

10 July 2020

Dear graduate students:

I hope your summer has been productive and fulfilling (with some relaxation and enjoyment of the recent sunny weather—at least in Pullman). With the start of the Fall 2020 semester approaching, I wanted to make sure that you were aware of certain requirements and provide guidance for international graduate students.

1) Changes in Responsible Conduct in Research (RCR) trainings

It has been a long-standing requirement that all graduate students receive RCR training through an online WSU-developed module. This requirement has been updated to a new, more complete training.

Effective January 1, 2020, the Vice President for Research, Dr. Chris Keane, announced a [policy](#) that expanded the Responsible Conduct in Research (RCR) requirements for all WSU researchers (faculty, staff and graduate students). This new policy requires that all graduate students take the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) RCR program, in place of the previous RCR training package from WSU. Graduate students who were current for the previous training were grandfathered in for the Spring 2020 semester. However, for Fall 2020, all graduate students must complete the new CITI-RCR training. The immediate impact of a failure to complete the training will be a delay in the processing of the student's assistantship paperwork until the training has been completed. In the future, enrollment holds will be placed on the student's account if the training is not completed, even if the student is not currently on an assistantship.

Please complete the new CITI-RCR training as soon as possible. The training can be accessed through the <https://myresearch.wsu.edu/> portal, under the Training tab.

Note: there is a small number of programs, whose graduate students do not conduct research, that have applied for exceptions to the RCR training requirement. These requests are being processed, and if granted, the affected students will be provided updated information.

2) Residence requirements for graduate student assistantships

The Graduate School policy, based on the state of Washington law (specifically the RCW—Revised Code of Washington), requires that students on an assistantship must reside in the state of Washington to be eligible for the tuition waiver associated with the assistantship. Exceptions were made for the extenuating circumstances at the end of the Spring 2020 semester when WSU campuses went to entirely online instruction in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, for Fall 2020, the standard policy is in effect, requiring a residence (establishing/maintaining a domicile) in the state of Washington if a student is on an assistantship appointment.

3) International graduate student concerns

Many of you are aware of the recent [guidance](#) from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) regarding enrollment of international graduate students. You should also be aware of yesterday's [communication](#) from the WSU leadership expressing deep concern about the negative impacts of this guidance on WSU's valued population of international students.

The International Student and Scholars Services Department in International Programs has provided the following guidance for current WSU students. Under the ICE guidance issued on July 6, WSU fits under category three, which is the hybrid instruction model. We have broken this down for international graduate students based on where they are and what type of instruction may be available to them.

A. International graduate students who are still in the state of Washington

You must enroll in at least one course that requires a face-to-face component, and you must meet the full-time enrollment requirement of 10 credits. Research credits, 700 or 800 level (thesis masters and doctoral students, respectively), should meet this face-to-face requirement. This enrollment will allow you to maintain immigration status and, where applicable, maintain eligibility for assistantship support and the associated tuition waiver. For non-thesis master's students, this face-to-face requirement might be met by enrollment in 701 or 702 credits; alternatively, there may be appropriate 500-level courses that fulfill the required face-to-face enrollment; you should discuss this with your graduate program coordinator for specific recommendations.

B. International graduate students who returned to their home country and cannot return this fall

If you cannot return to the state of Washington, you are ineligible for the assistantship and tuition waiver. Furthermore, International Programs cannot keep your SEVIS record active.

- You can choose to enroll for the semester from your current location if there are courses on your program of study that will be delivered via a mode that is accessible at a distance. In this case, students are encouraged to contact IP-International Student and Scholar Services for guidance on issuance of a new form I-20 to return in spring semester.
- If you choose not to enroll for the Fall semester, you should be aware that the Graduate School has a continuous enrollment policy. It is recommended that you apply for a leave of absence so that your status as a graduate student is maintained.

The Graduate School and your graduate programs are here to help you be successful in your graduate career. Please reach out to us if you have questions or concerns.

Best regards,

LMG

Lisa M. Gloss
Dean of the Graduate School