



COVID 19 GUIDANCE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

TO: MCCCDC VPSAs and International Student Directors
FROM: Melissa Flores, Assoc. General Counsel, Sr.
DATE: March 13, 2020
RE: COVID 19 Guidance for international students

This memo is crafted as a Q&A to assist your international students navigate during this unprecedented time. Feel free to share this information. If you have any questions, please call (480-731-8418 (office) 801-557-1657 (cell) or email me at Melissa.Flores@domail.maricopa.edu.

On March 12, 2020 Chancellor Steven Gonzales announced that the District would prepare to move on-site classes to an online format in response to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID 19) pandemic. As these plans progress, there will undoubtedly be confusion among our international students about how their student immigration status may be affected. The following information is intended to provide our international students with information in order for them to make decisions moving forward.

1. If my classes are moving to an online platform, can I return home for the remainder of Spring Semester?

In order to make the best decision for yourself, we hope that you would consider the following questions. In addition, we request that you review the [MCCCDC COVID 19 website](#). There is important information listed in the [Executive Communications](#) that could greatly impact your decision in regards to immigration and travel during this time.

Please note: The [CDC recommends](#) that travelers avoid all nonessential travel to the following destinations: China, Iran, most of Europe, and South Korea. The university strongly recommends that everyone reconsider travel to any country with a CDC Level 3 or 4 state department advisory based on the novel coronavirus. Those recommendations

change frequently and can be monitored through the [State Department](#) and [CDC websites](#).

2. What are some of the things I should consider in making the decision to return home to finish out the Spring Semester?

Please consider the following:

Are you able to access the technology used by the Maricopa County Community College District for online coursework in your home country (e.g., Canvas, Google Hangouts, Zoom, etc.)? Will you require a VPN to access it?

Have you considered the difference in time zones between Arizona and your home country? For example, if your professor chooses to use Zoom they may want to keep the same class time and date but will hold the class virtually, and you will still need to participate fully as if you were physically in the classroom. Also, keep in mind the time zone impacts of this. You should consult with your professors prior to traveling.

3. What about my immigration status if the MCCCDC moves my in-person classes to an online format for some or all of the remaining Spring Semester?

If you are enrolled in full-time classes this spring semester then you are still considered in good immigration status. This does not change even though the courses are moved to online. Due to this unprecedented situation, an exception is being made for international students to complete their spring courses online while continuing to remain in the U.S.

Please note that you must remain enrolled in your spring semester classes. If you choose to drop any of your classes this could negatively impact your immigration status.

4. Will offices on campus, including the International Student Services office remain open for the rest of Spring Semester?

Yes, the District, colleges, and essential functions will remain open at this time. Information is subject to change and we will update our office availability as new information comes in. It is likely that all appointments will be moved to phone appointments only. More information will be released as it becomes available.

5. What other issues should I be considering regarding traveling home?

Here are some visa-related questions you must consider:

Is your passport valid for a return in August? Your passport must be valid for 6 months beyond your return date to the U.S.

Is your visa still valid for a return in August?

Be mindful that some US Embassies and Consulates in some countries are currently CLOSED and that we anticipate significant delays in renewing your visa. Be prepared that more embassies/consulates could shut down during this time in further countries.

Does your I-20 have a recent travel signature that has been signed AFTER September 1, 2019? If not, you need to have a new travel signature from your College's International Services office.

Is this your last semester? If so, then please review the [MCCCD COVID 19](#) website and discuss with your International Student office contact regarding the next steps you should take.

PLEASE BE AWARE-We do not know how long these travel restrictions will last and what additional countries may be added to the restrictions already in place. If you decide to travel, be prepared, understand the risks, and be advised that you might not be able to return to the U.S. for an unknown period of time, your trip could be disrupted, or you may be quarantined upon your return.