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FALL 2020

ISO VIRTUAL FORUM: FALL 2020 UPDATES / Q&A *NEW STUDENTS*

THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 2020

10:00AM-11:00AM

Agenda

- Fall 2020 USDHS Guidance
- Visa Processing at U.S. Embassies/Consulates
- Travel Bans/Restrictions
- Other Issues
- Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

This ISO Virtual Forum slides will be posted on the ISO website after the session. A recording of the Forum will be posted as soon as available.



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Before or After This Session, Please Review:

- ❑ ISO Updates posted on USDHS Guidance for Fall 2020 and travel updates
 - ❑ <https://iso.mit.edu/news/iso-updates-spring-2020/>
- ❑ Major Immigration Alerts & Updates
 - ❑ <https://iso.mit.edu/news-and-announcements/major-immigration-updates/>



Role of ISO

- We are excited to welcome you to the MIT Community!
- Role of ISO is to support students in their academic mission and to assist in understanding how to maintain their legal immigration status while in the U.S.
- We are here to help you understand the expectations that the U.S. Government has mandated in order to be a student in the U.S.
- The ISO does not work for the U.S. Government. We are an advocate for you and assist you in complying with all regulations and reporting requirements in SEVIS. Both students and MIT have regulatory requirements of which we must comply.



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Role of ISO

- Assist in your adjustment to the U.S. and to MIT
- Facilitate your getting to know your fellow international students, and the broader MIT Community, through our programs and events
- ISO Staff wishes to get to know you as an individual, even during these times of social distancing.
- ISO uses weekly e-newsletters and our website to keep you informed of upcoming ISO and MIT events, programs, and news that will support your stay.
- Check our website regularly and use our *Knowledge Base* for frequently asked questions



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Fall 2020 USDHS Guidance



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J-1 Visa Holders

- USDHS guidance does NOT apply to J-1 visa holders
- U.S. Department of State Exchange Visitor Program, who oversee the J visa program, in June 25, 2020 guidance indicates that new J-1 visa holders may NOT pursue fully online coursework in Fall 2020



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USDHS July 24 Guidance on Fall 2020

- Summary posted on ISO Updates on July 29
 - ▣ <https://iso.mit.edu/news/iso-updates-spring-2020/>
 - ▣ New Students subject to pre-COVID-19 regulations
 - ▣ Continuing Students are eligible to take fully remote coursework inside or outside the U.S. in Fall 2020



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Continuing Students

- Students who have already been inside the U.S. in F-1 or J-1 status pursuing their current MIT degree program
- Continuing Students whose F-1 or J-1 status (SEVIS record) is “ACTIVE” status may remain in or enter the U.S. and pursue in-person, hybrid, or fully online coursework
- Continuing MIT students in “ACTIVE” SEVIS status may also continue their studies full-time remotely/online from abroad while maintaining SEVIS status



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Student with Change of Visa Status Pending

- students inside the U.S. with pending Change of Status applications with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) may remain in the U.S. and pursue studies while their application is pending to F-1
 - ▣ All students with a pending Change of Status application must contact [ISO Advisor](#) to confirm any limitations on study based on current visa status
 - ▣ Employment (on- or off-campus employment) may not be allowed until Change of Status to F-1 is approved



Change of Degree Level

- Students inside the U.S., who have completed an MIT degree program and will be starting a new MIT degree program in Summer 2020 or Fall 2020, may remain in the U.S. and pursue in-person, hybrid, or fully online coursework
- Students outside the U.S., who completed an MIT degree and will start a new MIT degree program in Fall 2020, will have an “Change Degree Level” Form I-20 that is an initial status in SEVIS
 - ▣ If an Active student, pursuing a previous MIT degree program, on or before March 9, 2020, will be allowed to enter the U.S. to pursue their new MIT degree program
 - ▣ Be sure to carry ALL Forms I-20, including from previous MIT program
 - ▣ Print out copy of enrollment verification/transcript from Spring 2020 semester at MIT



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Transfer Students (New to MIT)

- Transfer Students, currently inside the U.S. in F-1 status who will begin their program of study at MIT in the Fall 2020 term—including those moving from high school or another university degree program to MIT—can remain in the U.S. and pursue in-person, hybrid, or fully online coursework

- Transfer Students currently outside the U.S. and would be entering the U.S. to begin their MIT program of study:
 - Will be required to meet New Student courseload regulations
 - At least of 24 units/credits of hybrid/in-person component coursework in Fall 2020
 - If academic program will be fully remote in Fall 2020, may NOT enter the U.S. in Fall 2020 semester
 - would need to defer arrival to Spring 2021 semester
 - Can pursue full-time coursework online from outside the U.S. for Fall 2020



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New Students

- New Students with “Initial Attendance” Form I-20, who will begin their MIT degree program in Fall 2020, who are currently outside the U.S., will **NOT** be permitted to enter the U.S. if their program courseload is fully or mostly online
 - For eligible students, the earliest entry to the U.S. is 30 days prior to the start date for the Fall 2020 semester
 - Earliest arrival date is August 1, 2020 (due to change in Fall 2020 start date of August 31, 2020 – Registration Day)



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New Student/Transfers Enrollment Requirements (to enter U.S.)

- Pre-COVID-19 regulations apply to New Students/New Transfer Students
- Limit of 1 subject (12 units/credits) of fully online coursework towards maintaining full-time enrollment
- Must enroll in at least 36 total units/credits to be full-time student in Fall 2020
 - At least 2 subjects (24 units/credits) of in-person/hybrid coursework (with in-person components)
 - Additional subjects (at least 12 units/credits) could be in-person, hybrid, or fully online



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New Student/Transfers Enrollment Requirements (inside U.S.)

- Students in programs that require 24 credits plus a RA/TA for full-time status must be enrolled in either:
 - 12 credits of in-person/hybrid coursework plus a RA/TA that also has in-person/on-campus elements;
 - OR
 - 24 credits of in-person/hybrid courses with a remote/online RA/TA.



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New Student/Transfers Enrollment Requirements (inside U.S.)

- If a New Student's program has decided to have fully remote/online coursework in Fall 2020, then the New Student would **NOT** be able to enter the U.S. to study in Fall 2020
- ISO will assist New Students studying abroad in Fall 2020 to update visa documents (Form I-20 or Form DS-2019) with a Spring 2021 arrival date to the U.S.
 - ▣ ISO will issue new documents with confirmation from academic program at end of August/early September
 - ▣ Spring 2021 semester arrival date = January 29, 2021



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Pursuing Fall 2020 from Abroad

- New Students may pursue Fall 2020 semester fully online from abroad
- Students enrolled full-time, even from abroad, are required to have health insurance coverage
 - ▣ Will be billed for the MIT Extended Student Plan
 - ▣ May apply for a waiver if can show proof of enrollment in a comparable plan abroad



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Remote Appointments Outside U.S.

- May a student pursue an Research Assistantship (RA) or Teaching Assistantship (TA) remotely from outside the U.S.?
 - Formal process, coordinated with your academic department, to review if type of research or payment can be done abroad
 - Process outline from the Office of the Vice Chancellor
 - <https://iso.mit.edu/news/remote-student-appointments-performed-outside-the-u-s/>



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Visa Processing at U.S. Embassies/Consulates



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Visa Processing at U.S. Embassies/Consulates Abroad

- **July 15, 2020 -- [USDOS Provides Details on Phased Resumption of Routine Visa Services](#)**
 - Monitor U.S. Embassy/Consulate website (<http://usembassy.gov>) for confirmation of when services will resume at their particular consular post
 - procedures for scheduling a visa interview appointment
 - guidance on the ability to apply for an expedited/emergency appointment once Consulate re-opens
 - Consulates have traditionally prioritized student visa interview scheduling

Visa Interview Guidance

- Schedule interview for whatever time you can reserve, even if after the start date for the Fall 2020 term
- Procedure to request earlier visa interview time only possible when have an initial time scheduled (no guarantee)
- Expedited/Emergency appointments available if sufficient staffing, resources, and local conditions allow
- NOT possible to request expedite of Administrative Processing (security checks)
 - Embassy/Consulate does NOT have control over Administrative Processing (U.S. State Department and other government agencies in the U.S. responsible for these security check procedures)

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Visa Processing at U.S. Embassies/Consulates Abroad

- Report your scheduled Visa Interview Appointment and Visa Approved/Received in iMIT
 - login to [iMIT](#)
 - Click on left-hand menu “Admission”
 - Select on the “Visa Interview & Approval” button and complete the appropriate eforms
- ISO providing a support letter for visa applicants for entry in Fall 2020
 - [Download/print](#) a copy of the appropriate letter (versions for new or continuing students)
 - Click on link above, scroll down and click on “Log on with Shibboleth”, and complete Duo authentication



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Visa Processing at U.S. Embassies/Consulates Abroad

- No new Form I-20 required with notation “Student not pursuing fully online coursework”
 - ▣ Part of the July 6 USDHS Guidance that was rescinded
 - ▣ Consulates have been updated in recent days of corrected guidance
 - ▣ No new I-20 needed
 - ▣ Notify ISO if at visa officer requests updated Form I-20
- ISO providing a letter for visa applicants for entry in Fall 2020
 - ▣ <https://iso.mit.edu/visas-and-travel/letter-for-embassies-consulates-for-students-seeking-and-renewing-visas-fall-2020/>
 - ▣ [Download/print](#) a copy of the appropriate letter (versions for new or continuing students)
 - ▣ Click link above, scroll down and click on “Log on with Shibboleth”, complete Duo authentication



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Visa Processing at U.S. Embassies/Consulates Abroad

- Studying remotely/online abroad for Fall 2020, how early can a visa interview appointment be scheduled?
 - U.S. Consulate can issue the visa no earlier than 120 days prior to program start date listed on Form I-20/Form DS-2019
 - January 29, 2021 Spring 2021 Semester start date, schedule visa interview on/about October 1, 2020
 - ISO will issue updated Form I-20/Form DS-2019 with Spring 2021 arrival date



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Travel Bans / Restrictions

Major Immigration Alerts & Updates

<https://iso.mit.edu/news-and-announcements/major-immigration-updates/>



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Travel to U.S.

- If you are currently inside the U.S., recommend you remain in the U.S.
- Travel Ban and Travel Restrictions
 - Subject to a current Travel Restriction (14 days from when last in country before arrival to US):
 - Europe (Schengen countries plus UK and Ireland)
 - [DOS announced on July 16](#) exemption for certain visa holders
 - F-1 visa holders now exempt
 - J-1 (students) may request exemption at U.S. Embassy/Consulate
 - China
 - Iran
 - Brazil



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Travel to the U.S.

□ Travel Ban and Restrictions

□ Syria

- Visa application undergoes additional review for a “waiver” of the Travel Ban restriction

□ US-Canada-Mexico Travel Restriction

- recently extended to 08/21/2020
- “essential travel only” – study is considered “essential”



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Presidential Proclamation – Graduate Students/Researchers from China

- June 1, 2020 - [Presidential Proclamation – Suspension of Entry of Certain Students and Researchers in F and J status from China](#)
 - ▣ Does NOT apply to undergraduate study
 - ▣ suspends entry if an individual is connected to an entity that “implements or supports” the government of China’s “military-civil fusion strategy.”
 - ▣ An individual is considered to have a connection to such an entity if he or she has been funded by, employed by, studied or researched at, or on behalf of the entity.
 - ▣ No advance determination – notified at time of visa application at U.S. Embassy/Consulate or upon entry to the U.S.



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Other Issues



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How Late Can I Arrive to MIT for Fall 2020?

- No Later than November 9, 2020
- In-Person/Hybrid instruction for Fall 2020 semester ends November 20
 - ▣ Student must arrive to campus and:
 - complete required COVID-19 testing and self-isolation before accessing campus
 - attend in-person subject components
 - ISO must report to SEVIS your arrival to the U.S.
- Your academic program may set an earlier deadline to arrive based on program curriculum



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ISO Emergency Number for issues at U.S. Port-of-Entry

- ISO Emergency Phone Number: 617-258-5480
 - Will be connected with an ISO Advisor
 - For use ONLY for issues while at U.S. Customs and Border Protection (USCBP) at the U.S. port-of-entry (U.S. airport or border crossing)
 - This number should not be called to report a successful entry to the U.S.
- NOTE: It is common for students to be sent to USCBP Secondary Inspection at port-of-entry
 - Being sent to Secondary Inspection does **NOT** mean that anything is wrong with visa documents or eligibility to enter the U.S.
 - Secondary Inspection has access to SEVIS and can verify student status (not possible at primary inspection)



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MIT ID Cards

- Submit a photograph for the card to be processed via <https://mycard.mit.edu>
- Photo criteria:
 - ▣ front view of your full face, centered in the frame from just above the top of your head to your collarbone.
 - ▣ show your eyes open and without any glare from eyeglasses if you wear them
 - ▣ not show any garment or head gear that obstructs your face.
 - ▣ be at least 300 pixels wide and preferably saved as a jpg with high-quality optimization
 - ▣ Provide a scanned copy of your passport or driver's license to verify your identity (submit at the URL above).
- The card will be processed once all the information is received. Please email atlascenter@mit.edu if you have any questions or concerns.
- Instructions for pick up will be provided once you are on-campus.



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Online Check-In with ISO

- 2 Step Process (ISO will email instructions to all students)
 - (1) Eform to confirm Fall 2020 Plan
 - Enter U.S. to pursue in-person/hybrid program
 - Pursue Fall 2020 full-time remote/online from abroad
 - Defer program start date to Spring 2021 or Fall 2021
 - (2) Online Check-In Eform after arrival to U.S.
 - Provide copies of I-94 arrival record, entry visa issued by U.S. Consulate, U.S. residential address



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Gap Year (Undergraduates)

- Contact the MIT Undergraduate Admissions Office at gapyear@mit.edu
 - ▣ Deadline may have already passed, but still recommend contacting Undergraduate Admissions Office with any questions
 - ▣ ISO will be notified once your Gap Year has been approved
 - ▣ Undergraduates may not only take the Fall 2020 semester off



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Program Deferral (Graduate)

- Contact your academic program
 - ▣ Program must approve deferral of program start date and notify ISO
- Deferral to Spring 2021
 - ▣ ISO will amend your SEVIS record with a Spring 2021 start date
- Deferral to Fall 2021
 - ▣ ISO will amend SEVIS record with Fall 2021 start date
 - ▣ In March/April 2021, students will need to request a new Form I-20, providing updated financial documentation and confirmation letter from academic program of Fall 2021 program start date



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

I have been unable to secure a visa interview appointment at the U.S. Consulate, what are my options?

Each U.S. Embassy/Consulate will resume visa services as conditions allow in the country/city – staffing, resources, local COVID-19 conditions.

If there is another consular post in your country of citizenship or residency other than your local post that may be scheduling visa interview appointments, you can check if you will be able to secure one even if it is not your local post (each consulate will have policies about serving non-local applicants).

If you are unable to secure a visa to arrive for Fall 2020 semester, please be in contact with your academic program to confirm pursuing the Fall term remotely from abroad until you are able to secure your student visa to travel to the U.S.



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

MIT has changed the Fall 2020 start date and ISO indicated that new Forms I-20/DS-2019 will be issued with the new August 31 arrival date. I have not received the document. What should I do?

All New Student's SEVIS records have been updated to reflect the new Fall 2020 semester arrival date (August 31, 2020 – Reg Day), except for students who have documents issued for “Transfer Pending” or “Change Degree Level” as SEVIS does not allow us to change arrival/term start date for these students.

An update on the term start date will be done after arrival when reporting your physical presence in the U.S. and you have started your in-person/hybrid coursework.

Where ISO has issued electronic copies of the new Form I-20/DS-2019 for new students, they can be retrieved from iMIT or ISO will email the copy to you.

Where ISO is not able to issue the new Form I-20/DS-2019, students can still use your current paper document with the September 8, 2020 start date to schedule your visa interview appointment and to attend your visa interview.

ISO also provides a letter on the ISO website to download/print that confirms the new MIT Fall 2020 semester start date. It is recommended you carry the letter to your visa interview and to enter the U.S.



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

What documentation must I carry with me when entering the U.S.?

Details on entering the U.S. is available on the ISO webpage [“Entering U.S. Borders”](#).

The ISO also makes available a [letter to download/print](#) from the ISO website for eligible students to carry when applying for their visa and for entering the U.S. in the Fall 2020 semester.



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

I have recently been granted a visa with a fall starting date. The visa expiration date is one year from now. If I plan to study remotely from my home country for the fall semester, will I be able to enter the US for the spring semester with my current visa? If so, when can I enter? Or do I need to start the whole visa application process again with a spring starting date?

If you will enter the U.S. for the Spring 2021 term, and the visa you have been issued by the U.S. Consulate will be valid to enter the U.S. in Spring 2021, you do NOT need to apply for a new visa. You will need an updated Form I-20/Form DS-2019 with a Spring 2021 term start date, and the ISO will issue that to you once your change in arrival date to campus is confirmed by your academic program. Students beginning in Spring 2021 (January 29, 2021 term start date) can arrive to the U.S. up to 30 days prior to that start date (anytime after December 30, 2020).



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

Is there possibility that we start with a hybrid model and transition to full online? If so, will we be allowed to stay in the US?

If MIT is required to transition to fully online for all students, then, under the July 24 USDHS Guidance, students physically inside the U.S. will be allowed to remain in the U.S. and continue their studies full-time online for the remainder of the semester (or longer if allowed by further USDHS guidance).

This allowance only applies if ALL of MIT must transition to fully online, not just a particular academic program.



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

If I enter the US to pursue studies in-person/hybrid but then at a later date decide to return to my home country to pursue my studies and research virtually, would my visa and SEVIS status remain valid (and if so, for how long)?

Students entering the U.S. in Fall 2020 should plan to complete the Fall 2020 term in-person/hybrid in the U.S. If special circumstances arise, you will need to consult with your academic program about transitioning to fully online from abroad. You will need to consult with your [ISO Advisor](#) about current USDHS guidance that may impact your visa status/SEVIS status.



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

Reports are that my local consulate will resume visa services soon. I haven't booked an emergency appointment yet. Should I go ahead and book one now? What are the consequences if my emergency appointment request is rejected?

Students should schedule a visa interview as soon as possible and for whatever time is available, even if after the start of the Fall 2020 semester. It is not possible to request an expedited/emergency appointment if you do not already have a visa interview appointment scheduled. If an expedited/emergency appointment is rejected, then you will be able to still attend your initial scheduled visa interview.



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

I will pursue the Fall 2020 semester remotely/online in my home country and plan to come to the U.S. for the Spring 2021 semester. I have a visa interview scheduled for the end of August, should I keep this interview time?

If you will not be coming to MIT until the Spring 2021 semester, the U.S. Embassy/Consulate cannot issue a visa more than 120 days from your in-person program start date (January 29, 2021). So the earliest a visa could be issued is October 1, 2020. It may be beneficial to see if you can reschedule your visa interview for just prior to/on October 1, 2020 to be sure your visa can be processed in a timely manner. We recommend that you contact the U.S. Embassy/Consulate directly for guidance.



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

After I arrive to MIT, what are the quarantine procedures?

After arrival to MIT, MIT Medical will test students returning to campus upon arrival and require a 7-day quarantine period in your residence, and then a second test.

Details are available on the MIT COVID-19 Info Center FAQ webpage (<https://covid19.mit.edu/fall-2020-faq>).



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

I am applying for a visa, and I have already paid the SEVIS fee and visa fee. I had an interview appointment, yet it was cancelled. Should I wait and apply for a new form (I-20 or DS-2019) because of the change in arrival date, or can I just simply use the old form and make a new appointment? If I need a new form, do I have to pay the fees again?

You may schedule a new visa interview appointment with your current visa document, even if the arrival date to the U.S. will change (the SEVIS ID number and school/program code will remain the same on an updated Form I-20/Form DS-2019). The SEVIS Fee is valid for up to 12 months from the date of payment. The visa fee should not need to be paid again if rescheduling a visa interview that has been cancelled by the U.S. Embassy/Consulate.



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

I am a Canadian citizen entering in F-1 status and currently deciding between crossing the land or the air border. I have heard that it is more difficult when crossing the land border, can you provide any advice on this?

First, as a reminder, Canadian Citizens do NOT need to apply for an F-1 or J-1 visa at a U.S. Embassy/Consulate in advance of entering the U.S. to pursue studies. Students from Canada will present their visa documents and proof of admission to MIT and financial support documentation to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Officer when entering the U.S. There should be no difference if you are entering via a land border or by air.



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

I finished a degree at another US university and transferred my SEVIS record to MIT (to start my PhD program in fall) and gained my new I20 in June. I have a valid F1 visa generated from the previous program and am currently in US. Do I need to attend the mandatory orientation information session with ISO before the fall term starts? If so, will the information session be held on line or in person?

All New Students to MIT should attend the ISO Immigration Information Session (which will be offered online) and orientation programs offered by your academic program. Additional information on ISO orientation programs will be emailed to students in the next few days.



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

I am a new graduate student with an F1 visa from a US undergraduate institution. I am currently on OPT and in the US. I am aware that my employment authorization expires as soon as SEVIS transfer occurs. When would you recommend we schedule my SEVIS record to be transferred to MIT from my undergraduate institution? When would be the latest?

Students transferring to MIT should complete all eforms in iMIT under the “Admission” menu to request your MIT Form I-20. This includes an eform “Other Information for MIT 2020” that will provide details on your SEVIS record transfer release from your previous school to MIT. You will want to be in contact with your international student advisor at your previous school to coordinate the date to release your SEVIS record (after completion of internship/experience authorized by OPT). The latest transfer release date to MIT should be the start date of your MIT program of study (August 31, 2020 for the Fall 2020 semester).



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

Is there a way to figure out why a visa application is put under "Administrative Processing"?

Unfortunately no. The visa officer will not disclose the reason, nor are they likely to know the specific reason. There are a number of reasons that may require an application undergo additional security reviews, including similar names on security lists, country of birth or citizenship, travel history, employment history, field of study, or other factors that may not have anything to do with you personally.



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

In the ICE “Clarifying Questions for Fall 2020 Based On March 9 Spring Guidance Broadcast (Last Updated: July 24, 2020)” , it is said that students can remain in the US in a hybrid program of study with online components beyond the limitations at 8 CFR 214.2(f)(6)(i)(G) (question 5). Doesn't that mean that new students can come even if they follow more than 12 credits of online courses (but not 100% online)?

The review of the USICE guidance provides detailed reference to continuing students ability to take more than the regulatory limit of one online course towards full-time enrollment (even fully online), but did not provide similar guidance on New Students, therefore New Students at MIT will be required to be enrolled in at least 2 subjects (24 units/credits) of hybrid/in-person coursework in Fall 2020 semester.



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

I have a valid F-1 (or J-1) entry visa from my previous program of study in the U.S. Can I use this visa to enter in the same status to begin my program of study at MIT?

Yes. As long as the visa is to enter in the same visa status, has not expired, and has not been marked “cancelled” or “revoked”. Students must carry not only the MIT Form I-20 (or Form DS-2019), but also the Forms I-20 (or Forms DS-2019) from your previous school for which you were issued and used that visa. If you do not have your previous Forms, students are advised to contact their previous school and request photocopies of the Forms or a letter from the school confirming your dates of enrollment at that school in the visa status for which the visa was issued.



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

Can a new student pursue MIT coursework remotely from abroad for the Fall 2020 semester?

Yes. While your visa status will not begin until you enter the U.S. in your student visa status, you can enroll and pursue the Fall 2020 semester as a full-time student from abroad.

If you will not be arriving to campus until the Spring 2021 semester, the MIT ISO will need to issue an updated Form I-20 or Form DS-2019 with your updated arrival date in January 2021.



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

My subjects for the Fall will only be virtual. Can I arrive to the U.S. in the Fall?

Unfortunately, no. If your subject enrollment will be majority online then you will not be able to enter the U.S. in Fall 2020. Students can pursue their Fall 2020 coursework fully remote/online from outside the U.S.

If you will be studying abroad in Fall 2020, the ISO will process an updated Form I-20 with the Spring 2021 start date (January 29, 2021 – Spring 2021 Registration Day). Students would be able to arrive to the U.S. up to 30 days prior to that date (no earlier than December 30, 2020).



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

My US visa will expire before my program ends. I hope to do post-completion work permission (F-1 OPT / J-1 Academic Training). Do I need to renew my visa?

The entry visa issued by the U.S. Embassy/Consulate abroad is like a ticket to get into the U.S. Once you are inside the U.S., the visa can expire and you can remain in the U.S. as long as you are maintain your visa status as an enrolled full-time student or have authorization for post-degree-completion training. It is not possible to apply for/obtain a new visa from inside the U.S. You would apply for a new visa at the U.S. Embassy/Consulate the next time you travel abroad and need to re-enter the U.S. in student visa status (even on OPT or AT).



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

As a new F-1 student, if I am not able to arrive to MIT until the Spring 2021 semester, will I be eligible for off-campus employment authorization in Summer 2021?

Under the F-1 regulations, a student is not eligible for off-campus employment authorization until they have been pursuing a full-time program of study inside the U.S. for at least “one full academic year”. The only exception to this rule is if the graduate academic program requires all students in the program to pursue a mandatory internship/experience towards graduation requirements before fulfilling “one full academic year” in status.

So a student in a program without a mandatory internship requirement, entering the U.S. starting in Spring 2021, would not be eligible to obtain U.S. off-campus employment authorization until after the Fall 2021 semester.



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Additional Pre-Submitted Questions

If I am a New Student and I have already received my visa from the U.S. Consulate, may I enter the U.S. to take online only courses in the Fall 2020 semester?

Unfortunately, no. A New Student may not enter the U.S. and pursue a fully online course of study.

New Students can pursue fully remote/online coursework from abroad in the Fall.

The MIT ISO will need to issue an updated Form I-20/Form DS-2019 with the Spring 2021 arrival date for the student to join MIT in-person in the Spring 2021 semester.



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Additional Questions?

- ❑ Please submit any additional questions to the ISO Virtual Forum online form:
<https://tinyurl.com/y6dzru6c>
- ❑ For answers to common questions, please see the [ISO Knowledge Base](#) on the ISO website.
- ❑ Submissions to the Virtual Forums will be incorporated to the Knowledge Base.



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Important Links

MIT International Students Office – <http://iso.mit.edu>

- ISO Updates – Spring/Summer 2020
<http://iso.mit.edu/news/iso-updates-spring-2020/>
- Major Immigration Alerts & Updates
<http://iso.mit.edu/news-and-announcements/major-immigration-updates/>
- Visas and Travel
<http://iso.mit.edu/visas-and-travel/>
- Employment
<http://iso.mit.edu/employment/>
- Contact your ISO Advisor
<http://iso.mit.edu/about/student-advisor.shtml>

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