



# Portland Community College International Student Services

## Update: Overview of DHS Guidance for Fall 2020 for F-1 Students (as of 07/09/2020)

07/09/2020

Dear International Students,

We know that the news of the proposed SEVIS changes are causing everyone a lot of stress and uncertainty. This is still a fluid situation with new perspectives and developments constantly emerging. The [DHS announcement \(07/06/2020\)](#) and [FAQ \(07/07/2020\)](#) are not easy to understand, so we at PCC as well as international education leaders across the country are working to interpret them correctly.

Please understand that the information we are sharing with you here is what we BELIEVE to be the case IF the proposed changes do indeed go through. However, President Mitsui is working with other college / university leaders from Oregon to advocate at the state and national level to have these proposed changes reversed.

In the meantime, your current status during Summer 2020 will not be affected by the proposed changes.

### PCC's Status for Fall 2020 (in accordance with the DHS announcement 07/06/2020)

Because PCC will have some in-person classes in certain programs in addition to online/remote classes, PCC will be classified as a school "adopting a hybrid model." This means that even with the proposed changes, there are some avenues for students to remain at PCC. Please review the detailed information below as well as the flowchart at the end of this document.

#### Current F-1 PCC student with no in-person classes/labs ("fully online") during Fall 2020

- If you intend to be in Portland during Fall 2020, you may remain here with your I-20 in active status only if you are "not taking an entirely online course load for the fall 2020 [term], and [you are] taking the minimum number of online classes required to make normal progress in [your] degree program."
- If you are already in Portland and are not able to take any in-person classes that are required to make normal progress in your degree program, you will need to:
  - either leave the US
    - You can take online classes at PCC, but it is unclear at this time whether you will be able to maintain your I-20 in active status while outside the US or whether you will have your I-20 terminated.
    - or transfer to another US institution that is offering your program in-person
      - *warning: If the other US institution you transfer to is required to go fully online during Fall 2020, you will have to leave the US.*
- If you are currently outside the US and intend to be/stay outside the US during Fall 2020, it is unclear at this time whether you will be able to maintain your I-20 in active status while outside the US or whether you will have your I-20 terminated.

#### Current F-1 PCC student with "at least one/some" in-person class(es)/lab(s) during Fall 2020

- If you intend to be in Portland during Fall 2020, you may remain here with your I-20 in active status as long as you are "not taking an entirely online course load for the fall 2020 [term], and [you are] taking the minimum number of online classes required to make normal progress in [your] degree program."
  - [Here](#) is a list of PCC programs that will be offering at least one in-person class/lab.
  - You should be aware that even if your program is listed here, you would only be able to remain in the US if you are actually enrolled in one of the in-person classes that are being offered and that class is actually part of your normal progress toward your degree program.
- If you intend to be/stay outside the US during Fall 2020, you can take online classes at PCC, but it is unclear at this time whether you will be able to maintain your I-20 in active status while outside the US or whether you will have your I-20 terminated.

### Current F-1 PCC student on OPT or taking vacation term during Fall 2020

- If you are in the US, you may maintain your I-20 in active status as long as you meet the requirements of OPT or vacation term.
  - It is unclear whether students will be allowed to maintain their I-20 in active status if they are/stay outside the US for OPT.

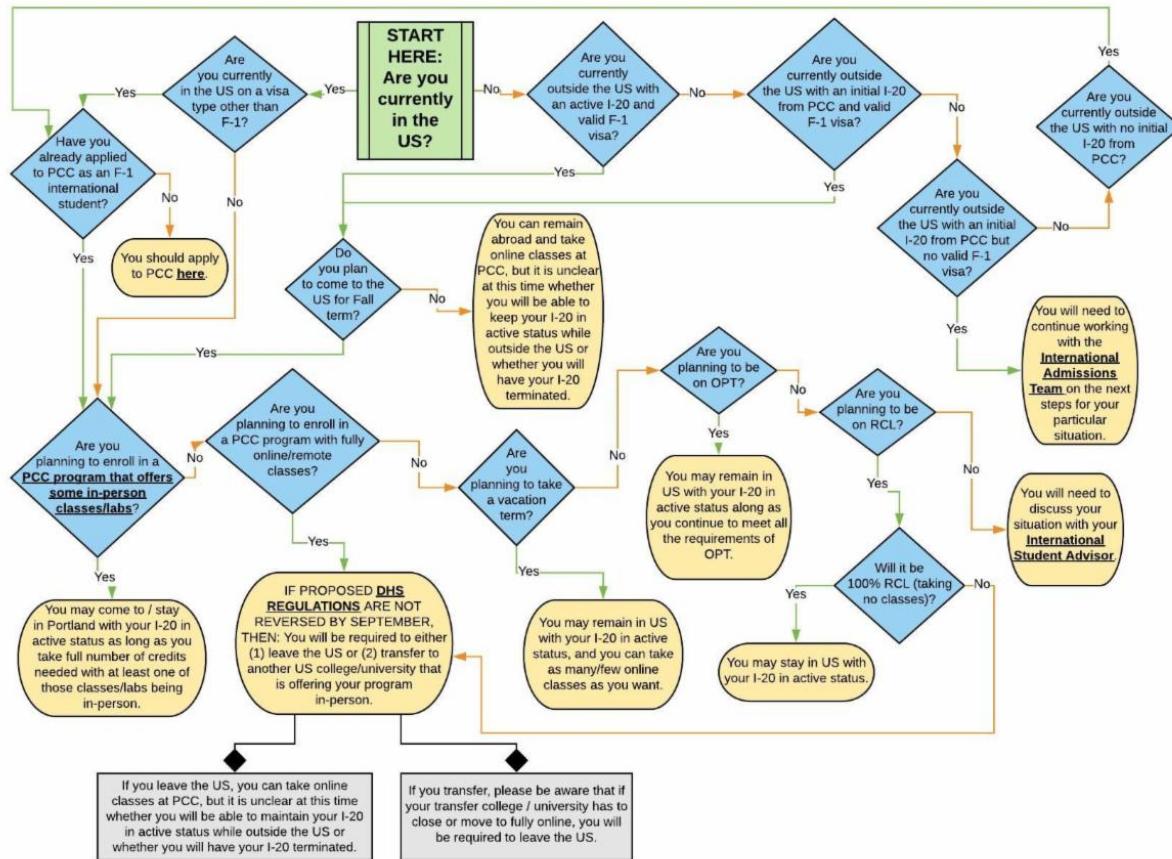
### Current F-1 PCC student with Medical Reduced Course Load (RCL) during Fall 2020

- If you are in the US, you may maintain your I-20 in active status as long as you meet the requirements of full-time RCL (zero classes).
  - If you are only given part-time RCL, i.e. required to take some classes, then being able to stay or being required to leave the US or transfer will depend on whether you can take at least one in-person class in your program during Fall 2020. (see above)

### Prospective F-1 PCC student during Fall 2020

- Transfer to PCC:
  - If you are already in the US and are intending to transfer to PCC from another US institution, then being able to stay or being required to leave the US or transfer will depend on whether you can take at least one in-person class in your program during Fall 2020. (see above)
  - If you are not already in the US but have a valid F-1 visa and are intending to come to PCC in Fall 2020, you will only be able to do so if you can take at least one in-person class in your program during Fall 2020. (see above)
- Initial I-20 with PCC:
  - If you are outside the US, you will only be issued an F-1 visa (note: visa offices are still closed worldwide) and be able to enter the US if you can take at least one in-person class in your program during Fall 2020. (see above)
    - If you are not issued an F-1 visa, you can take online classes at PCC from abroad, but your I-20 will not be put into active status.
  - If you are inside the US already (for example: change of status), you will only be issued an F-1 visa in the US if you can take at least one in-person class in your program during Fall 2020. (see above)

*Disclaimer: The information provided here is NOT legal advice and should not be construed as such. This is only meant as a way to share what we believe to be the case based on the DHS announcement (07/06/2020), the subsequent FAQ (07/07/2020) and communication with our SEVP Field Representative. For all legal advice regarding your F-1 visa status, I encourage you to seek the assistance of an immigration attorney.*



Click on the flowchart to open a pdf with clickable links

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All my best,

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