

F-1 Visa International Student FAQ

Center for Global Study & Engagement

July 10, 2020

CGSE is working collaboratively with multiple departments across campus to address the unique needs of our International Students. We are also working through our various international education and governmental networks to get the most clarity as possible on exactly what this new guidance from I.C.E. means for our students at Dickinson.

BELOW IS OUR BEST ATTEMPT TO BRING CLARITY TO THE [FALL 2020 GUIDANCE from I.C.E.](#) (DATED 07/06/2020), AS WELL AS ADDRESS THE MOST COMMON QUESTIONS YOU HAVE SENT TO CGSE.

With the new lawsuit, it is possible that this guidance will change. THIS IS AS OF RIGHT NOW.

HOW DOES THIS NEW GUIDANCE AFFECT ME AS AN F-1 STUDENT?

As a returning F-1 student, you currently fit into one of the following categories:

1. Already in the U.S. and still on campus in Carlisle.
2. Already in the U.S. but residing off-campus.
3. Outside the U.S. with plans to return to Carlisle for the Fall 2020 semester.
4. Outside the U.S. with plans NOT to return for the Fall 2020 semester.

Important Definitions:

SEVP Guidance **Hybrid** courses are what Dickinson is calling “**Classroom and Distance Mix**”

SEVP Guidance **In-Person** courses are what Dickinson is calling “**Taught in Classroom**”

SEVP Guidance **Online Only** courses are what Dickinson is calling “**Distance Taught**”

1. I plan to be on campus in Carlisle for the Fall 2020 semester – How does this new guidance affect me?

As you are choosing your courses for the Fall semester:

- You must be enrolled in full-time coursework (3.0 credits or more)
- You must be enrolled in one or more classes that are coded as “Taught in Classroom” or “Classroom and Distance Mix.”
- You may not enroll in all courses coded as “Distance Taught.”

In other words, in order to remain in compliance with your F-1 visa, you are not permitted to take ALL “Distance Taught” courses.

IF IN THE EVENT **Dickinson chooses mid-semester to close or partially close campus** (like we did in the Spring 2020), international students can remain on campus **AND WILL STILL BE IN COMPLIANCE** as the courses you are enrolled in will still be considered hybrid or in-person. If for some reason, we

determine we need to continue to hold some in-person courses to keep international students in compliance, we are committed to doing this.

2. I am in the U.S. but was hoping to remain off-campus and take all of my courses remotely online – How does this new guidance affect me?

According to the July 7th guidance, if you are currently in the U.S., you must report to campus for in-person “Taught in classroom” or “Classroom and Distance Mix” courses. (See response #1 above.) To remain in the U.S. but take all of your coursework remotely/online, you would violate your F-1 Visa and be out of compliance.

3. I am outside of the U.S. (in my home country or otherwise), and plan to return to Carlisle for the Fall 2020 semester – How does this new guidance affect me?

Please see response #1 above for all advice on course registration requirements.

If you already have a valid F-1 visa, as well as a valid passport that won't expire for at least 6 months past your date of entry, the only additional thing you will need is an updated I-20 that now includes the required remarks in the “remarks” section on the front page of the I-20. CGSE will send out another communication early next week with instructions on how to best request your new I-20 in a timely manner.

If you do not yet have a valid F-1 visa, and have successfully scheduled an appointment to renew yours at your local embassy or consular service, a DSO (Designated School Official) from CGSE will be happy to issue you a new I-20 prior to your appointment.

If you do have a valid F-1 visa, you will simply need your new I-20, including the now-required remarks, before travel.

I-20's are still permitted to be *emailed*, even under the new guidance released on 07/07/2020.

Please note: this FAQ does not address current travel restrictions, flight availabilities (and their costs) from your country, or your ability to secure a renewed F-1 visa in time for travel. We understand these are indeed additional challenges for each of our international students. This FAQ intends to focus on addressing how the new I.C.E. guidance affects your status, but we will continue to address your ongoing questions and concerns surrounding travel and visa restrictions in future communications.

4. I am outside of the U.S. (in my home country or otherwise), and DO NOT plan to return to Carlisle for the Fall 2020 semester – How does this new guidance affect me?

A. If you are planning to take all “Distance Taught” coursework with Dickinson from your home country...

According to the new guidance, we would need to “terminate” your SEVIS record as an “Authorized Early Withdrawal.” You are still permitted to take the courses online from your home country, but you will lose your F-1 visa status for now. When you are ready to return to campus in Carlisle, one of our DSO’s will assign you a new SEVIS ID# and I-20, you will need to re-pay the \$350 I-901 SEVIS Fee, and enter the U.S. with your new I-20 and F-1 visa.

- B. If you currently live in China, Vietnam, or Korea (and hold a valid passport for that country)...**
CGSE has worked hard to create new opportunities for “study abroad from home” options for international students in these three countries. Below are the links to each of our Program Pages for these “Dickinson In” programs:

[Dickinson in Beijing: International Student Program](#)

[Dickinson in Shanghai: International Student Program](#)

[Dickinson in Korea: International Student Program](#)

If you have questions about the China and Korea programs, please contact Marissa Mitchell mitchmar@dickinson.edu

[Dickinson in Vietnam: International Student Program](#)

If you have questions about the Vietnam program, please contact Stephanie Gulden guldens@dickinson.edu

If you opt into one of these programs, you will be officially registered in SEVIS as a “Study Abroad” student, therefore keeping your F-1 visa status active.

- C. If you would like to petition to enroll in one of your local universities...**

This option would be treated as a Non-Dickinson Study Abroad option. You have each already received email correspondence with the details of what this would mean for enrollment at Dickinson from CGSE. If you have a hard time finding these details, please email us at global@dickinson.edu, or visit the program page at the link below:

[Non-Dickinson: International Student Program \(Petition\)](#)

If you have questions about this Non-Dickinson option, please contact Katie DeGuzman deguzmak@dickinson.edu

If you petition and are accepted into this Non-Dickinson Study Abroad program, you will be officially registered in SEVIS as a “Study Abroad” student, therefore keeping your F-1 visa status active.

- D. If you are planning an official Leave of Absence (LOA)...**

Although not advisedly your first course of action, taking a Leave of Absence (LOA) is indeed an option for you as a student at Dickinson. If you would like additional information on the LOA process, please review [this link](#). Scroll down to “Status Changes.” If you are considering a LOA

and have specific questions, please reach out to Angie Harris, Associate Dean of Students, at harrisa@dickinson.edu.

Taking a LOA would require us to “terminate” your SEVIS record. When you are ready to return to campus in Carlisle, one of our DSO’s will assign you a new SEVIS ID# and I-20, you will need to re-pay the \$350 I-901 SEVIS Fee, and enter the U.S. with your new I-20 and F-1 visa.

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT ACADEMIC CONTINUITY – LIKE....

Can I declare my major from abroad?

Yes – please work with your academic advisor to do this.

What if the courses I need to complete my major or stay in track are all online or not available to me in some other way?

Please talk to your academic advisor about this. Your department needs to know what barriers you are facing so they can work with you and be flexible. These are unprecedented circumstances and faculty and departments are willing to work with you to help keep you on track.

DO I NEED A NEW I-20?

YES. Every single one of our F-1 visa students will require a new I-20. These new I-20’s will reflect the required remarks in the “remarks” section on Page 1, as well as our new Session Start and End Dates.

Our DSO’s at CGSE will prioritize issuing the new I-20’s for students who either still need to renew their F-1 visa, or students who are currently outside the country and plan to return to Carlisle for the Fall 2020 term. Once these students receive their new I-20’s via email, we will complete new I-20’s for the rest of our F-1 active students.

*****IF YOU ARE CURRENTLY OUTSIDE OF THE U.S. AND PLAN TO RETURN FOR THE FALL 2020 SEMESTER, PLEASE COMPLETE [THIS FORM](#) TO REQUEST YOUR NEW I-20 ASAP.*****

- If you are applying to renew your F-1 visa, please list in the “comments” section of the form the DATE of your visa appointment.
- If you already have your F-1 visa, please list in the “comments” section of the form the DATE of your flight to the U.S. OR your hoped for DEPARTURE DATE, if you have not yet booked a flight.

IF YOU ARE ALREADY IN THE U.S., WE WILL AUTOMATICALLY ISSUE YOU A NEW I-20 BEFORE THE AUGUST 4TH DEADLINE. PLEASE DO NOT COMPLETE THE ABOVE FORM.

IF YOU ARE OUTSIDE OF THE U.S. AND DO NOT PLAN TO RETURN FOR THE FALL 2020 SEMESTER, WE WILL AUTOMATICALLY ISSUE YOU A NEW I-20 BEFORE THE AUGUST 4TH DEADLINE. PLEASE DO NOT COMPLETE THE FORM.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE THINGS DICKINSON IS DOING TO ADVOCATE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS?

- Our institution has joined with peer colleges in an amicus brief supporting Harvard's and MIT's lawsuit challenging federal rules barring online study for international students and seeking a temporary restraining order to prevent enforcement of those rules.
- We are active members of NAFSA: Association of International Educators which does policy and advocacy work on behalf of F-1 students and many other international education issues.
- We have lodged a complaint with our regional SEVP field representative.

WILL DICKINSON BE PROVIDING FREE LEGAL COUNSEL FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS WHO NEED IT TO FIGURE OUT THEIR CURRENT SITUATION AND NEXT STEPS?

We do not anticipate that individual students will need legal counsel. As stated already, students who come back to campus and register for at least 1 in-person or hybrid course will be in compliance. Students who are already in the US need to plan to return to campus or go home to stay in compliance. As long as students follow this guidance, they will not need legal counsel. Melodi Hendrickson as Dickinson's (SEVP) Primary Designated School Official will be able to continue to work with students on case-by-case basis and collectively on F-1 visa compliance. If anyone has any concerns about meeting these requirements, please let us know and we will work with you.

OTHER QUESTIONS:

TAXES – DUE: July 15, 2020

The U.S. government has extended the deadline for submitting your tax paperwork from April 15th (our typical annual deadline) to July 15th. No matter where you are in the world at this time, you are still required to submit your tax paperwork, along with any potential amount due, ON TIME BY July 15, 2020.

I have already outlined for you in clear, step-by-step detail, all of the information you need to accurately file you Federal, State, *and* local taxes in emails from February 2020. Please review the following emails sent from Melodi's account:

- Dated 02/10/2020 with Subject: Non-Resident TAXES - Information & Workshops - PLEASE READ!
- Dated 02/10/2020 with Subject: Non-Resident TAXES - Additional forms attached
- Dated 02/13/2020 with Subject: TAXES, TAXES, TAXES! A follow-up email...
- Dated 02/27/2020 with Subject: State & Local Taxes - More TAX Updates

If AFTER REVIEWING all of the above email communications, you still have questions about your taxes, please email Christine Hock in Global Finance at hockc@dickinson.edu. She is not a tax expert and is unable to give you any tax advice. However, she can answer basic questions about NRA taxes and the filing process.

THANK YOU!!!

Here at CGSE, we recognize the multi-faceted challenges you face in the midst of this global pandemic, and we cannot express enough how much we care about you as an international student. We are here, we are listening, and we are working diligently to advocate for you and your needs. Hopefully this document has been of assistance to you at this time, and we are already working on the next one as soon as additional information is shared with us both from the institution *and* from I.C.E./SEVP.

NOTE: If you have sent an individual email to a staff member at CGSE, or to our main account at global@dickinson.edu, asking a question answered in this FAQ, **please accept this FAQ as your email response**. Thank you for your understanding.