

Virtual Town Hall: Impact of COVID-19

Immigration Topics for UR Faculty & Advisors

Fall 2020 Academic Planning and Advising Considerations for Faculty/Advisors/Administrators to support F-1 International Students

July 23, 2020 ♦ 11:00 am EDT



UNIVERSITY of
ROCHESTER

IS  **INTERNATIONAL
SERVICES OFFICE**
STUDENT SERVICES

Agenda

Opening Remarks:

Jane Gatewood

Vice Provost for Global Engagement &
Co-Chair, Coronavirus University Restart Team (CURT 2.0)

Presentation:

Ravi Shankar

Assistant Vice Provost & Director of International Services

Stephanie Krause

Associate Director, ISO Student Services

Discussion & Questions:

Please enter questions or comments to Q&A tool via Zoom

Overview of F-1 Student Enrollments during COVID-19

Under US regulations and normal circumstances, F-1 & J-1 international students must:

- **Enroll Full-Time each term:** Threshold of 10-12 credits; Equivalency for graduate study
- **Limits on Distance Education:** Only 1 online/remote course may count toward FT load

Temporary adaptations during COVID-19, per Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)

- March 2020 ICE guidance; Waiting for clarification on Fall 2020, following recent actions
- *UR Operations:* Online for Spring/Summer; Mix of in-person and online for Fall (hybrid)

Important distinctions based on student's enrollment & F-1 immigration record in SEVIS

- Must enroll full-time at UR to maintain F-1 (excl. part-time study, LOA, deferrals, etc.)
- Active F-1 students may pursue study fully online, regardless of location in US or abroad
- No allowance for Initial students: Enroll FT w/ physical attendance, or fully online abroad
- Processing for F-1 students starting a new program: SEVIS Transfer or Change of Level
- Student planning likely to hinge on travel ability, benefits eligibility, academic options ...

F-1 Regulatory Limits on Online/Distance Education

8 CFR 214.2(f)(6)(i)(G)

[emphasis added]

For F-1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An on-line or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F-1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no on-line or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

Regulatory framework is minimal; Subject to institutional interpretation & execution:

- Credit/classroom hours only – Not applicable to Continuation of Enrollment (999)
- 1 class vs. 3 credits – Flexibility, but commonly limited to 1 course, even when >3 credits
- Counted toward full course of study – Relevant threshold for student's program of study (i.e. 12, 10.5, or 9 credits, per UR standard for full-time); No limits beyond FT enrollment
- Provost's Office: UR classifications/definitions of distance education course sections

UR Distance Education Definitions

UR Classifications written w/ F-1 Regulations in mind: Definitions in GREEN are not subject to limit

Online Course is 1) offered “*principally*” via electronic means AND 2) “*does not require the student’s physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class*”.

UR Classifications	Definition Summary of Distance Education Course Sections	Immigration Interpretation
Complete Online	100% of scheduled class meetings are delivered via distance education; No requirement to visit campus to complete course	COUNTS toward F-1 distance education limit; Only 1 per term
Online (<i>with physical attendance</i>)	More than 80% but less than 100% of course is delivered via distance education; <u>Requires physical attendance to campus for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion</u>	DOES NOT COUNT toward F-1 distance education limit
Hybrid	More than 30% but less than 80% of course is delivered via distance education; <u>Requires physical attendance integral to completion</u>	DOES NOT COUNT toward F-1 distance education limit
In-Person	Up to 30% of course is delivered via distance education, if any; <u>Requires physical attendance integral to completion</u>	DOES NOT COUNT toward F-1 distance education limit
Correspondence	Self-paced course delivered via mail or electronic transmission, with separation and limited interaction between instructor and student	COUNTS toward F-1 distance education limit; Only 1 per term

F-1 Requirements for UR Course Selection

Sample Registrations to satisfy Full Course of Study / Full-Time Enrollment, when relevant

- Program requires 12 credits per term; Each course is 4 credits
8 credits 'Complete Online'; 4 credits 'Hybrid'; 4 credits 'Online w/ physical attendance'
- Program requires 12 credits per term; Each course is 3 credits
3 credits 'Complete Online'; 9 credits 'Online w/ physical attendance'
- Program requires 9 credits per term with graduate assistantship; Each course is 3 credits
3 credits 'Complete Online'; 6 credits 'Hybrid'; plus RA/TA/etc.
- Program requires 10.5 credits per term; Each course is 2.5 to 3 credits
3 credits 'Complete Online'; 7.5 credits 'Online w/ physical attendance'; + Add. courses

Discretion left to faculty/programs to determine structure & classify course section(s)

- No set immigration definitions around content distribution, minimum time in class, etc.
- Plausible justification to indicate the course "Requires physical attendance to campus for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion", *only as needed*
- Viability of multiple course sections for same content, with different attendance reqs.

Content Delivery, Travel Concerns & Other Issues

Potential scenarios for F-1 students to satisfy physical attendance component(s)

- *Consider:* Scope & Timing of in-person instructional format
 - Lectures vs. Lab vs. Recitation vs. Workshop vs. Group project vs. Meetings vs. ...
 - UR guidelines for delayed arrival (lockstep, phased) and programmatic deadlines
 - Online study, except for final exam, project, presentation, etc. (substantive weight?)
 - Academic “shifts”, for students present at start vs. those needing to arrive late
- *Consider:* Students unable to arrive within intended timeframe
 - “Integral to completion” vs. Student’s need to deviate from scheduled activities
 - Transition mid-semester, from section with physical attendance to ‘Complete Online’
 - Incomplete grading, to postpone in-person requirements until after term ends

Other considerations for UR Faculty & Academic Advisors

- Requests for any alternate study plan would require full-time UR enrollment (i.e. transfer credit)
- Mandatory quarantine period for 14 days, even after delayed arrival (per NYS, UR)
- *Caveat:* New guidance from ICE is expected; Perhaps US Department of State & others?

Summary: F-1 Students & Physical Attendance for Fall 2020



Immigration Status & Physical Location

- Active vs. Initial records; From UR, within US, abroad, or combination
- Travel barriers: Visas/Entry limits; Availability/Cost; Risks/Comfort



UR Course Classifications & Instructional Delivery

- Online study, with or without physical attendance requirements
- Ability to complete in-person component(s) at different pace



Changes in Course Section and/or Delivery Methods

- Requests to modify registered course section(s), due to travel ability
- Conversion to online instruction mid-term: ASE & ESM, Health/safety

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Discussion & Questions

Note: General FAQ Answers are under development for ISO website.

