COVID-19 Update: FAQs for Newly Admitted Students


Be sure to check the International Center COVID-19 Updates Page often for important updates, including Fall Term 2020 FAQs for new students [3].

Congratulations from the International Center on your admission to the University of Michigan! The mission of the International Center is to support U-M’s international community in many ways, but particularly when it comes to U.S. immigration and visa regulations. We know that you are concerned about getting a U.S. student visa and arriving in time for the fall semester. We want to assure you that despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, the University of Michigan will continue to provide you with the current information you need to successfully navigate your way here. Please know that the University of Michigan is closely monitoring this global health crisis and we will communicate with you about any updates or changes.

Since we are in an environment of always evolving information, please make sure to regularly check the International Center’s COVID-19 update page [2] for important information and updates. We will keep updating this page with new information or guidance as they become available.

Is the University of Michigan still issuing immigration documents (I-20 or DS-2019) for newly admitted students?

Yes, the University of Michigan’s International Center, Office of Undergraduate Admissions, Rackham Graduate School Admissions, and admissions offices for graduate and professional degrees (not administered by Rackham) are continuing to process immigration documents and serve newly admitted students, while working remotely.

What actions should I take to have immigration documents sent to me?

Once you have accepted your admission offer from U-M, you will want to follow your school’s admissions office (Rackham, Office of Undergraduate Admissions, Ross School of Business, etc.) instructions on how to fully matriculate into your program. Once you have submitted all of the necessary documents to your
admissions office and have matriculated into your program, you will receive instructions on how to set up your shipping preferences through eShip Global. Your I-20 or DS-2019 will then be shipped by the courier service (DHL, FedEx or UPS) you selected. Please contact your specific admissions office for more information about when to expect your immigration documents. Please note that due to the current COVID-19 situation, there may be a delay in delivery by the courier service.

How will the University of Michigan issue my immigration documents?

The Rackham Graduate School Admissions is continuing to review applications and process immigration documents. The shipment of forms may be slowed or delayed while staff are working remotely. For more information, please see the Rackham Graduate School Admissions' FAQ [4], or contact their office at rackadmis@umich.edu [5].

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions is continuing to review application materials, but typically does not prepare immigration documents for newly admitted students until after the enrollment deposit due date (May 1). For more information, please contact the Office of Undergraduate Admissions [6].

The International Center is continuing to work with the other admissions offices for graduate and professional degrees (not administered by Rackham) [7] to generate immigration documents on a weekly basis. Please contact your specific school or college’s [7] admissions office for more information.

Will I still be able to get a student visa?

The global COVID-19 situation is dynamic and quickly changing. As of March 20, 2020, all U.S. embassies and consulates around the world have suspended the routine processing of visas due to Covid-19. Please check the U.S. Department of State’s visa page [8] for announcements and updates in order to stay informed about the resumption of consular services and visa processing times. The International Center is closely monitoring this and will provide updates as necessary. You may also wish to check the website of the US embassy or consulate nearest to you for any other updates.

Will I be able to travel to the U.S. to start my program this Fall if I get my visa?

The current global situation is fluid, making it is impossible to predict whether further restrictions will be put in place by the U.S. government for travelers from high risk countries, or if international travel to the U.S. will be restricted due to the situation within the U.S.

You will need to continue to check the travel and visa restrictions that may be in place at the time you are planning to travel to the U.S. We recommend that you monitor the travel updates by the CDC [9] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) as well as resources from your own country’s governmental agencies. The International Center is carefully monitoring updates from the CDC, SEVP (Student and Exchange Visitor Program), USCIS (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services), and Department of State, and will update our website and communicate changes to students as we receive new information.

What if I am currently in the U.S. in F-1 or J-1 status?

Please contact your specific admissions office (see above) about your eligibility to transfer your F-1 or J-1 status from your current U.S. institution to the University of Michigan. They can advise you if you are also a current U-M student starting a new degree or program level.
I am currently in the U.S. in another nonimmigrant status (H-1B, H-4, TN, etc.). What should I do?

Please contact the International Center at icenter@umich.edu[10]. Your options and course of action depends on many variables, and an adviser can help outline the issues so you can make an informed decision.

What should I do if I want to defer my admissions to a future semester?

If you are an undergraduate student, please contact the Office of Undergraduate Admissions[11]. If you are a Rackham Graduate School student, please contact your graduate program. If you are a non-Rackham graduate student, please contact your specific admissions office. They will work with you regarding when you may be able to begin your program at U-M.

What happens if my program is only offering online classes this fall semester?

Under normal circumstances, the regulations only allow F-1 international students who are located in the U.S. to enroll in a maximum of three online credits which may be counted towards their minimum enrollment requirements.

The current guidance allowing international students to enroll fully in online courses has not been extended to the fall semester. If your program is only offering online classes this fall, then you may enroll in classes from your home country. Please contact your specific admissions office for more information on your eligibility for immigration documents based on your program’s decision to only offer online courses this fall semester.

You will be issued an I-20 or DS-2019 for the fall semester if you will be able to enroll full-time in on-campus, in-person courses.

Who do I contact if I have questions?

Please contact your specific admissions office if you have questions about your U-M application, acceptance, matriculation, or the processing of your immigration documents. If you have questions about the U.S. visa process or other immigration related issues, please contact the International Center at icenter@umich.edu[10].

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