Dear students,
We learned from yesterday’s MIT-Harvard hearing that the U.S. government agreed to rescind the Fall 2020 SEVP July 6th guidance and FAQ's.

Summary of SEVP July 6th policies that have been rescinded (these are no longer required):

- Students attending universities operating in a hybrid model must enroll in at least 1 class with an in-person component, and they must be enrolled in that class by Aug 4th regardless of the start date of classes.
- By August 4th, the university must update students I-20’s confirming the students are not enrolled in fully online programs.
- If the university moves entirely online mid-semester due to public health concerns, F-1 students must exit the U.S.

For now, we are reverting to the the March 9th and March 13th SEVP guidance that allows the following:

- Continuing students may take online classes and remain in the U.S.
- Continuing students may take online classes outside the U.S. without taking an immigration leave of absence.

Please note, this situation is unfolding. We expect that SEVP will provide new guidance for Fall 2020, but based on the Harvard-MIT hearing, we expect that the new guidance will take into consideration reasonable COVID-19 modifications U.S. universities are making for Fall 2020.

You are valued!
During this time of uncertainty we want you to know that you have support from both the UNC Charlotte community and around the country.

- See Interim Chancellor Lorden’s July 9th message Supporting International Students
- NAFSA Association of International Educators is advocating on behalf of international students. See NAFSA’s summary of the SEVP’s COVID-19 related updates

Stay tuned for more information - We will continue to update you via email and these pages (ISSO COVID-19 Information and Updates, and ISSO Fall 2020 Updates and FAQ's) as we receive updated guidance from SEVP for Fall 2020.

Sincerely,
ISSO Staff


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On Tue, Jul 7, 2020 at 12:34 PM Intl Student Scholars <intlso@uncc.edu> wrote:

Dear F-1 International Students,

Yesterday in a July 6, 2020 Broadcast Message, the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) communicated its long-awaited Fall 2020 enrollment guidance for F-
1 students. Below is a summary of the ISSO's interpretation and how it impacts UNC Charlotte.

Since UNC Charlotte has decided to offer a combination of in-person, online, and hybrid classes for Fall 2020, F-1 students will be allowed to take more than one online class and count it toward fulltime enrollment. However, it is expected that F-1 students enroll in at least 1 class that is either in-person or hybrid.

The ISSO must re-issue all I-20 immigration documents by August 4th for those who will be remaining in the U.S. and taking classes in Fall 2020.

**In order for us to know who you are, you MUST enroll for Fall 2020 classes by Friday, July 17th (even if you are not certain which classes to register for and even if you cannot get a full course load by that date)!**

The ISSO is also responsible for submitting a modified operational plan to SEVP by August 1st.

If a school changes its operational stance mid-semester and as a result, F-1 students change to all online classes, the students must immediately exit the U.S. or transfer to a school that offers in-person classes.

We recognize that this is an extremely challenging time for you all and that these are not simple rules to follow. Please know that the ISSO is working with senior university leadership to try to identify as many in-person classes as possible. We also recognize that if the COVID-19 metrics change enough to warrant a shift back to online classes, this would have catastrophic impacts on your status unless SEVP decides to change its stance.

We recognize that there are still several other questions unanswered. As of today, this is all we have been told by SEVP, so we will have to wait for more guidance. In the meantime, we will update the ISSO COVID-19 website very soon with a Frequently Asked Questions section and in a separate email announce the next ISSO Virtual Town Hall.

We also remind you that if you are inside the U.S. and experiencing severe financial hardship, to please apply for [UNC Charlotte emergency funding](https://www.uncc.edu/iss/news/enrollment-updates). Also, the [Niner Food Pantry](https://www.uncc.edu/iss/services/food) remains open this summer. Additionally, the ISSO continues to advise all students via phone 4 days/week. You can sign-up for an advising phone call [here](https://www.uncc.edu/iss/services/telephone-advising) if you need to talk with us!

Remember that we are resilient Niners and we will get through this!

Sending you warm wishes,
The ISSO Staff

Please note ISSO serves nearly 3,000 enrolled international students, in addition to over 1,000 prospective students and students on OPT and STEM OPT. Therefore, we appreciate your patience in allowing us 2 - 3 business days (Not including weekends and holidays) to respond to your emails.


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Office Hours: Remote Operated Staff
Monday - Friday 8:00am - 5:00pm

According to University Protocol, no staff will physically be in the ISSO Office until further notice. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate a new advising schedule and try new ways to connect with students and scholars remotely. Please expect some delays in processing times as we work through this with you all.

Advising hours:
Monday / Friday- 10:00am - 12:00pm (phone appt)
Tuesday / Thursday - 2:00pm - 4:00pm (phone appt)
Wednesday - No Advising

OPT Application Review:
Thursday, virtually at 2:00pm *Based upon prior registration*

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