



STUDENT AND EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM (SEVP) GUIDANCE ON ONLINE CLASSES FOR FALL 2020 SEMESTER

What does the new SEVP guidance mean for international students at the University of New Haven?

Q. What are the normal limits for online/remote coursework on the F-1 visa?

Under normal circumstances, F-1 visa regulations state that undergraduate F-1 students must enroll in at least 12 credits per semester and that graduate students must enroll in at least nine (9) credits to maintain full-time enrollment. Typically only three (3) online/remote credits can be counted toward meeting the full-time enrollment requirement, and the remaining credits must be on-ground.

Because of the coronavirus global pandemic, the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) has issued special guidance for the Fall 2020 semester. For schools operating with a hybrid or flex model that combines in-person classes with online/remote classes, F-1 students will be allowed to take more than three (3) credits online/remotely, but will not be permitted to study fully online and remain in the U.S.

Q. What if there is another outbreak of the coronavirus and courses transition completely to online/remote learning during the Fall 2020 semester? *Added July 7*

Should another outbreak occur that impacts course delivery, the University will work with all international students individually to attempt to continue course delivery in person or through a hybrid format, while following the guidance at that time from the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP).

Q. Is it possible to study online and/or remotely if I am not in the U.S.?

Students may study remotely, part-time or full-time, if they are outside of the U.S., as they are not subject to visa regulations. Depending on the situation in a student's home country, students who are from outside of the United States may find it difficult to travel at this time, or they may feel unsure about traveling. In these instances, pursuing online and/or remote studies from a student's home country could be a good option. International students who study remotely during the fall semester, will be able to join their classmates on-campus for the Spring 2021 semester, provided they meet all visa requirements.

International students who are planning to pursue online and/or remote coursework during the Fall 2020 semester should consult with their academic adviser regarding the courses they should take. The F-1 regulations do not limit the number of online/remote credits international students may take if they are not in the U.S.

Q. If an international student is in their final semester, and only has one class left, can that last class be completed online?

The course load for an international student who is in the United States (even if it is only three (3) credits) cannot be fully online. International students in this position would have to leave the U.S. and pursue their final credits online from home.

Q. How does the latest Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) guidance affect eligibility for Optional Practical Training (OPT)?

International students who left the U.S. during the Spring 2020 semester and who are unable to return to the U.S. for the fall semester must return in the spring 2021 semester on a new initial I-20. A new initial I-20 "restarts the clock" on eligibility for practical training. To be eligible for Optional Practical Training (OPT), a student would have to be enrolled for one full academic year, and thus would not be eligible for OPT until January 2022.

Q. How does the latest Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) guidance affect eligibility for Curricular Practical Training (CPT)?

Undergraduate students are not eligible for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) until they have completed at least one full academic year. Graduate students are eligible for CPT after completing one semester, provided they are not on academic probation.

Students who left the U.S. during the Spring 2020 semester and who are unable to return for the fall semester, must secure a new initial I-20 to return to the U.S. for the Spring 2021 semester. A new initial I-20 "restarts the clock" on eligibility for practical training, including CPT.