer to CHUB, Emmaus Hostel is a simple church-run guesthouse located in the Taba neighborhood. A single room is US \$25 per night with breakfast. The city center is about 10 minutes to walk, and CHUB about 25-30 minutes.

Cell phones/Wi-Fi

Cell phones are widely used, and there are several networks to choose from. Make sure to check your international roaming plan to avoid exorbitant bills. Using WhatsApp is recommended as a popular way to communicate. Local SIM cards can be procured on arrival for unlocked phones, and a “pay as you go” top up system works well. In case you are interested to borrow a simple Rwandan cell phone with local SIM card, Global Engagement Institute can make them available for a small fee of US \$15, not including a plan. You can then purchase your own “pay as you go” top up vouchers.

4G internet has reached Kigali, and connectivity in many public and private hotspots has become reasonable. There are also simple 4G internet devices available with a local plan. In case you are interested to borrow one, Global Engagement Institute can make them available for US \$65 including unlimited 4G plan.

Cultural/Safety Considerations

Rwanda is generally a very safe country, and crime rates are low. The usual precautions, however, apply. You will receive further information about particular do's and don'ts during your orientation. Please also ask your host family or the staff at your guesthouse as well as your work colleagues about particular issues around your home and work.

Please note that Rwanda has prohibited the use of plastic bags. Make sure not to carry any plastic bags with you, including in your luggage. It is possible that authorities ask you to open your luggage upon arrival to search for plastic bags.

In general, it is strongly recommended not to ask about an individual's ethnicity in Rwanda. Since the genocide of 1994, ethnic divisions are discouraged in both thought and discussion, and the national government has prioritized the promotion of the concept of "one Rwanda, one people". It is considered a deeply sensitive topic and should not be approached lightly by any outside visitors even with the best intentions, unless done so in a very broad and diplomatic sense when talking about peace and reconciliation efforts post-genocide. Any direct reference to specific ethnic groups should be avoided.