

Dear International Students,

I hope that you have been staying healthy and well, whether you are in the U.S. or overseas. As we approach the winter quarter, the UCLA Dashew Center for International Students and Scholars (Dashew Center) would like to provide updated guidance regarding winter quarter instruction, travel to the U.S., and requirements to maintain valid F-1 and J-1 status in the U.S. so that you may make informed decisions about your travel plans.

On October 26, 2020, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Emily Carter announced [plans for winter quarter instruction](#). Per [orders from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health \(LACDPH\)](#) and recommendations from [UCLA's COVID-19 Response and Recovery Task Force](#), UCLA will continue to offer remote-only instruction for winter quarter with the exception of a limited number of in-person or hybrid courses necessary to train students for essential workforce positions.

While I know some of you may have been hoping for more in-person course offerings for winter quarter, please be aware that UCLA must comply with guidelines established by local and state health departments to limit the transmission of COVID-19. At this time, LACDPH has not granted UCLA permission to hold in-person classes except under narrowly defined exceptions. Please note that university campuses in other counties may operate under different public health guidelines. UCLA will not be able to expand in-person course offerings until LACDPH updates its [Protocols for Institutes of Higher Education \(PDF\)](#).

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), a part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and U.S. Department of State (DOS) have not yet released updated guidance on F-1 and J-1 status requirements for the winter and spring quarters. In the absence of updated federal guidance for the winter and spring terms, we advise students to refer to the following guidelines for information about current F-1 and J-1 visa restrictions and exemptions:

- F-1 students: [SEVP's Frequently Asked Questions \(PDF\)](#), last updated on August 7, 2020
- J-1 students: [Exchange Visitor Program Information on Coronavirus](#)

Per latest SEVP and DOS guidance:

- International students with a Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) record status of "Initial Attendance" (e.g. Initial and Initial Transfer I-20/DS-2019 documents) will be required to enroll in a minimum of one in-person class for winter quarter to be eligible to:
  - 1- enter the U.S. in F-1/J-1 status, **and**
  - 2- maintain valid F-1/J-1 status
- UCLA students in continuing F-1/J-1 status may enroll in 100% remote courses while maintaining their F-1/J-1 student status inside or outside the U.S.

Continuing F-1/J-1 status students are:

- UCLA students who were in valid and established F-1/J-1 status prior to March 9, 2020, and have continued to maintain their F-1/J-1 status with full-time enrollment within the U.S. or overseas; **or**
- UCLA students who entered the U.S. in valid F-1/J-1 status with in-person course enrollment **and** successfully completed the Post-Arrival Visa Check-In requirement for fall 2020 quarter.

Newly admitted students who started their degree programs in fall 2020 through remote learning from outside of the U.S. (and did not establish F-1/J-1 status in U.S.) are not considered continuing for visa status purposes.

### **On-site/In-person Instruction**

UCLA approved on-site classes are delivered in person, with students and instructors physically present in a learning environment. Onsite-site classes can be identified on the [UCLA Schedule of Classes](#) by the meeting location displayed as a building and room number, which is only listed for classes taking place in person.

As shared earlier, in-person course offerings for winter quarter depend on guidance from our local health authorities to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Decisions made by campus leadership for the winter quarter must be aligned with this guidance and must prioritize the health and welfare of our campus community. The Registrar's Office has compiled a [list of approved winter on-site courses \(PDF\)](#) for your reference.

### **Important Note:**

Courses not included in the approved winter on-site courses list will not be considered as in-person courses for F-1/J-1 visa status purposes. In addition, if a course is included in the approved on-site courses list, it does not guarantee that the course is available and will be held in-person as conditions may change or academic departments may decide to offer the course remotely. We strongly recommend that you check and verify in-person course availability with the academic department that is offering an in-person course before making your travel plans to the U.S.

Individual arrangements made directly with professors to conduct in-person academic or research activities will not constitute approved in-person course enrollment for purposes of F-1/J-1 visa status validation if the course is not included in the approved campus list.

For additional information, please refer to the Registrar's Office [COVID-19 FAQs](#).

**International students who are required to enroll in an approved in-person course should not attempt to enter the United States if they are not enrolled in a course as listed on the approved list of classes. Please note that even if students enter the U.S. in F-1/J-1 status, the Dashew Center will not be able to register or validate "Initial Attendance" F-1/J-1 records for students who are not enrolled in at least one approved in-person class for winter quarter. Consequently, students will be in violation of their student visa conditions.**

## Resources

We understand that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, travel restrictions and visa limitations present an array of challenges for us to overcome together. UCLA is committed to providing resources to advance the well-being of all students. Some resources you may want to utilize to support your health and wellness during this time:

### [Ashe Student Health and Wellness Center](#)

310-825-4073

310-206-6217 - Ashe COVID-19 Hotline (available seven days a week)

Monday – Thursday, 8 a.m. – 1 p.m., 2 – 4:30 p.m.

Friday, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., 2 – 4:30 p.m.

Weekends (online only): 8 a.m. – 1 p.m., 2 – 4:30 p.m.

Provides primary care, specialty care and pharmacy services to students. Currently, all care at Ashe is by appointment only and will start with a telehealth visit. If needed, telehealth visits will be followed by in-person care. Students can schedule an appointment through the patient portal.

### [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)

310-825-0768 (available 24/7)

CAPS offers individual and group counseling, psychiatric evaluation and treatment, crisis and organizational consultation, psychological and well-being education and more. Counselors are available by phone 24 hours a day. Currently all services are being offered via telehealth.

While international students are not able to access the CAPS therapy or psychiatry when living out of the state of California due to state law and licensing regulations, CAPS has offerings listed below:

- Weekly drop-in hours for international students to consult about mental health resources and questions.
- A three-part workshop series for international students focused on time/stress/sleep management and other relevant topics. The series will be recorded to ensure accessibility for international students residing abroad.
- CAPS clinicians are collaborating with international student clubs and organizations in promoting mental health awareness and education.
- UCLA is in the process of partnering with MySSP (Student Support Program), an online mental health resource that offers 24/7 access to phone, video and chat support in the students' preferred language.
- [The Resilience in your Student Experience \(RISE\) Center](#) provides online wellness resources accessible for all students, including live virtual events and a holistic healing library.

**Case Management Services and the Consultation & Response Team (CRT)**

310-825-6941

Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Case Management Services supports students in distress and advises faculty, staff and students on how to support students in periods of crisis.

**Dashew Center for International Students and Scholars**

Monday - Friday

Morning: 9:00 am - 11:30 am

Join URL: <https://ucla.zoom.us/j/653160112>

Afternoon: 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm

Join URL: <https://ucla.zoom.us/j/872598433>

The Dashew Center [COVID-19 Updates](#) page is updated frequently with policy news and answers to frequently asked questions.

The prolonged nature of the pandemic has been challenging for many, and I recognize the particular burdens it has placed on UCLA's international students. As the fall quarter comes to an end, please take good care of yourselves and your mental, physical, and emotional health. I hope you and your families stay healthy and safe, and please do not hesitate to [reach out to us](#) if you need any assistance.

Sincerely,

Sam Nahidi  
Director