



Impact of the SEVP/DHS March 9 and March 13 Guidance on International Students at Virginia Tech Last updated July 24, 2020

IMPORTANT UPDATE

This document has been updated based on the July 24, 2020 SEVP/DHS [News Release](#), and [Broadcast Message: Follow-up: ICE continues March guidance for fall school term](#), and [FAQs](#). See 1.3 and 1.4 below.

As a result of the July 14 decision by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) within the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to rescind their July 6 policy directive, the [March 9 SEVP/DHS guidance](#), [March 13 addendum](#), and [July 24 Broadcast Message: Follow-up: ICE continues March guidance for fall school term](#) are controlling. Following is an overview of what this means for international students at Virginia Tech:

1. If Virginia Tech is able to maintain its operational status and plans for fall 2020 semester, as outlined in [President Sands' June 8 announcement](#) and on the [VTReady website](#), offering a mix of in-person, online, and hybrid courses:
 - 1.1. **International students who are currently inside the United States in F-1 nonimmigrant status may enroll in any combination of in-person, online, and/or hybrid courses that best suits their academic, health, and other needs (including 100% online) as long as they remain enrolled in a full-course of study (minimum of 12 credits for undergraduate students, 9 credits for graduate students without an assistantship, 12 credits for graduate students with an assistantship, or students in their final semester who do not require full-time enrollment to complete their degree program who have been authorized by a Designated School Official (DSO) in Cranwell International Center for a Reduced Course Load).**
 - 1.2. **International students who are currently outside the United States (or will be for fall 2020 semester) with an Active record in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) and who enroll full-time in online Virginia Tech courses for fall 2020 semester while remaining outside the United States will be considered to be maintaining F-1 status and their SEVIS records will remain in Active status.**
 - 1.3. **International students in New/Initial status in SEVIS who are currently outside the United States will be allowed to enter the US for fall 2020 semester as long as they are not pursuing a full course of study that is 100% online.**
 - 1.4. **International students who were in valid F-1 nonimmigrant status on March 9, 2020, including those previously enrolled in entirely online classes who are currently outside of the United States, will be allowed to re-enter the US for fall 2020 semester to continue their programs of study even if they are pursuing a full course of study that is 100% online.**
2. If Virginia Tech is required to stop all in-person classes and shift to an entirely online mode of instruction at any point during fall 2020 semester:
 - 2.1. **International students in F-1 nonimmigrant visa status who are inside the United States and enrolled at Virginia Tech would be allowed to remain in the United States and in Active status in SEVIS** so long as the students participated in online or other alternate learning modalities. SEVP/DHS notes in the March 13 guidance that "given the extraordinary nature of the COVID-19 emergency, SEVP will allow F-1 and/or M-1 students to temporarily count online classes towards a full course of study in excess of the limits stated in 8 CFR 214.2(f)(6)(i)(G) and 8 CFR 214.2(m)(9)(v)...for the duration of the emergency."
3. If Virginia Tech is required to completely close and cease all modes of instruction at any point during fall 2020 semester:
 - 3.1. **International students in F-1 nonimmigrant visa status who are inside the United States and enrolled at Virginia Tech would be allowed to remain in the United States and in Active status in SEVIS** so long as the students intend to resume their course of study when the university reopens and classes resume. SEVP/DHS notes in the March 13 guidance that "this is similar to short-term breaks in the school calendar when classes are not in session."