

Dear International Student,

If you are planning to travel in the near future, it is essential to keep in mind that multiple travel restrictions remain in place because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Countries worldwide have a variety of restrictions, so it is strongly recommended that you check with the authorities of the countries you intend to visit both when making travel plans and again before traveling so they have the most up-to-date information.

### **Cross-Border Traffic from Mexico and Canada**

The U.S.-Canada and U.S.-Mexico borders continue to be closed to non-essential travel through **February 21, 2020**, and given the current surge in COVID-19 cases, chances remain high that the closure will be extended again before this date. The restriction expressly exempts F-1 student and air or sea travel. Please refer to our [website](#) for more details on this restriction.

### **Canada Implements Significant International Travel Requirements**

The Canadian government announced tighter restrictions on all international travel. All flights from Mexico and Caribbean countries will be suspended until April 30, 2021. This flight suspension is subject to extension at any time. Prior to departure to Canada, all air travelers are required to present a negative COVID-19 test result to board the aircraft. All air travelers to Canada, with limited exceptions, must also reserve a room prior to departure in a government-approved Canadian hotel for three nights at the traveler's expense. Upon arrival to Canada, each traveler must submit to an additional COVID-19 test and quarantine in the government-approved hotel for 72 hours while awaiting results. If the test result comes back negative, the traveler may then complete the remainder of a 14-day quarantine plan at their home or other quarantine location.

### **Travel from Specific Regions**

Presidential Proclamations suspended entry into the U.S. of all F-1 students who were physically present within the following countries during the 14-day period preceding their entry to the U.S. are prohibited from entering the country. Similar exceptions apply for U.S. Lawful Permanent Residents and certain other categories of travelers, including those whose travel to the United States would be in the national interest. !!

- People's Republic of China (excluding Hong Kong and Macau)
- Islamic Republic of Iran
- Brazil
- South Africa

In addition, the U.S. Department of States has advised that students with **valid F-1 visas** traveling from the Schengen Area (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland), the U.K., and Ireland **may** travel to the United States.

### **Proof of Negative COVID-19 Test Required for Entry to U.S.**

As a reminder, proof of a negative COVID-19 test is required before a traveler may board a plane to the United States. Pursuant to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) requirement, all travelers to the United States, including U.S. citizens, must present proof of a negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours of boarding a flight for the United States. On Friday, January 29, 2021, the French Prime Minister, Jean Castex, announced that, starting from Sunday, January 31st, “any entry into France and any exit from our territory to or from a country outside the European Union will be prohibited”

### **France Closes Borders to Non-EU Travel**

As COVID-19 cases rise in France and as new, more contagious British and South African variants of the virus have emerged, France has implemented these new travel restrictions to try to avoid another nationwide lockdown.

### **Avoid Unnecessary Travel**

If you decide to travel, be prepared, understand the risks, and be advised that you might not be able to return to the U.S. for an unknown period of time. Your trip could be disrupted, or you may be quarantined upon your return. Also, if your existing F-1 visa will expire before your return, you would need to apply for a new stamp at an Embassy or Consulate of the U.S. before you can return to the states. Please review your country’s Embassy or Consulate’s visa appointment information before you make final travel plans.

### **UTRGV’s International Travel Guidelines**

Students who will enter the United States for Spring 2021 **must** report their travel to the University. Please complete the UTRGV’s [Self-Reporting Travel Form](#) to let us know about your recent travel or your upcoming travel plans. Members of the UTRGV community who reside or must make frequent trips to Mexico border cities abutting the Rio Grande Valley Counties must not complete the travel form.

Please be advised that these rules can change at any time so please monitor your UTRGV email for any updates. We will continue to monitor the news, airline information, or travel information, and we will email you any updates. For any additional questions, please email us at [international@utrgv.edu](mailto:international@utrgv.edu)

Sincerely,

IASS Staff



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