

Guidance for incoming Intl Ph.D students (correction)

August 3, 2020

Dear colleagues,

We are writing as follow up to the announcement last week that Lehigh is advising new international students to delay travel to the U.S. until the spring semester. Students who remain in their home country, as we advise, are able to start their programs remotely in Fall 2020, or defer until Spring or Fall 2021. New international students are defined as those individuals who are applying for their F-1 visas for initial study in the US.

This guidance applies to most newly admitted international undergraduate and graduate students. However, international undergraduate and graduate students who are already in the United States are excepted from this guidance. New international PhD students who are able to obtain a visa may also petition their department for an exception by emailing the relevant director of graduate studies.

To approve a request by a PhD student to begin their program in person, the department will need to verify that in-person instruction is available. According to the most current guidance from the Department of Homeland Security, new international students will not be able to enter the United States to enroll at a university for the fall term to pursue a full course of study that is 100 percent online. This means that those departments that agree to allow new international students who obtain a visa to begin their studies this fall on campus will be obligated to ensure that at least some instruction will be offered in person. This may include a single course (of any credit hours) or research hours.

We ask that departments that permit international PhD students to begin this Fall in person in the U.S. notify the Office of International Students and Scholars. ISS will have to verify that these students will be taking some instruction in person in order for them to obtain a visa. Please contact the [staff in ISS](#) with questions regarding new and on-going international students.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Matherly, Vice President/Vice Provost, International Affairs
Beth Dolan, Deputy Provost for Graduate Education