

Update for International Students at Montclair State University

March 13, 2020

Dear Student,

We are monitoring the COVID-19 situation closely and would like to give you updates, including travel outside the U.S., changes to International Admission and Student Services Advising, OPT Review prior to mailing, Document pick up. We will continue to provide updates as they become available.

Sincerely,

International Admissions and Student Services

Montclair State University

TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE U.S.:

SEVP is allowing F-1 and J-1 students to take their Spring 2020 classes online, either from within the U.S. or outside of the country with no impact to your immigration status. If you feel more comfortable returning home for the remainder of the semester, you may do so. However, please keep the following in mind:

- You should review the [University's Coronavirus webpage](#).
- You can review regularly updated COVID-19 travel advice resources on the [CDC](#), [U.S. Department of State](#), and [WHO's](#) websites. Be sure to continually monitor travel restrictions and updates from your home country as well.
- Make sure all of your classes are online before you leave the country. Check with your professors prior to leaving the U.S. You will be required to continue taking all the classes on your current schedule (**If you were already approved for a Spring 2020 Reduced Course Load, you may continue taking your current course schedule.) **If you drop any class(es), you will lose your F-1/J-1 status.**
- Check if you can access the technology needed for your online coursework in your home country and whether you will need a VPN to access it (i.e. Canvas, Zoom, Gmail, etc)?
- Consider the difference in time zones between New Jersey and your home country. For example, if your professor holds a virtual class session during your normally scheduled class time, will you be able to fully participate, given the time difference? Discuss this concern with your professor **prior to travel**.
- Have you discussed potential risks associated with travel with your family back home?
- Complete the [International Student Relocation Form](#) if you are traveling outside the U.S., or moving off campus between now and the end of the Spring 2020 semester.

- You will need a travel authorization signature (on page 2 of your I-20/on page 1 of your DS-2019) from the Admission and Immigration Counselor if you will be returning to complete your studies in the summer or fall semester. If you have a travel signature that is valid until September 1, 2020, then you do not need a travel signature. If you do not have a valid signature, then complete the [Travel Signature Request Form](#) and we will email you to come to our office for signature.
- You will need a valid F-1/J-1 visa in your passport to return on the F-1/J-1 visa. If you do not have a valid visa in the passport, you will need to visit the American Consulate in your home country and obtain the visa prior to returning to the U.S. If you have questions, email us at intserv@montclair.edu. Please be advised that some US Embassies and Consulates in some countries are CLOSED. Because of this, there may be significant delays in renewing your visa. Also be prepared that more embassies/consultants may close in other countries.
- If you are traveling, your passport must be valid at least 6 months in advance of your return date.
- If you are completing your studies this Spring 2020 semester and you choose to return home before the end of the semester, be aware that you will not be able to return to the U.S. on that F-1/J-1 status. Regardless of the end date on your I-20/DS-2019, your status will end on the day that you complete all requirements for your degree (for most Spring 2020 graduates, that is May 12, 2020).
- **(F-1 students only):** If you have already applied for post-completion OPT, then please email us at intserv@montclair.edu prior to leaving the U.S. If you are graduating this Spring or Summer 2020 and have not yet applied for OPT, be aware that you must apply before leaving the country. You will not be able to apply for OPT while overseas.
- If you decide to travel, be prepared, and understand the risks. Know that you might not be able to return to the US. for an unknown period of time, your trip could be disrupted, or you may be quarantined upon your return.

Changes to International Admission and Student Services Advising:

Our office will be open regular hours. However, to align with University guidance on social distancing, our office will provide advising by email, phone, virtual appointment effective March 16, 2020. We ask that you email us at intserv@montclair.edu with your questions. We can then assess the situation, answer your questions, and provide you with further guidance.

(F-1 students only): OPT Packet Review Prior to Mailing:

After you have received your OPT I-20, contact our office email at intserv@montclair.edu to schedule a phone appointment with the International Admissions and Immigration Counselor. In that email, also provide your documents. We will email you back with a phone appointment date and time. Do not send us a copy of your check due to security risk.

Document Pick up:

If you have requested any documents, you will be notified by email when your documents are ready with instructions on pick-up or mailing.

Please note: Information is subject to change and we will update you with any changes.