



International Students, Welcome to Valpo! (or welcome back)

We in the Office of International Programs (OIP) are happy to see you back for the new semester, and welcome to those who arrived for the first time!

First, please note that the OIP document pick-up open hours for the Spring 2021 semester will be **1:30-5:00pm Monday/Wednesday/Friday**. During those times, if you have something to pick up at the front desk, you can walk in to do that.

Also, please know that you are always welcome to contact Janice Lin (janice.lin@valpo.edu) or Andrew Knox (andrew.knox@valpo.edu) to make an appointment if you'd like to talk! We will be happy to set up a meeting (virtually or safely in-person, whichever works best for everyone).

Now, as we get started in this Spring 2021 term, please take note of these important points about maintaining your legal F-1/J-1 immigration status.

Full-time Enrollement

As an international student in F-1 or J-1 status, you must register for a full-time load of credit hours each Fall (and Spring) semester to maintain your legal F-1 or J-1 status.

- At least **12 credits** for undergraduate (bachelors) students
- At least **9 credits** for graduate (masters/doctorate) students

IMPORTANT: Please note that you must also **complete** a full time load. In other words, as a bachelors student, you are not allowed to start with 12 credits, and then drop to 10 before the end of the semester.

Online/Onsite Class Rules for Spring 2021

The following exception to the normal online/onsite class enrollment rules was issued by the U.S. government for F-1/J-1 students due to the COVID-19 situation.

- **Continuing** F-1/J-1 students are allowed to take only online classes if they wish.
- **Newly arrived** F-1 students must take at least 1 class which has an in-person requirement (in other words, a regular on-campus class, or a hybrid class which meets in-person occasionally at set times).
- **Transfer-in students** who are new to Valpo in Spring 2021, but were studying in the U.S. in Fall 2020, can enroll in all online classes in Spring 2021. **However**, please know that your sponsor may have different enrollment requirements which they require you to follow.

If you are outside the U.S. taking full-time, online-only classes during the Spring 2021 semester, please see [this FAQ](#). (the details on the FAQ are the same for Fall 2020 and Spring 2021) **Also, make sure you fill out the "Spring 2021 Location Reporting" e-form** on [iValpo](#) (under "F-1 Student Services") so that we are aware of your location. Please fill this out even if you submitted the Fall Location Reporting e-form last semester.

Reduced Course Load for Final Semester

If you are in your final term, e.g. you will complete **ALL** required credits for your degree by May 2021, you may take only what remains for your degree in the Spring 2021 semester, even if it is less than 9 or 12 credits. However, **you must fill out the "Reduced Course Load (RCL)" e-form on iValpo** (under "F-1 Student Services") so that we have a record that Spring 2021 is your final term.

If you are below full-time because of completion of your course of study, **be very careful and make sure you will not have to stay longer than this semester to complete your degree requirement**, or else you may have future problems with your immigration status.

Final Semester

If Spring 2021 is truly your final term, and you will complete all degree requirements and graduate by May 2021, please read [these reminders](#) carefully.

Also, check these important notes:

- If you have **withdrawn or will withdraw** from VU or are taking a leave of absence, please contact Janice Lin (janice.lin@valpo.edu) immediately.
- If you have an **off-campus internship/practicum**, you must register for the internship course and obtain CPT authorization from our office **before** starting the internship/practicum. For an **on-campus internship** over 20 hours/week, you will also need to receive CPT authorization. [Click here](#) for more details on Curriculum Practical Training (CPT).
- **Returning students**, if your local US residential address has changed since last semester, please let us know through submitting the Local U.S. Address Change e-form on [iValpo](#) (under the Biographical Information tab).
- **If your status is not F-1 or J-1**, please email international@valpo.edu to let us know.

Thank you, and all the best for a great semester ahead! Contact us if you have any questions ([OIP Staff page](#)).



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