

Frequently Asked Questions on Fall 2020 Guidance on International Student Enrollment

How many classes do I need to take if I am overseas?

For continuing students, you will need to enroll in 12 credit hours (UG) or 9 credit hours (Graduate Students) to maintain your visa status. For new students who do not have an active SEVIS record, there are no specific requirements as you will not be holding any immigration status outside the U.S.

I am a sponsored student. Is there anything special I need to know about online/in-person class requirements?

Please check with your sponsor for their specific requirements for classes. You are responsible for checking with your sponsor on the exact requirements they may have for you regarding online & in-person classes.

Will I lose my F-1 visa status if I am outside the U.S. for more than 5 months?

During COVID-19 and under the current guidance, if you are enrolled in classes online full time, and you are outside the U.S. for more than five months, you do not lose your visa status nor do you subject to the [Five Month Rule](#). However, if you are not taking a full time course load, then you lose your visa status and are subject to the Five Month Rule.

Do I need to report anything to the OIP if I am currently outside the U.S.?

If you have not done so, please complete the "Summer/Fall 2020 Location Reporting" e-form on [iValpo](#) so we can put a remark on your SEVIS record to indicate you are currently overseas due to COVID-19. This is a government requirement.

Can I file an Optional Practical Training (OPT) application after I return to my home country?

In order to file an OPT application, you must be inside the U.S. If you have more questions on this matter, please contact andrew.knox@valpo.edu.

I am a new (initial) student, hoping to start at Valpo in Fall 2020. Can I come into the U.S. and start my program at Valpo?

If you have an initial I-20 with a program start date in August 2020, have paid your SEVIS fee, and have received a valid F-1 visa, you are welcome to come to Valpo to start your program since Valpo is offering a mixture of in-person and online courses.

What if I am transferring in or changing level to start a new program at Valpo in Fall 2020?

If you will arrive at Valpo in-person for the Fall 2020 semester as a transfer-in or change of level student, you will be able to start your program without any problem since Valpo is offering a mixture of in-person and online courses. If you have any other questions or uncertainties about your arrival at Valpo, please contact us to discuss your plan.