GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Q: Where can I read up-to-date info from the government in charge of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (F-1 student records)?

- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement: https://www.ice.gov/coronavirus (refer to Nonimmigrant Student and SEVP-Certified Schools section)

Q: Where can I read information about travelers prohibited from entry to the U.S.?

- Non-COVID-19 Related: NAFSA: https://www.nafsa.org/professional-resources/browse-by-interest/executive-order-travel-ban-nafsa-resources

Q: Can I take all of my fall 2020 courses online?

- If you are a student with an active SEVIS record with UW Tacoma (continuing UW Tacoma student), you can maintain an active SEVIS record as long as you are enrolled full time or part time (with vacation quarter, medical or final quarter reduced course load approval) regardless of mode of instruction and whether you are inside or outside of the U.S.
- If you are a student with an initial SEVIS record with UW Tacoma (new or new transfer student), you may begin your studies fully online from outside of the U.S. However, your SEVIS record cannot be activated and must remain in initial status.
- If you are a new or new transfer student and are already inside the U.S. or enter the U.S. successfully before September 30, 2020 (1st day of Autumn 2020), your SEVIS record can be activated, regardless of mode of instruction.
- If you are a new or new transfer student currently outside of the U.S. and want to enter the U.S. for your fall 2020 studies, you must be enrolled in at least one in-person course. Please contact International Student and Scholar Services for information about finding in-person course offerings and for an updated I-20. Note that we cannot guarantee your entry into the United States.
Q: Does the new guideline affect students on OPT?
  ● No. But if you are thinking about starting a new degree program, you should consult with an international student advisor (uwtiss@uw.edu) to learn how the new guidance may affect you.

UWT ADMISSIONS AND CLASSES

Q: What is the mode of instruction for UWT during Autumn 2020?
  ● On June 29th, Chancellor Pagano sent an email to all students, staff and faculty that UWT will be offering a mix of in-person, hybrid and online courses (https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/chancellor/communications-sent-uw-tacoma-commun ity#20200629pagano).
  ● Approximately 15% of courses will be offered in-person during fall 2020.

Q: How do I know if autumn classes are in-person, hybrid or online?
  ● Find your class(es) on the Time Schedule: https://www.washington.edu/students/timeschd/T/ Does it have a location listed? If not, it will be online. It will also have a note that says “offered via remote learning”. Some classes will still have a meeting day and time listed. This means that the course will have a synchronous component
    ○ Make sure to check the notes carefully! Some classes may only meet in the 1st week of the quarter.

Q: What’s the definition of In-Person, Hybrid or Online?
  ● UWT’s definitions of in-person, hybrid, and online can be found here: https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/teaching-learning-technology/online-hybrid-course-designation-policies

Q: Can I take an in-person or hybrid class at UW Seattle or Bothell?
  ● Yes. However, in order to keep your SEVIS record active with UW Tacoma, the majority of your course credits during the quarter must be offered by UW Tacoma. This rule is the same pre-COVID-19.

Q: How can I register for an in-person or hybrid course?
  ● Use the UW Tacoma Time Schedule Quick Search tool (https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/ts-quicksearch/). Be sure the check the “In-Person” box next to “Course Delivery” (Tools to find in-person classes for Autumn (click on course deliver, “In-Person” this include hybrid model): https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/ts-quicksearch/
Graduate students should contact their graduate program advisor for advice and assistance if needed.
Undergraduate students should contact their academic advisor for advice and assistance if needed.

Q: Can I defer my admission to UW Tacoma?
   • Yes. Graduate students should contact their graduate program advisors. Undergraduate students should email: uwtinfo@uw.edu
   • Once deferral is finalized, we can issue an up to date I-20 with a new program start date.

Q: Autumn is my final quarter and I only have one class left. The class is online. Is it OK?
   • Yes. Your SEVIS record will remain active whether you are inside or outside of the U.S.

Q: Can I take a vacation quarter in Autumn?
   • If you are enrolled full time this Summer and have not taken a vacation quarter during the past Spring, Winter or Autumn and you plan to re-enroll for Winter 2021, you are eligible for a vacation quarter. Please email uwtiss@uw.edu to verify your eligibility and to receive an approval.

Q: What am I allowed to do during a vacation quarter?
   • During a vacation quarter, you can remain in the U.S., go outside of the U.S., enroll part-time, or not enroll at all. You earned it! Your SEVIS record will remain active.

Q: How can we remain safe in in-person class?
   • UW Tacoma is working hard to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all those attending in-person courses during autumn 2020. The health of our students, faculty, and staff remain central to all decisions we make. Please refer to Chancellor Pagano’s “New details on our plans for autumn quarter” message posted on June 29, 2020:

Q: What if the class is listed as hybrid but the instructor and students agree to change the in-person component to online?
   • Determinations of whether a course is in-person or online are guided by the time schedule.
TRAVEL AND VISAS

Q: How can I travel to the U.S. as an F-1 student?
- Check most up to date COVID-19 related travel restrictions on CDC’s website: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/from-other-countries.html
- Check non-COVID-19 related travel restrictions: https://www.nafsa.org/professional-resources/browse-by-interest/executive-order-travel-ban-nafsa-resources
- In order to seek admission into the U.S., all enrolled UW Tacoma students must carry the following documents:
  - A valid passport with expiration date over 6 months
  - A valid F-1 student visa
  - A valid I-20 with a travel signature on 2nd page signed less than 1 year ago (new transfer students will not have travel signature on their transfer pending I-20, they will receive continued attendance I-20 once their SEVIS record is activated after their 1st quarter starts)
- New students with initial I-20 cannot seek admission into the U.S. more than 30 days before but no later than program start date printed on their I-20s (September 30 for Autumn 2020 quarter).
- New transfer students with transfer pending I-20 must seek admission into the U.S. anytime before the program start date printed on their I-20s (September 30 for Autumn 2020 quarter).
- New and transfer students must carry a print out of their class schedule showing at least one in-person/hybrid course.
- Customs and Border Protection officers have final discretion of admitting F-1 students into the U.S. UW Tacoma cannot guarantee you will be granted entry, even with the above-listed documentation.

Q: Can I use emailed and printed I-20 to apply/ renew an F-1 student visa and to seek re/admission into the U.S.?
- During COVID-19 emergency, UW Tacoma is permitted to email your I-20 to your UW Tacoma email addresses. However, we still highly encourage you to get a hold of an original I-20 for the purpose of applying/renewing F-1 student visa and seeking re/admission into the U.S. Contact uwtiss@uw.edu to request that an original I-20 be sent to you via regular mail.

Q: Should there be a remark on my I-20 stating that “the student does not have an entirely online schedule for Autumn 2020” to apply/ renew an F-1 student visa and to seek re/admission into the U.S.?
- This remark is no longer required. However, if you are applying for an F-1 student visa or renewal, we highly encourage you to request an original I-20 with this remark. We also recommend that new and new transfer students who are seeking
admission into the U.S. request an original I-20 with this remark. Alternatively, students can use a print out of their Autumn 2020 class schedule to prove that their schedules are not 100% online.

- To request an updated original I-20 with this remark, please contact uwtiss@uw.edu.

Q: Can I stay in the US with an expired F-1 student visa?
- Yes. Your F-1 student visa only needs to be valid at the time you are entering the U.S. You can let your F-1 student visa expire as long as you are inside the US and have an active SEVIS record.

Q: Can I travel via a third country to avoid the travel restrictions from my home country?
- This may be possible. Pay close attention to US guidelines (such as CDC, CBP), guidelines from your home country, and guidelines from the third country and airline(s) involved.
- There is never a 100% guarantee that you will be permitted to enter the U.S.

Q: When will US embassies/consulates reopen?
- U.S. embassies/consulates are taking a phased resumption of visa issuance services which differs from posts to posts. To learn more, please visit:
  - Visa Appointment Wait Times: https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/wait-times.html

Q: Is a COVID-19 test result required to enter the U.S.?
- No. But individuals traveling to the U.S. from abroad are being asked to self quarantine for 14 days according to CDC guidelines: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/after-travel-precautions.html

Q: I want to go home but flights are scarce and expensive. What can I do?
- Keep looking. Have a back up plan in place so that you can continue to maintain your F-1 status.
- Contact your country's embassy/consulate located in the US for help.
  - Refer to Embassy Contacts section on this page: https://j1visa.state.gov/covid-19/
EMPLOYMENT

Q: I am a new student for Autumn 2020. If I started taking classes full time remotely from my home country, will I be able to get an authorization to engage in paid internship off campus for Summer 2021?

- No. In order to be eligible for optional CPT, students must maintain an active SEVIS record for three consecutive quarters. UWT cannot activate SEVIS records of new students who are outside of the U.S. even if they are enrolled full time.

Disclaimer: ISSS is able to provide students with general guidance. However, any advice provided to students by our office, as well as information on this document, should not be construed as legal advice. Additionally, due to the fluid nature of current situations, U.S. government entities may change their interpretation of these immigration laws/regulations and eligibility requirements for benefits at any time. We will do our best to provide students with the most current guidance. Each case is fact-specific and it is advised that students contact experienced immigration attorneys for further advice.