



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY - SAN ANTONIO
Office of International Affairs

Maintaining Non-Immigrant F-1 Status

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can a student on F-1 visa status participate in online classes?

Can a student on F-1 visa status participate in online classes outside the U.S. and still maintain their nonimmigrant status?

Will a student on F-1 visa have the ability to return to the United States if they are continuing their studies outside of the country as a result of COVID-19?

I am an F-1 enrolled degree-seeking student and I need to submit a request to have an I-20 processed. When will you process my new I-20? How can I receive it?

I am an F-1 international student working at A&M-SA? How many hours can I work?

I have recently traveled to an international country, what action should I take?

I am an international student, and plan to travel abroad. To whom should I report?.....

I am an F-1 student. I have applied for OPT. Will my OPT be delayed due to COVID-19?

I have tested positive for COVID-19, what action should I take?.....

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Can F-1 student participate in online classes?

Yes, F-1 student can participate in online classes until the university determines otherwise. Texas A&M University San Antonio has notified students that effective March 23rd, 2020 all classes will be conducted online.

SEVP has allowed non-immigrant students to make normal progress in their program of study by allowing students to participate temporarily on Online courses either by engaging distance-learning, either within the country or outside the country.



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Can a student on F-1 visa status participate in online classes from outside the U.S. and still maintain their nonimmigrant status?

Yes, nonimmigrant students can temporarily engage in distance-learning, either from within the U.S. or outside the country, considering COVID-19. This temporary provision is only in effect for the duration of the emergency.

You must notify Office of International Affairs (OIA) if you plan to leave the country and participate in an online course. Remember, you must get your I-20 timely signed for return back to the U.S.

Will students on F-1 visa status be able to return to the United States if they are continuing their studies outside of the country as a result of COVID-19?

Students who continue to make normal progress in their course of study remain eligible for admission into the United States. However, because of the changing array of travel restrictions, nonimmigrant students should refer to their local embassy's website through the U.S. Department of State for any updates about visa issuance. Also, Department of Homeland Security ([DHS](#)) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)) websites both provide information about current travel restrictions to the United States.

I am an F-1 enrolled degree-seeking student and I need to submit a request to have an I-20 processed. When will my new I-20 be processed? How can I receive it?

Students are recommended to make their request via phone call to the Office of International Affairs (210) 784-1309 or email at international.affairs@tamsua.edu.

All request should have the proper supporting documents in place. Once we receive your request and have reviewed your documents, an I-20 will be produced. Applications to USCIS for immigration benefits such as, OPT, CPT, program extension, and expiring I-20 will be processed as soon as request are made and supporting documents have been reviewed.

We expect student documents to be ready for mail out within 2 business days. Please remember documents can be delayed if supporting documents are incomplete.



I am an F-1 international student working at A&M-SA? How many hours can I work?

International students are only authorized to work 20 hours per week; except during holiday break or summer break; at which time they can work full-time.

I have recently travelled to an international country, what action should I take?

If you have recently traveled internationally to any country at all, you must NOT come to campus for 14 days following the date of your return to the United States. It is recommended that you self-monitor during this time and follow [CDC](#) guidance for recognizing symptoms and when to be tested.

Please use the [Travel Self-Report form](#) to report your travel, and the University's Risk Management team will reach out to you with further instructions.

I am an international student and I plan to travel abroad. To Whom Should I report?

International travel is currently unpredictable and high risk. If you choose to travel, be prepared for delays or the inability to re-enter the United States. Be aware that travelers returning from [CDC Risk Level 3](#) may be prone to additional screening. Visit your local [US embassy](#) or consulate website (link is external) to confirm operating status and find information about appointment rescheduling and/or emergency services.

Any international/ domestic travel must be reported to the OIA, please email international.affairs@tamusa.edu for any upcoming travel plan.

Additionally, please complete the [Travel Self-Report form](#) to report your travel. The University's Risk Management team will reach out to you with further instructions.

I am an international student. Can I travel within the U.S.?

Even within the U.S., different regions are experiencing travel impacts and restrictions. The [CDC: COVID-19 Cases in the U.S.](#) website has updated numbers per state, but this is changing quickly. If you choose to travel domestically, please be sure to consider your own health and safety. We encourage you to follow the CDC and local recommendations for



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travel. Aside from any risk from COVID-19 itself, be prepared for possible localized transportation bans or infrastructure disruption which may impact your travel plans.

Don't forget, please complete the [Travel Self-Report form](#) to report your travel. The University's Risk Management team will reach out to you with further instructions.

I am an F-1 student and I have already applied for my post-completion OPT. Will my OPT processing be delayed due to COVID-19 impacts to USCIS?

A&M-SA is closely monitoring USCIS updates that may impact processing of student's employment Authorization Documents and/or Optional Practical Training applications. Please continue to check the Office of International Affairs' website or call the office for updates. According to the USCIS website, as of March 18, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has suspended routine in-person services until at least April 1. However since the OPT application is a mail-in application, this suspension will not impact services.

Note: Students must attend all courses Online and make satisfactory progress to maintain their F-1 status. The Office of International Affairs will continue monitoring F-1 students and updating SEVIS records accordingly.

The Office of International Affairs continues to support our international students during regular business hours:

Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

WebEx or Skype meetings are available if student prefers a face-to-face remote visit; please email international.affairs@tamusa.edu or contact (210) 784-1309.

Remember the OIA Team is Here for You!



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