

# COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for F-1 International Students

## General Information for All Students

### **Has anything changed since the July 6<sup>th</sup> ICE policy updates for fall 2020?**

The July 6th SEVP/ICE policy updates were rescinded in court on July 14. However, there is still no official guidance released by SEVP/ICE for colleges and universities moving forward. Therefore, the current policies put in place during spring 2020 and outlined in the following FAQs remain in place until further notice.

### **Where can I get the most up to date information about COVID-19, campus closures, virtual learning, and my status as an F-1 international student?**

Please check your email regularly as we will continue to send you important updates and instructions. You can also monitor the following websites:

<https://foothill.edu/virtualcampus/>

<https://www.foothill.edu/healthservices/corona-virus.html>

<https://www.foothill.edu/international/covid-19%20updates.html>

### **Is the campus closed?**

Yes. Foothill College campus is currently closed per the Santa Clara County Shelter in Place order. Courses and services will continue to be offered remotely.

### **Is the fall 2020 quarter going to be online?**

Yes, most of our fall 2020 quarter courses will be delivered virtually with a limited exception for a select number of lab courses and hybrid courses for specific allied health programs.

### **Is the International Student Programs (ISP) office still open?**

Yes. The ISP office is currently offering virtual services. Our staff will continue to respond to your inquiries via email:

*Current/Continuing Foothill students:* [fhinternational@fhda.edu](mailto:fhinternational@fhda.edu)

*Applicants/Incoming Foothill students:* [fhintladmissions@fhda.edu](mailto:fhintladmissions@fhda.edu)

If you have a specific question for one of our Immigration Advisors or International Counselors, you can reach out to them as well. Please be patient with our response due to a high volume of email inquiries.

### **How do I contact my professors if I have a question?**

Contact information for instructors is found in your course syllabus.

### **How will I know how my online classes will be structured?**

We highly recommend that all students review course descriptions when selecting and enrolling in online courses. Some courses may still have designated virtual meeting days/times, so you need to consider if these courses will work for your schedule, especially if you are studying outside of the U.S.

Once you register and begin your course, you should review the syllabus to get more information about course requirements, assignments, and expectations. If you have further questions, please contact your professor directly.

### **Will the required course books be electronic too? What if I need a physical book(s)?**

Most required books have e-book versions available for purchase online from various sources. Information about required textbooks can be found in the syllabus of each course. If you have a question about course materials or requirements, please contact your professor directly.

### **If classes are online, why do I still have to pay the same cost for tuition?**

Many factors are taken into consideration when calculating tuition and fees, including our ability to offer access to leading faculty and educational resources. Tuition and fees also help us provide student support services such as tutoring, counseling, and International Student Programs, all while ensuring that your courses are transferable no matter how they're delivered. There will be no changes or reduction of our tuition or fees based on the instructional method. International students will continue to receive a high quality, affordable education from one of the top community college Districts in California.

### **Are online courses still transferrable to 4-year universities?**

Academic online courses are reviewed the same as in-person courses for transfer to the University of California (UC), California State University (CSU), and many other 4-year institutions. If you have further questions, please discuss your education and transfer plan with an international counselor.

### **I've never taken a fully online course. Are there any resources if I have questions?**

Yes. You might find the information on the [Online Learning Resource Hub for Students](#) helpful. On this page, you will find live tech support, tips for using Canvas and Zoom, and more.

### **Are online courses accessible for students with learning differences? Can I still get support services?**

Yes. Foothill's Disability Resource Center is still offering accommodations and support services for students online. To learn more and to request assistance, please visit the [Disability Resource Center's](#) website.

### **Does my international health insurance cover the cost of COVID-19 testing? What about treatment if I get sick?**

Yes. Health insurance through Foothill College covers the cost of COVID-19 testing as well as treatment for F-1 students. If you have any further questions about health insurance coverage, please contact Lark Cratty at [crattylark@fhda.edu](mailto:crattylark@fhda.edu)

If you have a health emergency within the U.S., please dial 911.

### **If I am not in the U.S., do I still need to pay for health insurance?**

No. If you are taking classes online, outside the U.S., you will not be charged for our health insurance. The health insurance is only mandatory for students who are physically in the U.S. If you have questions about health insurance, please contact Lark Cratty at [crattylark@fhda.edu](mailto:crattylark@fhda.edu)

## New/Incoming Fall 2020 Students

### **I'm admitted, but the consulate in my country is closed, and I can't get a visa. Can I study online from my home country?**

Yes. We understand that many consulates around the world remain closed. Since we are offering courses and services remotely, you can begin your studies outside the U.S. Once the consulates and campuses reopen, you can choose to join us in-person for a future quarter. Please read the [Fall 2020 Updates and Resources for New International Students](#) for important information on taking online courses.

### **If I begin my studies outside the U.S., what does that mean for my I-20 and F-1 status?**

While you will still be a Foothill College student, if you are unable to obtain a visa and enter the U.S. to activate your record with ISP, you will not be in F-1 status. If you have already been issued an I-20 for the Fall 2020 quarter, please contact ISP [fhintladmissions@fhda.edu](mailto:fhintladmissions@fhda.edu)

### **The consulate in my city will reopen after the fall quarter begins (late September/October/November). Can I start the quarter online and then come in person later during the fall quarter?**

No, you must enter the U.S. before the first day of the Fall quarter, which is September 21. If you cannot get your visa and enter the U.S. before September 21, you will need to wait until the next available quarter (winter or spring 2021); however, you can complete your entire fall quarter courses virtually from outside the U.S.

### **I have obtained an F-1 visa for Fall 2020 and plan to come to the U.S. Can I still take my classes virtually in the U.S.?**

Yes, you will be able to enter the U.S. if you have a valid visa and I-20 for Fall 2020. Remember, you must enter the US before the first day of classes, which is September 21. You will be required to check in with ISP to have

your SEVIS record activated. We will send more information about check-in/orientation/SEVIS activation in the future, so please continue to check your email.

### **Do I need to attend orientation?**

Yes, there will be a virtual orientation. During orientation, we will share important information that will help you to be successful at Foothill. You will learn about campus services, counseling, ISP services, etc. More information will be sent to you.

### **What's the next available quarter after Fall 2020?**

The next available quarters are winter and spring 2021. Winter 2021 courses begin in January 2021, and spring 2021 courses start in April 2021. For more information on quarter start times and deadlines, please check our [academic calendar](#).

### **How many times can I defer my admission or defer the issuance of my I-20?**

We have waived the application and I-20 shipping fee for the Fall 2020 quarter only. You can defer your admission or the issuance of your I-20 once to either the winter 2021 or spring 2021 quarter. You may decide to defer beyond the winter or spring 2021 quarter; however, at that point, you will have to pay the \$75 shipping fee to receive your I-20 outside of the U.S.

### **How will I complete my math and/or English placement test?**

At this time, math, English, and ESL assessments are offered online. Admitted students will receive instructions on how to sign up for Assessment.

### **Fall 2020 is my first quarter at Foothill College, and I want to defer my admission to winter or spring 2021.**

#### **What do I have to do?**

Please contact our Admission Advisor at: [fhintladmissions@fhda.edu](mailto:fhintladmissions@fhda.edu) if you wish to defer your admission to the winter or spring 2021 quarter. Please include your full name and CWID in your email.

#### **I do not want to study virtually. What can I do?**

We understand your concern. This is an unusual situation, and our staff and faculty are here to support you. We have moved our classes and services to a virtual format to ensure the health and safety of everyone. You can choose to defer your admission to a future term if you'd prefer not to study online.

## **Current/Continuing International Students**

### **I am a continuing F-1 international student. If all of my fall classes are held virtually, what does that mean for me?**

For the summer and fall 2020 quarters, most courses will be held using virtual methods. You will remain in F-1 status as long as you register in and complete a minimum of 12 units during the fall quarter. You can take your classes in the U.S. or from overseas while maintaining your F-1 visa status per federal regulations. You

may choose to take courses during the summer 2020 session if you'd like; however, taking classes during the summer is optional.

**I am still in the U.S. Can I travel outside the United States over the summer and come back to the U.S. to start the fall quarter?**

Yes, you may travel outside the United States. Please ensure that your I-20 has a valid travel signature or be prepared to request an I-515A at the airport if needed. Please be aware that even with a valid F-1 visa, international travel back to the U.S. may continue to be restricted. Immigration, travel, and health screening policies may change without notice. Please visit the [CDC website](#) for the most up to date information regarding COVID-19 and travel restrictions.

**I need a travel signature on my I-20 signature. What do I do?**

If you have a signature on Page 2 of your I-20 that is dated within the last 12 months, you can travel with the current signature.

If you do not have a current signature on your I-20, email Merry Quittner at [quittnermerry@fhda.edu](mailto:quittnermerry@fhda.edu) to request an electronic signature on your I-20 up to one month before you are scheduled to return to the U.S. To request a travel signature, please email the following information:

1. Passport name
2. CWID or student ID number
3. Birthdate and/or SEVIS ID number
4. Subject: I-20 travel signature
5. The date you plan to return to the U.S.

During the COVID-19 pandemic only, international students are permitted to travel using electronic signatures on their I-20s, which can be scanned or digitally produced signatures.

**Can I complete the fall quarter virtually from outside the United States?**

Yes, you can choose to complete the fall quarter online from outside the United States. Please keep the following in mind:

- You will remain in F-1 status only if you register for and complete a minimum of 12 units for the spring quarter. You can choose to register for as many online 'V or Z' courses as you'd like, but when selecting courses, we recommend that you select classes that do not have a meeting day/time in the course description.
- Please ensure that you will have regular access to a computing device and a reliable internet connection.

**Can I take off the fall quarter and continue my studies in the winter or spring 2021 quarter?**

If you wish to skip the fall quarter entirely (not take any classes), please contact:

**Barbara Brown**, Immigration Advisor - [brownbarbara@fhda.edu](mailto:brownbarbara@fhda.edu)

**How do I access services such as counseling, immigration advising, etc.?**

Student Services will be available virtually, including counseling and immigration advising. Please see below for more information about whom to contact with questions or to schedule a virtual appointment.

Immigration Advising:

Barbara Brown [brownbarbara@fhda.edu](mailto:brownbarbara@fhda.edu)

International Counseling:

Set an appointment through counseling: <https://www.foothill.edu/counseling/>