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**To:** [isso-f1-students](#)  
**Subject:** International Student details related to Summer 2020 course changes  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 8, 2020 5:25:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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## Details related to Summer Course Changes

Dear students,

We hope that you are staying safe and healthy during this challenging time.

As you have likely heard, BU will continue teaching all courses for Summer 1 and Summer 2 in a virtual format. Since summer is generally a vacation period for many of our students, a continuation of remote classes during the COVID-19 crisis should not impact many of you provided you are registered for the Fall 2020 semester (see the following for when to register: <http://www.bu.edu/reg/calendars/registration/>). For most students, registration has already started. However, if you are planning on completing your program on May 17, 2020 or September 25, 2020, you will need to weigh travel decisions and program completion plans carefully as your F-1 student status is only valid while you are physically present in the US.

Please read the following message for more details and continue to contact your ISSO advisor with specific questions. ISSO is currently operating remotely during this time. You can find details about how to contact our office on our [Menu of Remote Services](#). We update our website frequently, and we suggest that you visit our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page often.

### ***Virtual/remote instruction***

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) has provided schools with flexibility to offer online instruction during this unprecedented time. ISSO has reported changes to instruction methods to SEVP for Spring 2020 and we will do so for Summer terms now that we know summer courses will be offered remotely. These temporary provisions are in effect for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency and ISSO is paying very close attention to the regularly updated guidance.

### ***Address updates***

If you remain in the United States, you should continue to update your "Immigration U.S" address in the Student Link. Immigration regulations require that you update this address within 10 days of a change in your physical address. If you were living in BU housing during Spring 2020, and you have now moved off-campus but remain inside the US, please e-mail [ISSO@bu.edu](mailto:ISSO@bu.edu) with your full name, your BUID number and the complete address where you are now residing. Doing so will allow us to update your SEVIS record directly, which will be in your best interest, as you will not be able to update your Immigration US address in the student link until after the Spring classes end on May 4th.

### ***Considerations for May graduates***

- ❖ If your I-20 expires in May 2020 and you will not be able to complete your program, you should review our information about [extending your I-20](#) and contact [your ISSO Advisor](#) immediately to begin the extension process so you can continue into a future semester.
- ❖ Current USCIS guidelines require that you be physically present in the United States in order to apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT). BU and other institutions are advocating with USCIS to offer the flexibility of allowing students to apply from outside of the United States. However, USCIS has not made any changes. Therefore, if you are still in the US and would like to apply for OPT, please follow the instructions on how to schedule an OPT appointment which are on our [Menu of Remote services](#). Details on the [OPT application](#)

[process](#) are available on our website.

- ❖ May Commencement ceremonies/celebrations have been postponed. May graduates will receive a new I-20 that will reflect your May 17, 2020 completion date. If you have left the US and you will not extend your F-1 status by applying for OPT or by continuing in another degree program, you will not be able to use your current immigration documents to return to the US to attend graduation ceremonies. If this applies to you and you wish to return to the US to attend commencement ceremonies, you will need to return on a Visitor's Visa or using the Visa Waiver Program, whichever applies to you based on your country of citizenship.

### ***Considerations for September graduates***

- ❖ Students graduating in September must be enrolled in final requirements/courses over the summer. If you will be enrolled in fewer than 12 credits during the summer sessions, you must request a final semester Reduced Course Load from ISSO. To initiate this process, please contact [your ISSO Advisor](#).
- ❖ We strongly recommend that you work carefully with your academic department to make sure that courses you need to graduate will be available this summer, as the transition to remote format this summer may affect class availability. If you determine that you cannot complete your program this summer but your I-20 is expiring on September 25, 2020, you should plan to register for the Fall semester and review our information about [extending your I-20](#) and contact [your ISSO Advisor](#) at least 6 weeks before your I-20 expires to begin the extension process.
- ❖ Students who are inside the United States and wish to apply for OPT based on a summer completion date will be able to do so 90 days prior to their program completion date. For most summer grads, this is September 25, 2020 so the earliest you will be able to apply for OPT is June 27, 2020. ISSO will begin scheduling OPT appointments for those graduating in the summer on June 15, 2020. If you will complete your program after Summer 1, you may be able to apply for OPT earlier. You can contact [your ISSO Advisor](#) to determine if this applies to you.
- ❖ Current USCIS guidelines require that you be physically present in the United States in order to apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT). BU and other institutions are advocating with USCIS to offer the flexibility of allowing students to apply from outside of the United States, but no guidance providing any flexibility has yet been published. Details on the [OPT application process](#) are available on our website.

### ***Looking forward to Fall 2020***

- ❖ We are currently anticipating a return to normal operations for Fall 2020, depending on the status of the virus outbreak later in the summer.
- ❖ Students who register full-time for Fall 2020 do not need to register for courses during the summer, as summer is considered your vacation term.
- ❖ If you plan to graduate in January 2021 and need less than 12 credits to graduate. You must request a final semester Reduced Course Load from ISSO. Please note that we are not yet accepting Reduced Course Load requests for Fall 2020 so that we can continue to address more immediate needs related to the COVID-19 pandemic. We plan to begin accepting these requests after we have resumed normal work operations on-campus in the summer.
- ❖ If you traveled home over the summer and your F-1 visa stamp will expire prior to your return to the United States, you should plan to apply for a new visa over the summer. Currently, US Embassies/Consulates are closed for routine operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but we urge you to visit the website of the US Embassy where you will apply to determine how to schedule a visa appointment. If you find that you are unable to schedule a visa appointment and are concerned about your ability to return to BU for the Fall semester, please contact [your ISSO Advisor](#).
- ❖ If you departed the United States over the summer and need a new travel signature to return to the United States, please review [our FAQ](#) addressing how to request a new I-20 with updated travel signature.

We hope you find this information useful as you plan for summer and beyond. If you have questions that were not addressed on this e-mail, please contact [ISSO@bu.edu](mailto:ISSO@bu.edu) so that we can assist you.

Best,

***The Staff of the ISSO***



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