

July 7, 2020

Dear Iowa State Community,

New guidance for international students in the U.S. has been issued by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). This guidance impacts international students (F-1 and M-1 visa holders) studying in the U.S. and taking online classes in the fall semester due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Iowa State University will be offering in-person, online, and hybrid courses in the fall. The new ICE rules, which can be read [here](#), require the university to certify that its international students in the U.S. are not enrolled in *entirely* online programs; are not taking an *entirely* online course load in the fall; and are taking the minimum number of online classes required to make normal progress in their degree program. International students within the United States are not permitted to take a full course of study through online classes. The guidance states if students find themselves in this situation or if the university needs to transition to entirely online instruction this fall in response to the pandemic, then international students must leave the country or transfer to another institution with in-person instruction. As we learn more about this guidance, we will provide more information.

We believe this action by ICE is unwise. We are deeply concerned that this policy creates uncertainty and anxiety for our international students, who are already navigating many professional and personal challenges as a result of the pandemic. Our international students are encouraged to access the following campus resources, if you have questions or need support:

[International Students and Scholars Office \(ISSO\)](#)
[Office of the Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion](#)
[Student Counseling Services](#)

515-294-1120
515-294-8840
515-294-5056

We are coordinating with our national organizations regarding this important issue, including the [Association of American Universities](#) and the [Association of Public and Land-grant Universities](#), as we are obligated to comply with federal policy. We are advocating for our international students to have maximum flexibility to continue their education at ISU as we prioritize health and safety during the COVID-19 crisis.

We value deeply the contributions of our international students, faculty, and staff who offer their diverse talents, skills, perspectives, and cultural vibrancy to our campus. Iowa State University will do all we can to support our international students to continue their academic progress this fall.

Wendy Wintersteen
President