



Immigration Questions: [ipdept@olemiss.edu](mailto:ipdept@olemiss.edu)  
International Admissions: [kwsmith1@olemiss.edu](mailto:kwsmith1@olemiss.edu)  
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## **International Student Enrollment Guidance for in-person v. online classes in Fall 2020**

International students on F and J visas are generally required to be full time students and are subject to limitations in online class enrollment.

For undergraduate students:

- Only one 3-hour class of 12 hours (full time) can be fully online
- Students can take more than 3 hours of online credits as long as 9 credits have an in-person component

For graduate students:

- Only one 3-hour class of 9 hours (full time) can be fully online
- Students can take more than 3 hours of online credits as long as 6 credits have an in-person component
- Dissertation hours do not count as online hours

For students required to take IE090/091 and students in the OMI Accelerator programs:

- No fully online courses count toward the requirement to be full time students

### **What qualifies as an in-person class?**

Is there a physical classroom presence that is integral to the course? If yes, the course would count as an in-person course. This applies even if part of the course is delivered online. For example, in a TTh class this fall, if half the class meets in person on Tuesdays and online on Thursdays and vice versa for the other half of the class, this course meets the in-person requirement since there is a physical classroom presence integral to the course.

### **Can international students take online courses from outside the US?**

For students taking classes outside the US, there is no visa-related limitation to enrollment in online classes as these students are not on a student visa in the US. Guidance is forthcoming from a group on campus about which countries, if any, students can be located to enroll in online courses outside the US for fall 2020.

### **Guidance**

If there are a significant number of international students registered for specific fall classes, the course is a candidate for an in-person component if feasible under the parameters and protocols guidelines.

If there are significant numbers of international students in your programs, having alternative in-person courses that are degree-applicable will be helpful.



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There are negative consequences for international students if they are not able to enroll in the requisite amount of in-person hours, including being out of status or having to take a leave of absence. Students who take a leave of absence will lose their visa status and must reapply for a visa which incurs additional costs, time, and the threat of the new visa application being denied; however, students who take a semester of in-person, but not degree-applicable, courses could suffer financially from the living expenses in the US.

For the spring 2020 semester, because students were in compliance prior to the change in course delivery, international students were able to maintain their status despite being in online courses. The Student Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) made this exception for students for "the duration of the emergency". No guidance has been issued specifically for the fall 2020 semester or to define the end of the emergency.

**Note:**

If any degree programs are offered fully online in the fall with no in-person classes, OGE must report this program change to SEVP. Please let us know which program and the type of instruction by emailing [jpdept@olemiss.edu](mailto:jpdept@olemiss.edu).