



IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR NEW AND CONTINUING ETSU STUDENTS FOR FALL 2020 (after July 15 SEVP Guidance Update)

On July 14, the previous ICE COVID-19 SEVP Guidance for Fall 2020 was rescinded and on July 15 the policy was updated. However, this information may still generate a lot of questions and concerns, but please know the IPS Office and the ETSU Community are here to assist and provide you with the support you need to ensure your success while you are our student.

So based on the latest information provided, IPS offers the following guidance:

ARE YOU A NEW OR CONTINUING STUDENT IN THE UNITED STATES OR PLANNING TO COME BACK IN THE FALL 2020?

- In order to maintain your F1 status while in the US, international students at ETSU must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit hours (Undergraduate) and 9 credit hours (Graduate). **Based on the latest update, if you are a continuing student, there is no limit on the number of online/remote courses you can register for. If you are a NEW (initial) student you have to be enrolled in AT LEAST one hybrid/in-person course (NO EXCEPTION).** SEVP requires F-1 international students to take these classes and make normal progress toward completing the degree program.
- Students attending schools adopting a hybrid model (which is, a mixture of online, hybrid, and in person classes) will be allowed to take more than one class or three credit hours online.
- Contact your academic advisor for assistance if you are having difficulty finding face-to-face or hybrid courses.

ARE YOU CONTINUING STUDENT IN THE UNITED STATES OR PLANNING TO COME BACK IN THE FALL 2020 EXPECTING TO GRADUATE IN FALL 2020?

If this is your last semester of study and you are unable to register for a full course load, please read below:

- Student must also apply for graduation and submit a [Reduced Course Load](#) form in order to justify their under enrollment in their last term.
- **Based on the latest update, there is no limit on the number of online/remote courses you can register for in your last semester of study..**

ARE YOU A CONTINUING STUDENT CURRENTLY IN YOUR HOME COUNTRY?

- If you are a continuing student who is back in your home country and you decide that you are not returning to ETSU for the Fall 2020, or you are unable to return due to travel restrictions, you must contact our office and notify us if you plan to enroll online at interntl@etsu.edu
 - If you decide to take courses while you are still in your country, you must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit hours (Undergraduate) and 9 credit hours (Graduate) to keep your SEVIS record ACTIVE.
- If you choose not to study while in your home country, you must submit a [COVID-19 LEAVE OF ABSENCE FORM](#). This form will enable you to take a leave of absence while you stay in your home country and our office will update your I-20 accordingly.
- Once you are ready to return to the United States in the Spring 2021 or any subsequent term, it is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to get in touch with the IPS Office to get your updated I-20.
- If your F-1 visa expires while you are in your country during your Leave of Absence, it is your responsibility to renew it at your local US Embassy/Consulate to be able to enter the United States when you are able to come back.

ARE YOU A NEW STUDENT CURRENTLY IN YOUR HOME COUNTRY?

- If you are a newly admitted student for fall 2020 and you decide not to come to ETSU in the fall, or you are unable to travel due to travel restrictions, you **MUST** contact the appropriate **Admissions Office** to let them know.

You may contact admissions via:

- etsuinternational@etsu.edu
 - Undergraduate: 423-439-4213
 - Graduate: 423-439-4221
- If you have submitted a **Housing** contract to live at the ETSU Residence Halls and you need to change your arrival date or cancel, please contact the Housing Office directly at housing@etsu.edu
 - **Pre-Arrival Sessions**- Please stay alert to messages from the IPS Office. New students will be invited to these useful sessions where you will be able to ask questions and receive important information to prepare for your arrival at ETSU. For date and time visit:
<https://www.etsu.edu/honors/international/new-students.php#tab-3-2>
 - If you are a new student and arrive in the U.S., you **MUST** attend a **Check-In Presentation**. This is a session **IN ADDITION** to your regular Orientation. Date and time information here:
<https://www.etsu.edu/honors/international/new-students.php#tab-3-10>

TRAVEL INFORMATION

If you are in your country and wish to start planning for your return to the United States, please be reminded that the IPS Office is not the best source for travel information. The best sources are your airline, your local American Embassy, and the [Center for Disease Control information](#).

VISA INFORMATION

Please continue to monitor the opening of your local American Embassy. Each country will be following its own schedule so check with them in order to make an appointment for your visa interview. You can check the status of your local embassy here: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/COVID-19-Country-Specific-Information.html>

Feel free to contact IPS if you have any questions or concerns!

Adapted from FIU