

***Message from KUMC's Senior International Officer***

Dear KUMC International Students,

Today we have received many questions relative to the [SEVP Broadcast Message: COVID-19 and Fall 2020](#) and the news <https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/06/politics/international-college-students-ice-online-learning/index.html> that came out yesterday (7/6/2020) regarding international student enrollment for the fall semester 2020. Many of you have understandable concerns about your ability to maintain status and remain in the United States in order to continue your program of study.

- I want to assure you that this communication from SEVP does not represent a stronger or more stringent approach to the regulations around the full-course of study requirement that we would normally follow per the regulations (see [Full Course of study 8 CFR 214.2\(f\)\(6\)\(i\)](#)).
- Rather, the SEVP communication clarifies that the exception which allowed for online enrollment in spring 2020 due to COVID-19 is no longer in effect for fall 2020.
- Nonetheless, there is leniency which allows for “hybrid course” enrollment to count toward the full-course of study requirement for maintaining status.
- At KUMC, we do not anticipate any status issues for our international students since KUMC is expecting to resume face-to-face courses or face-to-face courses will be adapted to a “hybrid” delivery approach, which has both online and in-person components, and meets the regulatory requirements for maintaining status.
- To avoid any issues, we will also be communicating with departments, programs and faculty who have international students as a reminder that the mode of delivery impacts international students’ status. Please be assured that there is great awareness and sensitivity on the part of our faculty, so we do not anticipate any issues.
- Additionally, as part of our standard SEVIS registration protocol we undertake every semester, we will be checking each student’s enrollment. If we identify any individual issues relative to meeting the “full-course of study” obligation, we will work with the student and program to rectify the issue.
- Per the communication, for all students attending schools in the United States this fall 2020, designated school officials (DSOs) must issue new Forms I-20 to each student certifying that the school is not operating entirely online, that the student is not taking an entirely online course load for the fall 2020 semester, and that the student is taking the minimum number of online classes required to make normal progress in their degree program. DSOs must indicate this information in the Form I-20 Remarks field in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). **OIP will be completing this process and email you about the pick-up of your I-20 so you can maintain it for your records.**
- Furthermore, OIP will submit our KUMC plan per the stated requirement that “Certified schools that will not be entirely online but will reopen in the fall and that will use any of the following educational formats must update their operational plans by August 1, 2020.”

**Here are the main points or takeaways for F-1 Students from the SEVP message:**

- “Due to COVID-19, SEVP instituted a temporary exemption regarding the online study policy for the spring and summer semesters. This policy permitted F and M students to take more online courses than normally allowed for purposes of maintaining a full course of study to maintain their F-1 and M-1 nonimmigrant status during the COVID-19 emergency.”
- “For the fall 2020 semester, SEVP is modifying these temporary exemptions.”

In summary, temporary exemptions for the fall 2020 semester provide that:

1. F-1 students may not remain in the U.S., obtain a visa, or enter the U.S. if they will attend schools **that will operate fully online for fall semester 2020**. If their school is operating 100% online, they may remain in active SEVIS status while taking a full-course of study from outside of the United States.
2. F-1 students at schools that are returning to normal operations will follow existing federal regulations regarding online education.
3. F-1 students at schools that are using a hybrid approach, combining in-person and online classes, will be allowed to take more than one class online as part of their “full course of study” obligation.

I hope this helps clarify. Please reach out to me and Irina Aris if you have any concerns relative to your status or your anticipated course registration for fall 2020. For recent updates and announcements from OIP such as [the statement made at the Town Hall](#), please also visit our [website](#).

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*“The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.” – Marcel Proust*

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