**International Students FAQ, COVID-19**

**Q. What do I do if I am outside the U.S. and I want to return to the U.S. for graduation in August, but my I-20 End Date has expired? If my visa date is still valid can I return with that I-20?**

A. If your I-20 End Date has expired, your student status has ended, and you will not be admitted in the U.S. with that I-20, even if your student visa has a later date. You will need to apply for a B-2 Visitor Visa to return. Our school can assist you by writing a letter for you and any of your family members to assist you in being granted a Visitor Visa.

**Q. What are the possibilities that Knox will offer Fall term classes online?**

A. As of now, there are no plans for Knox to teach fall term remotely. We still hope to welcome all of our students to campus in the fall for the full, human-powered Knox experience.

**Q. What should students do if they need to return home within 60 days after completing their program of study, but their travel plans are complicated by a lack of commercially available flights or their country currently prohibits all inbound travel?**

A. SEVP recognizes that some students may find it difficult to return home during the COVID-19 emergency because of diminished travel options. Students in this situation are encouraged to communicate with their Office of International Student Services for guidance and to assess options. Alex Pia will document in the student's record any information related to a student's inability to leave the country due to COVID-19.

**Q. If students choose to travel home and complete the spring term remotely and do not return until the Fall term, will students be subject to the five-month rule?**

A. Under current conditions, if an active F student leaves the United States to complete the spring term online, their SEVIS record would remain in Active status and not be terminated.

**Q. I am currently in the U.S. but was planning to travel outside of the U.S. Should I cancel my trip?**

A. 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.

**Q. What should I do if I have been accepted to graduate school in the Fall?**

A. If you will begin a new degree program at another school soon, you must contact the OISS to coordinate the transfer of your SEVIS record. This request must be made before the end of the 60-day grace period.

**Q**. **Can DSOs electronically send signed Forms I-20 to students instead of physically mailing the forms?**

A. Yes, due to COVID-19, regulations have been modified, and DSOs may electronically send Forms I-20 to student email addresses.

**Q.** **Many students’ on-campus employment opportunities are now being conducted remotely. Can international students engage in remote work for on-campus employment?**

A. If the current on-campus employment opportunity has transitioned to remote work, immigration regulations all international students to engage in on-campus employment remotely.

**Q.** **Due to COVID-19, is there any chance that students would be able to apply for post-completion OPT from outside the United States?**

A. Currently, government guidance is you must be inside the U.S. to apply for OPT. There has been no official change to that policy. Because this policy is still in place, students who choose to leave the U.S. and enroll in spring quarter remotely will need to balance the risks. The Department of Homeland Security is evaluating this question and may issue additional guidance, but has yet to make a decision on this question. We are watching closely for any news on this issue, and will communicate it to our students if any developments occur.

**Q. Are Social Security Offices open for me to apply for a SSN?**

A. All Social Security Offices have suspended all face-to-face services. It is possible to mail your application and supporting documents, but it involves sending original documents such as your passport. The OISS advises to wait until the Social Security Offices open, so that you can apply in person. To learn when offices may reopen, you can check [here](https://www.ssa.gov/agency/emergency/)

**Q. My source of finances has decreased substantially. Is there any way that I can legally work in the U.S.?**

A. If you are suffering a severe financial hardship due to unforeseen changes in your financial circumstances beyond your control that make it difficult for you to continue your education in the United States., you may apply to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for authorization to work off-campus. This is referred to as “Severe Economic Hardship”. Contact Alex in the OISS office for more information and how to apply.

**Q. What if I am planning on staying in the U.S. for OPT, and I want to obtain health insurance?**

A. If you are planning on staying in the U.S., and you would like to purchase insurance, you can do so online. Following are some well-known insurance companies:

* [Gateway USA](http://www.gatewayplans.com/)
* [Compass Benefits Group](https://www.studenthealthusa.com/)
* ISO Student Health Insurance
* [Visitor Insurance](http://www.visitinsurance.com/)
  + Note that the Knox College maintains no association with the companies listed. You are responsible for procuring and maintaining suitable health insurance and for any required correspondence.

**For Newly Admitted Students**

**Q. What are the possibilities that Knox will offer Fall term classes online?**

A. As of now, there are no plans for Knox to teach fall term remotely. We still hope to welcome all of our students to campus in the fall for the full, human-powered Knox experience.

**Q. Will Orientation (International and First-Year) be happening as planned?**

A. We fully expect the fall term to start on time, including orientation as planned. Should there be a delay for any reason, alternative plans will be communicated to you.

**Q.** **Can I defer my enrollment due to the complications COVID-19 has caused myself and/or my family?**

A. Yes, you can defer your enrollment to a later date. Also, your scholarship awards and financial aid will not change. Your Start Date can be adjusted to the next term, and our school will issue you a new Form I-20. However, you must do this before you travel to the United States. You cannot defer your program start date once you have already entered the United States, and you may not enter the United States more than 30 days prior to your adjusted program start date.

**Q. What do I do if travel from my country to the US is prohibited and I’m not able to make it to Knox?**

A. If you are not able to enter the United States due to border closures, please let us know. We will work with you to ensure a Knox education is possible. If you need to defer your enrollment to a later date, your scholarship awards and financial aid will not change.

**Q. The US Embassy in my country is closed. What do I do if I am not able to secure a visa?**

A. The US Government has temporarily suspended visa services worldwide. They will reopen as soon as possible, but have not provided a date at this time. We are encouraged to see that U.S. embassies are starting to open in some countries such as China. If the embassies in your country are still closed and you are unable to schedule a visa appointment, please contact us. We will work as hard as we can with you to ensure that you are still able to obtain a student visa and attend Knox. If you need to defer your enrollment to a later date, your scholarship awards and financial aid will not change.

**Q. Can I travel to another country before I come to the U.S. for college?**

A. If you plan to travel to another country before entering the U.S., be sure to review any travel restrictions in that country before making travel plans. Many countries around the world are restricting travel to/from other countries so be sure to review travel restrictions before you travel. Be aware that you must remain physically present outside of the country impacted by travel restrictions for 14 days or more before you will be allowed to enter the U.S.