

## OISS Update - March 20, 2020

As of March 18, 2020, the United States is suspending all routine immigrant and non-immigrant visa service in most countries worldwide, per the [U.S. Department of State](#). On March 19, 2020 a [Level 4: Do Not Travel Global Health Advisory](#) was established.

### **How will the Level 4 Do Not Travel Global Health Advisory and temporary US Suspension of Routine Visa Services affect international students?**

#### **Current International Students:**

- ❖ If you decide to leave the US, please check the [State Department website](#) and [CDC website](#) for current information before returning to the US.
- ❖ Students that began their first term at Pepperdine Spring 2020 (and remained in the US for the duration of this term) will not be eligible for their vacation break and must be enrolled full time in the summer to be in status. For Seaver, 12 units is considered full time. For the graduate schools, please check with your program adviser or DSO to be sure you are taking enough units to be classified as a full-time student.
- ❖ If you have an expired visa (or it will expire soon), you can remain in the US as long as you maintain your F-1 status: enroll in classes as required by schools, submit any changes on the OISS Portal, submit requests in a timely manner for their CPT, OPT, and others.
- ❖ If you attempt to return to your home country in the hope that the consulates will reopen to renew your visa and the advisory remains in place, you may be unable to reenter the US and continue your program.

#### **Implications for Graduating International Students:**

- ❖ If you are graduating and considering the next level study (Masters, PhD), and wish to remain in the US, you may consider transferring your SEVIS record to an alternate university if you have already applied for and received admission to that school before the expiration of your 60 day grace period. Students would not need to return home in this case and should contact their DSO for instructions.
- ❖ If you are graduating in April or May, and wish to remain in the US to obtain practical training in your field of study, you should apply for OPT as soon as possible by following the instructions in the [OPT Manual Spring 2020 edition](#). Do not leave the US until you have filed your OPT application with the USCIS.
- ❖ If you are leaving the US permanently and completing your program at the end of the Spring 2020 term, please submit the *Exit or Transfer Request*.

#### **Online coursework after Spring Term:**

- ❖ While the US government indicated they would be flexible with adaptations to the Spring 2020 learning environment (fully online delivery) and students will remain in active status regardless of where they are around the world this term, it is too early to know if this policy will extend to the summer term. In addition, a decision has not been made about the feasibility of in person classes for the summer. It is also too early to know if the Level 4 travel advisory will lift in time for your safe return. We will notify students if we receive any updates on either scenario.