

## International Students – Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

### Should I change my travel plans for Spring Break?

We discourage you from travelling outside of the U.S. and Canada, unless it's to return home. You could be subject to quarantine for 14 days if countries you visit or transit through are raised to CDC Level 3. Travel restrictions may also be expanded to additional regions or countries without advance notice.

You should consider your own health status and other reports before making plans for domestic travel, recognizing that the status of COVID-19 infection in the United States continues to change.

### Should I go home, or is it better to stay at Knox?

This is a question every student and their family will need to answer for themselves.

If you have friends or family in the US, it might be a good idea to stay with them.

Staying at Knox is also an option. International students are allowed to live on campus during the Spring Break and Spring Term. You'll be taking your classes online, but you will continue to have access to essential services, including health, counseling, and campus dining facilities. By staying on campus, you'll avoid any travel restrictions when in-person classes resume. If you wish to stay on campus, **you must complete [this form](#) no later than Sunday, March 15, at 10:00 p.m**

Of course, you may be most comfortable going home. But there is some risk, given travel restrictions, flight operations, etc., that you could have some difficulty coming back to Knox when in-person classes resume. **If you leave the US, get a new signature on your I-20 before leaving.**

### What if I go home but am not able to return until the Fall term? Will my I-20 be terminated if I have been outside the U.S. for more than 5 months?

If you are not able to return to the U.S., we will work with you individually to determine the best path toward advancing your Knox education. This may include continuing to take classes remotely, but it also may include taking a leave of absence. Every student's situation will be different. Contact Alex Pia directly about your options.

Regulations on extended leaves from the country beyond five months have been [modified](#) so that I-20s are not automatically terminated. However, if you anticipate a leave in excess of five months, it's important to talk with Alex Pia prior to departure.

How will studying online affect my F-1 visa status?

The Department of Homeland Security has issued guidance stating that international students can temporarily engage in distance-learning (such as what Knox is doing), either from within the U.S. or outside the country, and still fulfill F-1 visa requirements.

What about my stuff in my room if I can't come back?

If you're traveling internationally, it's best to store your belongings in campus storage before you leave. Check the email message from Eleanor Khan for the details regarding accessing storage areas.

Will I have to self-quarantine when I return to the U.S. from my country?

Every person traveling for any reason from a [Level 2 or Level 3 country](#) for COVID-19 or who is aware that they have been in direct contact with a known COVID-19 positive individual MUST self-quarantine off campus for 14 days upon return to the US.

What if I want to apply for OPT?

Remember that you must be physically present in the US to apply for OPT. If you're hoping to go home or leave the country, you should submit your OPT application before traveling. If you are approved for OPT, you must have your Employment Authorization Document with you when you return to the U.S. from abroad.

What should I do about filing tax returns if I decide to go home and do not have time to complete them before I leave?

It is best to complete your taxes before the April 15 deadline. You can mail the forms from abroad if you cannot complete them before you leave. Otherwise, you will need to file your tax returns late, which could incur a fee and interest on any tax amount you may owe.

**For traveling internationally, please make sure to take the following original documents with you:**

- **Passport**
- **Valid Visa (check your expiration dates!)**
- **Form I-20 (with updated travel authorization signature)**

**We would also encourage you to travel with the above documents if you will be traveling domestically, however, be careful with them and always keep them in a safe place.**