

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

New Advising Guidelines - FAQ**Q: Is there any restriction on specific countries if we choose to travel outside the United States?**

A: If you choose to travel outside of the United States, please make sure to check the current policies/restrictions for your destination. Many countries are currently implementing quarantine procedures depending on where the traveler is from or what countries they have recently visited.

Q: Am I allowed to or required to leave the United States?

A: You are not required to depart the United States. OIA encourages you to make your decision based on your own health considerations as well as the health and safety of others in mind.

Q: If I leave the United States now and I am gone for more than 5 months, will there be any impact on my immigration status?

A: No. If you maintain your full-time enrollment, you are still considered to be maintaining your immigration status. The move to online classes for spring and summer is just a temporary change to the mode of instruction given the current circumstances.

Q: I am graduating in May. Can I come back if I leave now?

A: If you depart the United States now, you will not be able to return to the United States after 5/3/2020 as your I-20 will be shortened to your commencement date.

Q: How should I get my I-20 signed?

A: Due to the health and well-being of our students and staff, OIA is adopting REMOTE advising, via phone and email. As a result, walk-in services are no longer available. OIA is able to process I-20s at this time. Processing and mailing may take longer than normal.

If you choose to depart the United States and take the online courses from your home country, you may leave the country without a travel signature.

Q: Is OIA open now?

A: Advising is handled remotely, not in person. Our staff is working fulltime, M-F, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., and is available to assist you via email (iss@osu.edu) or phone 614-292-6101.

Q: Will I be guaranteed entry to the United States for AU20 if I depart the United States now?

A: While re-entry can never be guaranteed, please make sure you have a valid passport, valid F-1 visa, a travel signature on your I-20 signed within the last year and your funding documents to minimize your risk. Please keep in mind that your ability to enter the United States will be determined by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials at the port of entry. There are currently a variety of restrictions prohibiting various groups of foreign nationals from entering the United States due to COVID-19. We have no ability to predict how suspensions of travel will evolve during the upcoming weeks/months nor what kind of scrutiny will be in place at the port of entry.

Q: Are we required to report to OIA if we depart the United States?

A: No. Students may leave the country without a travel signature.

Q: How will I be able to apply for OPT if I remain outside the United States after graduation?

A: At this time, USCIS does not permit applications from outside of the United States. OPT recommendations will be delayed through May 1.

Q: What happens if we leave now and we spend 5 months at home before we can return to campus in August for autumn semester, will our I-20s be terminated for spending 5 months abroad?

A: No at this time no terminations will occur, according to the latest guidance from DHS, for spending part of spring 2020 semester at home to continue your online classes before autumn semester.

Q: Can Graduate Assistants teach/work remotely since their college is doing distance instruction?

A: Yes, per the directives from SEVP. Students can engage in distance learning per their institutions' directives as a result of COVID-19.

Q: Can nonimmigrant students participate in online classes from outside the United States and still maintain their nonimmigrant status?

Yes, nonimmigrant students can temporarily engage in distance-learning, either from within the United States or outside the country, in light of COVID-19. SEVP will provide updated guidance as additional information concerning the scope and length of this situation becomes clearer.

Q: Will students be able to return to the United States if they are continuing their studies outside of the country as a result of COVID-19?

A: Students who continue to make normal progress in their course of study remain eligible for admission into the United States. However, because of the changing array of travel restrictions, nonimmigrant students should refer to both DHS and CDC websites, [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) for information about current travel restrictions to the United States.

Q: Does my student health insurance cover testing or treatment of COVID-19?

A: If you are enrolled in our Student Health Insurance, the insurance would cover the **diagnostic testing** for the COVID-19 when requested by a physician and provided at approved locations in accordance with the CDC guidelines. Cost sharing will be waived including co-pays, coinsurance and deductibles for this diagnostic testing. Students who feel like they may have been exposed to COVID-19 are being advised to immediately call their provider.

