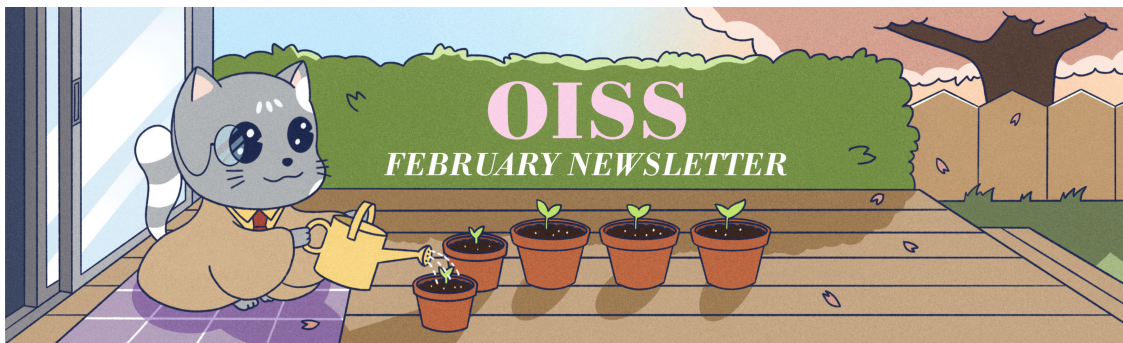

DO NOT RESPOND TO THIS EMAIL
Please begin a new email so we do not lose responses in the thread

[View email in your browser](#)



Dear International Students,

Just like that ... Spring semester is upon us and March is around the corner. We continue to remain hopeful for what is ahead and will continue to support all of you in any way that we can. We care about you and miss you.

Thank you to those of you who took the time to complete the OISS Crits! (survey) last month. We received 102 very helpful responses that will guide us in changes and improvements for our office as we work to offer you the services and support you want and need. Congratulations to Yuchen Liu and Aswathy Biju for winning the two \$50 RISD Store credits!!

OISS News

REMINDER! If you have not already done so, please complete the **Spring 2021 Study Plans Form** below **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!** We need to make updates and notations on your I-20s, and it is very important that we know your plans so we can get you what you need for immigration purposes.

[Spring 2021 Study Plans Form](#)

OISS Wintersession & Spring 2021 Semester Drop-In Advising Hours:

Tuesdays from 8:30am to 10am EST

Thursdays from 11:30am- 1pm EST

To attend the OISS Drop-In Advising Hours:

1. Register by filling out this [Google Form](#)
2. Receive the Drop-In Advising Zoom link upon completing the form.
3. Click on the link during the Drop-In Advising hours (Tuesday 8:30am - 10am EST & Thursday 11:30am - 1pm EST) - Speak to an OISS advisor!

Students will be served on a first-come, first-serve basis during Drop-In Hours. You will be assigned to a breakout room to speak to an OISS advisor for up to 15 minutes.

* If you require more than the 15 minutes of a drop-in advising time, a scheduled appointment with an advisor is recommended and can be scheduled at: oiss@risd.edu. We have access to other modes of communication too (WhatsApp, WeChat, KakaoTalk, LINE, Skype)- just ask! **We will continue to use the virtual space for our advising sessions for the 2020- 2021 Academic Year.**

* **OISS hours are Monday- Friday, 8:30am- 4:30pm EST**

Immigration Updates

Enrollment and Travel

If you have requested to study remotely:

- You must remain in remote study for the entire semester.
 - If you are studying remotely outside of the United States, traveling into the U.S. after the semester begins is a risk and you may be denied entry by Customs & Border Protection (CBP). In addition, RISD has protocols in place due to the pandemic (see [RISD COVID site](#)).
 - If you are studying entirely remotely inside the United States, you will not have access to campus.

If you are studying in-person and accessing campus for the Spring term, you MUST arrive on-campus by Monday, March 1, 2021.

If you are an F-1 Student entering the US for the first time to study at RISD, you MUST be enrolled in at least one hybrid or in-person course in order to maintain your

immigration status. OISS staff will be checking in with students who have just arrived to confirm their enrollment.

All Students on the F-1 Student Visa MUST BE enrolled in at least 12 credits to maintain their immigration status. If you are a student in your final term, you may take fewer than 12 credits so long as you will still complete your graduation requirements on time (by June 5, 2021). In order to do this, you must complete an [Exception to Academic Policy Form](#) from the Registrar's Office.

If you are traveling into the US prior to the semester start of February 22nd, please make sure that your most recent I-20 has been signed on page 2 within the last year. If you need a travel signature, please complete the [I-20 Travel Signature Request Form](#).

As of January 26th and in accordance with [CDC guidelines](#), all international travelers are required to have proof of a negative COVID-19 test or recovery from COVID-19.

Travel Letter Template- See attached letter for any travel into the United States or visa appointments that this information may be helpful with.

I-94 Record- Please be sure to [check your I-94 Record](#) every time you enter the United States to ensure that your information has been recorded correctly by CBP.

Note About Travel- If you are currently in the United States with plans to work or study here in the near future, traveling outside of the U.S. is not recommended. With the current travel restrictions in the U.S. and in many other countries, when you might be able to return to the United States is unknown. This is not immigration-specific, but rather related to the global pandemic and the travel restrictions that are country-specific. Please contact oiss@risd.edu with any questions specific to your situation.

Routine Visa Services- Continued Slow Reopening: U.S. embassies and consulates have continued with their "phased resumption of routine visa services" and there are still delays and closings. We encourage you to monitor the embassies and consulates in your home country as appointment availability will depend on local conditions. Click [HERE](#) to find the embassy nearest you in your home country.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the most up-to-date ICE/SEVP Policy Guidance from August 7, 2020. We have been told by SEVP to continue using the August 7, 2020 Guidance for Wintersession and Spring 2021.

Scams

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) has been made aware of a **spoofing scam** involving individuals using the **SEVP Response Center (SRC)** phone numbers (703-603-3400 and 800-892-4829) and **claiming to be SRC representatives**. The fraudulent callers are inquiring about Form I-94 documents and asking students to provide information regarding monetary transactions.

CONTACT OISS at oiss@risd.edu if you think you have received a fraudulent call. We can report it to the appropriate officials.

Things to remember:

- SEVP officials will NEVER ask students to provide credit/debit card/gift card numbers, wire transfers, or bank routing numbers, or to make bitcoin deposits for any purpose.
- NEVER divulge personal or financial information to unknown callers.

If you receive a call like this please contact and report it to OISS immediately. Information on [Scams in the United States](#). DO NOT give anyone money over the phone if they are threatening you in any way. No US Government office will demand money over the phone.

Other Things to Consider

Information related to [Social Security Numbers and Driver's Licenses](#).

[CLICK HERE](#) to see previous OISS Newsletters

Programming with
OISS

For all OISS-specific events, visit the [Events & News](#) tab on the OISS website.

[Visa Options: Working in the US after Optional Practical Training](#)- Gain information and guidance on which visas might be available to F-1 visa holders after OPT. Immigration Attorney, Eileen Morrison, will present visa eligibility details for visas such as the H-1B, O-1, EB2, TN and more. You may sign up for the session [HERE](#).

Are you graduating this year and want to learn more about [Optional Practical Training \(OPT\)](#)? [CLICK HERE](#) for our upcoming lunch sessions! Eating lunch during the session is acceptable! [OPT Canvas modules](#) are up and running - so check them out!

Are you searching for an off-campus summer internship in the United States? Then do your research now to gather information required for [Curricular Practical Training \(CPT\)](#) work authorization!

Tax Season 2020 has begun. All non-immigrant students who were physically present in the U.S. at any point during 2020 MUST file a tax form in the United States - even if you did not work in 2020. To learn more about what is required, visit the [Sprintax](#) website. For a quick tax overview, visit the [OISS website](#).

The TAX FILING DEADLINE IS: APRIL 15, 2021

For information on upcoming programs at RISD, remember to check out Involved at:
<https://involved.risd.edu/>

Please stay in touch with us. We're here for you as you continue navigating your international student experience at RISD.

Sincerely,

The Office of International Student Services Team

Kate Sacco, Director

Jennifer Dressen, Assistant Director

Amy Andrea Iglesias, International Student Advisor

Sachi Tan, Administrative Coordinator

Dr. Meowgi, Friend to All

Follow us on Social Media!



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Office of International Student Services

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL OF DESIGN

TWO COLLEGE STREET PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02903 TELEPHONE 401-277-4957 FAX 401-454-6605

November 24, 2020

Dear Officer,

This letter is to offer further explanation on behalf of Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, Rhode Island, United States of America. On July 24, 2020 SEVP issued Broadcast Message (Message ID: MID189), Subject: Follow-up: ICE continues March Guidance for Fall School Term. On August 7, 2020, that policy guidance was finalized.

The previous SEVP Broadcast Message (Message ID: MID 187) issued on July 6, 2020 required institutions to update all Initial and Active Form I-20 student records to indicate the campus modality. On July 14, 2020 U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement rescinded the July 6 directive. Based on the rescinded July 6 directive and the most recent broadcast message on July 24, it is our understanding the above-mentioned notation is no longer required; however, this letter serves to verify the following:

- Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), located in Providence, RI plans to adhere to the following schedule:

Wintersession 2021(Jan 11- Feb 12): Operating entirely online*

- Per current regulations students may enroll in remote courses and maintain status.
- **For students who have Active records in SEVIS:** According to the August 7th policy guidance, the student needs to maintain a full-time course load but may study in a fully online, hybrid or in-person course modality so long as they are making normal progress in their degree program.
- **For students who have Initial records in SEVIS:** According to the August 7th policy guidance, the student must be enrolled in at least one hybrid or in-person course if they are to study in the United States. In addition, they must be enrolled full-time and making normal progress in their degree program.

**Exceptions of programs that ARE offering hybrid or in-person courses: Industrial Design, Interior Architecture and Glass.*

Spring 2021(Feb 22- May 27): NOT operating entirely online

- **For students who have Active records in SEVIS:** According to the August 7th policy guidance, the student needs to maintain a full-time course load but may study in a fully online, hybrid or in-person course modality so long as they are making normal progress in their degree program.



- **For students who have Initial records in SEVIS:** According to the August 7th policy guidance, the student must be enrolled in at least one hybrid or in-person course if they are to study in the United States. In addition, they must be enrolled full-time and making normal progress in their degree program.

The student intends to return to campus to continue/start their studies. Wintersession courses will begin on January 11, 2021, however students are expected to arrive on campus by December 28, 2020.

Please note that for students traveling from Canada, travel to attend school is considered "essential travel" per the U.S. Customs and Border Protection rule from 5/22/2020 as found in the Federal Register and quoted below.

"For purposes of the temporary alteration in certain designated ports of entry operations authorized under 19 U.S.C. 1318(b)(1)(C) and (b)(2), travel through the land ports of entry and ferry terminals along the United States-Canada border shall be limited to "essential travel," which includes, but is not limited to...

Individuals traveling to attend educational institutions;

["https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/05/22/2020-11145/notification-of-temporary-travel-restrictions-applicable-to-land-ports-of-entry-and-ferries-service"](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/05/22/2020-11145/notification-of-temporary-travel-restrictions-applicable-to-land-ports-of-entry-and-ferries-service)

Additionally, per the travel.stage.gov website - Students traveling from the Schengen Area, the UK, and Ireland with valid F-1 and M-1 visas do not need to contact an embassy or consulate to seek an individual national interest exception to travel.

Should additional support be needed while in transit please contact RISD Public Safety. They are available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week and will be able to quickly reach the Office of International Student Services Staff (Kate Sacco, Director or Jennifer Dressen, Assistant Director).

RISD Public Safety:

+ 1 (401) 454-6666 OR + 1 (401) 454-6376

Sincerely,



Catherine Sacco, PDSO

Director, International Student Services

401.709.8474

IMMIGRATION/ EMPLOYMENT EVENTS

★ OPT Application Sessions

Feb 15, 17, 19, 22, 24, 26
March 1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24

12-1pm
EST

★ Visa Options Session

Tuesday, March 9

7-8:30pm
EST

★ Self-Employment & Freelancing Session

Tuesday, April 6

7-8:30pm
EST

★ CPT Tabling Events

April 7 and 21

11am-1pm
EST