

The Way to San José Program FAQ Sheet - Revised 6/30/2020

General

What is the Way to San José program?

The Way to San José program is a pathway for our admitted international students to take online courses this fall and stay on track to graduate. This [program](#) provides online options to replicate your on-campus experience in fall and allows you to join us in person when you are able to do so. Selecting this pathway allows you to move closer toward graduation and your future career.

This fall, you can look forward to the following:

- Up to nine units of online courses from the safety of your home
- No visas, travel, or housing challenges
- Full online orientation and advising services
- Courses that allow for live lectures and interactions with faculty members
- Save an estimated \$10,000 US dollars in living expenses for fall
- Participate in online lectures and networking opportunities with Silicon Valley leaders in your field, as well as career and job fairs.

To opt into this program, all you have to do is [register](#) for SJSU courses through your MySJSU account. Check with your department advisors for input on what courses to take.

Which master's degree programs are participating in the Way to San José program?

The following programs have opted to offer the Way to San Jose program as an option for their students for fall 2020:

- Software Engineering
- Computer Engineering
- Electrical Engineering
- Industrial and Systems Engineering
- Engineering Management
- Data Analytics
- Computer Science

Most other programs will also allow Fall 2020 matriculation for online coursework, but the programs participating in the Way to San José program are committed to providing online instruction mindful of time zone differences as well as additional career and professional development opportunities for their international students studying remotely.

Who can I contact if I have questions about the Way to San José?

Questions about the details of the fall online program can be addressed to the College of Graduate Studies at graduate-studies@sjsu.edu or see our general FAQs [here](#). You can also

follow our [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) accounts @waytosan jose for more information and to hear from current SJSU students and alumni.

Online Education

Are classes asynchronous or synchronous? How do I participate if at the same time?

Your graduate program will design course schedules thoughtfully so as to avoid any schedule conflicts from occurring especially for critical courses that you may need to take in your first year of the program. The faculty within your department are designing classes for maximum flexibility and participation. Some classes will be fully asynchronous while others may be “hybrid” with some synchronous elements as well as asynchronous components.

How are lab sessions taught online?

Faculty members are currently working on plans for fall 2020 labs.

If classes are online for Fall 2020 but my visa is accepted, should I come to the US?

The Way to San Jose program will allow you to take classes online for the fall 2020 semester, so it is up to you where you decide to reside during that time. You need not reside in the U.S. to participate in the Way to San Jose. It is our hope that you will be able to travel to San Jose in time for the Spring 2021 semester, but as conditions change quickly, we are closely monitoring our options to ensure the safety of our communities into Spring 2021. We don't know at this time what classes will look like in Spring 2021 but our administration is exercising caution in planning for the next semester.

What career resources are available through the Way to San José?

The College of Graduate Studies will be working with the SJSU Career Center to develop online programming for students in the Way to San Jose surrounding professional development and other career-related matters that may interest you in your first semester of graduate school. Please stay tuned for more details in the coming weeks about this programming.

Will SJSU open on-campus classes mid-way in Fall 2020?

This scenario is highly unlikely given the current landscape of COVID-19. Our faculty members are planning for a mostly, if not fully, remote learning environment due to the ongoing pandemic.

What will exams look like for online courses?

Your graduate program director or advisor will be able to answer program-specific questions about course and exam formats. You can also contact instructors of the courses for which you've enrolled to ask for more information.

Can I still join the Way to San José if my visa is not approved?

Yes - a visa is not required for WTSJ online enrollment.

Will I still have access to the library?

Yes. The MLK library has a wealth of online resources for you to enjoy wherever you are this fall.

Can I register for 3 or 6 units through the Way to San José? Can I register for more than 9?

Regardless of whether you are enrolling from your home country/abroad, you can enroll in as few or as many units as your academic program allows. While nine units are recommended, graduate students have the enrollment limit of 16 units throughout the advance registration period and can register for fewer than 9 units as well.

Can I do a part-time job in my home country while I take classes online?

If the job is with a company in your home country, yes. You are not bound by F-1 immigration regulations until you enter the United States in F-1 status.

Visa Issues**If I come to campus Spring 2021 after Fall 2020 online classes, will a new I-20 be sent to me?**

We will work with you to defer your I-20. Your SEVIS ID number remains the same so you do not need to pay the I-901 fee, if you have already done so.

I just received my university admission letter and I-20. Should I pay the SEVIS fee even though the U.S. Embassy in my country is closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Yes, you should pay the SEVIS fee online and print the receipt showing proof of payment. This receipt is required for your visa appointment.

How does switching to online instruction affect my immigration status?

Under normal circumstances, F-1 students are limited by immigration regulations to taking a maximum of one course (3-4 units) online to meet the full-time enrollment requirements. However, due to COVID-19, SEVP (Student and Exchange Visitor Program) has made an exception for spring 2020 allowing a full load of online coursework. Current federal guidance suggests that F-1 students at SJSU will continue to have this exception in fall 2020.

If the U.S. Embassy in my country remains closed and I can't get a visa for fall 2020, will I be able to take online classes and then appear for a visa interview later when the embassy resumes services to arrive on campus in spring 2021 to continue with my studies?

Yes, you may enroll in online classes at SJSU while in your home country and then obtain a visa based on a spring 2021 start date I-20. The fee you pay for the DS-160 (visa application) is valid for one year. This would allow you to begin your studies on time and still enjoy the benefits of in-person study on the SJSU campus when you are able to be here.

Will I be able to defer my fall 2020 application to spring 2021? If allowed, do I have to request a new I-20 and pay a new SEVIS fee?

Deferral requests need to be made with the Admissions Office. If they authorize your deferral to spring 2021, then we would need to amend your I-20 start and end date. The deferral of I-20 dates would not require you to pay a new SEVIS fee. An amended I-20 would need to be mailed to you.

CPT Concerns

If Fall 2020 is online, does this mean I'm not eligible for CPT?

You do not become eligible for CPT unless you have entered the United States in F-1 status. ISSS is awaiting further guidance from the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) for fall 2020 and how online classes will have any impact on the F-1 status.

If I come to campus in Spring 2021, can I do CPT in summer 2021?

The short answer is no. You need to have been in F-1 status for one academic year (i.e. two consecutive semesters) before you are eligible for CPT.

Can I apply for a campus job before coming in Spring 2021?

Unfortunately, no. You need to have an immigration status in the United States to be eligible for on-campus employment. In addition, you will need a social security number. Which requires presence in the US.

How can I start CPT in Summer 2021?

If you are successful in entering the United States in spring 2021, you would need to be enrolled full-time (i.e. 9 units) for two consecutive terms before CPT eligibility. Since summer is an optional term, if you enroll in 6 units(considered FT in the summer), the earliest you could potentially be eligible for CPT by Fall 2021. This is contingent on course availability in the summer. CPT in summer 2021 is not possible in this scenario.

For fall 2020 admits, will taking online classes have any effect on students' CPT or OPT application in the future?

Current immigration regulations state that in order to be eligible for CPT, you have to be in F-1 visa status (in the U.S.) for one full academic year (e.g., fall and spring academic semesters) and in good academic standing. As indicated above, we do not expect enrollment in online courses in fall 2020 at SJSU to affect your visa status. Therefore, if you arrive in the United States and begin your F-1 status in fall 2020, you would be eligible for CPT in summer 2021. If you begin F-1 status in spring 2021, you would be eligible for CPT one academic year from when you start, unless SEVP provides an exception to this rule.

Will online classes fulfill the fulltime 12 months of classes requirement for students who will apply for CPT?

We don't know yet. Current immigration regulations state that in order to be eligible for CPT, you have to be in F-1 visa status (in the U.S.) for one full academic year (e.g., fall and spring academic semesters) and in good academic standing. At this time, we don't know whether SEVP will provide an exception and count the fall 2020 semester toward CPT eligibility for a student matriculated at SJSU in fall 2020 and taking online classes from their home country while awaiting their F-1 visa.

Miscellaneous

When does class registration begin?

Registration began on Monday, June 15, 2020. Your specific enrollment date and time is viewable on your MySJSU portal.

When is the deadline to register?

For new students enrolling for regular session, advance registration closes on August 16, 2020. Late registration will begin on the first day of Fall classes - Wednesday, August 19 - and will continue through September 8, 2020. Keep in mind that late registration usually involves late fees.

When is the deadline to complete the Intent to Enroll?

September 1, 2020

Are there any fee concessions for online classes?

While we acknowledge the challenges of funding graduate education in general, and we appreciate the description of the specific challenges you face as international students, we are not able to reduce the fees for your education. The reasons are as follows:

- The campus continues to remain open, and essential services related to operations and support—including campus housing, dining services, facilities maintenance, IT support and services, University Personnel services and Library virtual support—continue to function.
- The fees noted typically cover fixed and ongoing expenses and costs that the university continues to incur during the pandemic in order to finance, maintain, and operate student facilities and programs, including the Student Union, Student Association and Health Center fees.
- These fees are not based on who uses these facilities and/or services or how much is used, but instead cover the debt services and personnel on a 12-month budget basis.
- The Student Wellness Center and Spartan Recreation Center will continue to provide various online services for students.

While we are not able to reduce your fees to attend graduate school at SJSU, there *are* support mechanisms that can help you defray the cost of your education, including scholarships and assistantships.

Do I need to take international student health insurance while taking online WTSJ classes?

If you are not going to be physically present in the US, you do not need to purchase the mandatory health insurance. You will need to purchase it for the term you enter in F-1 status.

Do I need to provide proof of immunizations?

The campus has identified certain online majors as needing to submit their proof of immunization at this time. However international students taking remote classes in their home country may or may not belong to this group. If you have received a secure message from the Student Health Center, you have been identified as needing to submit proof and should do so if you are able to.

For students who have been identified as needing to submit proof of immunization, you will receive an email notification from Student Health Center to check for secure messages in your Student Health Center Online Services portal.

Upon submission, students will receive secure messages regarding their immunization compliance status via SHC services online portal. Currently, processing time is between 6-8 weeks.

I want to defer my admission. Where can I find the deferral request form?

Please see our separate deferral FAQ sheet [here](#) for details on deferral. You can email graduate@sjsu.edu to inquire about how to submit a formal Deferral Request Form. Please use the subject line "Fall 2020: Admission Deferral Inquiry" and include your full name and SJSU ID# within the body of your email.