INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS & SCHOLARS TOWN HALL

AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

Date: May 27, 2021, 09:00-10:00 AM (EST)

Location: Zoom Webinar

Moderator

- Ambassador Steve Mull
  Vice Provost for Global Affairs

Panelists

- Susan Davis
  Acting Vice President for Student Affairs
- Dudley Doane
  Director, International Studies Office
- Dr. Chris Holstege
  Executive Director, Department of Student Health and Wellness
- Prof. Rachel Most
  Associate Dean for Undergraduate Academic Programs, College of Arts & Sciences
- Richard Tanson
  Program Manager, International Students and Scholars Program
- Phil Trella
  Associate Vice Provost and Director, Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs
OPENING REMARKS

Steve Mull

Good morning, good evening, or good afternoon, wherever you are. My name is Steve Mull. I am the University of Virginia’s vice provost for Global Affairs. My colleagues and I are so excited to welcome all of our international students at the University of Virginia and their families from around the world to our Town Hall today that is devoted to international student issues for the upcoming fall semester here at the University of Virginia. The meeting today will be live captioned to help you follow along at the bottom of the screen. We will also be recording today’s session and will make it available on the International Students and Scholars Program website in the next day or two.

As all of you know better than I, the past 15 months have been an extremely challenging time for all of us at the University, but no one has had more challenges to face and overcome than all of you have had, with everything from travel and immigration restrictions, isolations from loved ones far from home, and having to study and take exams sometimes 12 time zones away. Some of our first-year students last year did not even come to Grounds. They studied remotely for the whole first year, and we are especially excited to welcome them here to Charlottesville in the fall. Throughout all of these challenges, the University, with President Jim Ryan’s strong support, has done its best to help our international students and their families, working through our outstanding Office of Student Affairs, the International Students and Scholars Program (ISSP) office, the Student Health and Wellness Center, our advocates in Washington and so many others. Today we are pleased to report that we are enthusiastically planning a full return to normal academic operations this fall with a full in-person, residential educational experience. We are so excited to be able to welcome all of you to Grounds this fall and be together again with you.

It is clear that some challenges remain, but I am convinced we are going to overcome all of them. My colleagues and I hope to spend some time this morning speaking with you on how we can best overcome them together. Many of you will have seen that all students coming to Grounds this fall will have to be fully vaccinated with a WHO-approved vaccine for any student arriving after July 1. As we will hear from our director of Student Health and Wellness, there are a number of vaccines that are already approved that will help students be able to come here. But if you are unable to be vaccinated, do not worry, we still want you to come here on time, and if you arrive without the appropriate vaccination, we will work with you to get you vaccinated here in Charlottesville, and while you are waiting for the vaccination to take effect, we will ask that you test regularly and that you wear a mask. The testing will be provided free of charge and will be conveniently available, and once you are fully vaccinated that will no longer be necessary. We are also pleased that the Biden administration has indicated that it will allow full-time students with visas to enter the United States, regardless of other orders or restrictions that may be in place. But we are aware there continue to be some difficulties getting visas due to the backlog. Whatever the challenges, my colleagues and I are fully committed to working with each of you to overcome them. We ask that if you have not yet done so, please do complete the survey that the International Students and Scholars Program office sent out the week before last asking you to indicate what individual problems
you are anticipating might prevent you from getting here on time for the beginning of fall semester. If you have not completed that, please do as soon as you can. That will be a very important piece of information to help us help you get off to as regular a start as possible this fall.

Now, I would like to introduce a very distinguished panel we have with us this morning to answer your questions. I am very pleased to introduce our acting vice president for Student Affairs, Susan Davis; the director of our Student Health and Wellness Center, Dr. Chris Holstege; associate dean in the College of Arts & Sciences, Rachel Most; the director of Graduate Student Affairs in the Office of the Provost, Phil Trella; the director of our International Studies Office, Dudley Doane; and the director of our International Students and Scholars Program, Richard Tanson. I would like to encourage all of you to submit your questions in the Q&A box at the bottom of your screen. We will answer as many of your questions as we can during the next hour. With those opening remarks, it gives me great pleasure to introduce the acting vice president for Student Affairs, Susan Davis.

**COMMENTS BY PANELISTS**

**Susan Davis**

Good morning everyone. It is so great to be with you. We cannot wait to have you back, and if you are a new student, we cannot wait for you to come. We know how difficult it has been. It has been a difficult time here in the United States, and we know it has been especially difficult for you where you are. Student Affairs, in case you do not know, oversees areas outside the classroom and will impact your life in those areas, including through the Career Center, the Student Health and Wellness program, the Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS) and Housing & Residence Life. Certainly from the questions we saw in advance, the majority relate to Student Health and Wellness and some relate to Housing & Residence Life. Together with my colleague, Chris Holstege, we can answer questions related to vaccination and quarantine, for which we have a very easy process for you to navigate. We will be working closely with the International Studies Office (ISO), which is the front door for your arrival and for answering all your questions as you come to Charlottesville.

**Chris Holstege**

Students, welcome. We look forward to seeing you as you matriculate at the University of Virginia. I have a few matters to relay to you. The Student Health and Wellness Center is here to help you with your needs when it comes to health. We have really perfected our management in regards to the pandemic as well as other health cares that may come up. I want you to be aware that right now the prevalence of COVID is really low in our area, both in Virginia and in our immediate area, because our vaccinations have increased in the population, including students in the area. The other matter, so you are aware, is we are accepting all those vaccines that are authorized by the WHO (World Health Organization) on its Emergency Use List. All of those vaccines are accepted by the University as proof of vaccination. I understand many questions have come up about this. Finally, let me mention that if you are getting
vaccinated, or have the ability to get vaccinated, but cannot complete the vaccination series, please do start the vaccination process. Many of these vaccines are very effective. Even if you get just the first one, we will work with you to finish up your vaccination when you get here. I look forward to talking with you more.

Rachel Most

Welcome everybody. Good morning, good afternoon or good evening, whatever you time zone is. I am the associate dean for academic programs in the College of Arts & Sciences. Therefore, most of what I am going to discuss in the next few minutes pertains to Arts & Sciences. Our Summer Orientation Programs are focused on new first-year students and new transfer students. It is all virtual. We are focused on advising and on course enrollment for next fall. You likely already received several emails from us about this. We are going to start in June with some webinars. You will get an email on June 2 telling you how to register for one of those webinars. On June 4 you will be able to see your appointment time in our Student Information System, which we call SIS. That is the day and time during which you will enroll in your classes. We are going to send out a pre-enrollment survey to students for you to preselect some of your fall classes. Then all of our sessions throughout June and July will consist of a full-day of advising on Zoom, where you can drop in, ask general questions to our deans and staff, or go into a virtual breakout room for a private conversation. You can get your questions answered, and then on the next day you will enroll in your fall classes using SIS (Student Information System), and there will be help throughout that day as well. Most students will be limited to 13 credits. You will go back in August to complete your schedule.

I know that is a lot of information all at once. This is in all the emails we have sent and will continue to send. Much of it is on our Orientation & New Student Programs website as well. If as you read this information you have questions, you can email askthecollege@virginia.edu. We can direct you to the right place or answer your question within 24 hours. This is for academic questions about the College of Arts & Sciences. We look forward to welcoming you in the fall. Our faculty are really excited to get back into the classroom to teach as well. Thank you.

Dudley Doane

Good morning from Charlottesville everyone. We in the International Studies Office are very excited to welcome new students, as well as continuing students coming back to Charlottesville later this summer. Steve mentioned a survey we sent out about 10 days ago. Please complete that as soon as you can, but also be aware that in a few weeks (probably by mid-June), we will send out another survey that will ask you for arrival information. We realize that your travel plans may not be confirmed until later in the summer. You will be able to go back into the survey and update us once your plans are confirmed.

By working with our colleagues in Student Affairs and in the schools, we will be ready to welcome you and to assist you with getting from your arrival airport to Charlottesville, and with settling in once you actually come on Grounds. Our services will ramp-up again this fall semester with the Global Greeters Program, the VISAS Program (Volunteers with International Students and Scholars) and other programs for international students and scholars. We are very excited about transitioning from virtual to real-time, in-person services and to spending time with you face-to-face. We welcome you.
Phil Trella

Hello everyone. Rather than belabor the points my colleagues have already shared, I will just say that I know many of our graduate and professional students have been engaging in coursework remotely over the course of the past year, and we are really eager for you to be able to come to Grounds to begin the process of becoming fully immersed in your research and teaching activities here at the University. At the graduate level, we are very diverse. There are many different programs, with a dizzying array of start dates and different periods of transition into program. I encourage all of our students to stay in close contact with your specific program and with your department. However, if you have questions that your specific program is unable to answer or you do not know whom to ask, feel free to reach out to me directly with any questions you have at any time. I will be sure to connect you to the appropriate person in the area in which you are studying. That is a role I am happy to play. My email is based on my last name: trella@virginia.edu. Feel free to reach out to me directly. Many of the questions for graduate and professional students will be the same as they are for all students, regarding issues with vaccination and travel and so forth, so the other panelists can answer those questions. Anything specific to your graduate program, I am happy to help you and really look forward to meeting those of you who have been participating remotely over the course of the past year and to see you in person and to get to know you.

Richard Tanson

Good morning everyone. Let me echo the sentiments of all of my colleagues in welcoming you to the University. We are all extraordinarily excited, as our director has said, to return to a fully residential program. I know that all of you from around the world are very excited about that as well. We are anxious to get to the questions, so let me begin with a couple of important reminders. I want to remind everyone, especially if you are a new student or a student who has not yet been to study in the United States, you do need to begin the visa process through ISSP Connect, our online Immigration Portal. Please go to the portal, which you can find that on the ISSP website. The portal’s direct URL is: connect.issp.virginia.edu. Follow the Newly Admitted Students instructions. We will hold an orientation earlier than usual this year. We will hold a combined undergraduate and graduate orientation sometime in July, on a date to be announced later. It will be virtual. That will give you plenty of time to get the information you need. Finally, do remember that you need to pay attention to the start date on your visa document, as you are not allowed to enter the United States any earlier than 30 days prior to that date.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Question: What should I do if I can't get vaccinated in my home country before I come to the U.S.?

Chris Holstege

Regarding vaccines, the WHO Emergency Use List for COVID-19 has all the vaccines that are approved right now by the World Health Organization. The United States recognizes all those, and the University
will also accept all those vaccines. If you get a vaccine that is not on that list, then when you come to the University of Virginia you can come to Student Health, and we will work with you on your vaccination status, including working with the Virginia Department of Health. This is the same if you are partially vaccinated. We would like you to start your vaccination process regardless. If you cannot complete the vaccination series, we will work with you when you arrive to complete it here. The guidance is changing almost weekly on this, and I assume we will see a lot more changes before you arrive. We will make sure we have the most up-to-date guidance to work with you to make sure you are as immune as possible to COVID. I want to make sure you do not stop your vaccinations because you are worried you cannot complete the process in your country. Please do begin getting vaccinated now, and we will work with you once you get here. There are plenty of vaccines available here in Virginia.

**Question:** What should I do if I have been vaccinated with a vaccine that is not approved by the WHO for emergency use, such as the Sputnik vaccine?

**Chris Holstege**

What should a person do who has been vaccinated but not with a WHO approved vaccine? Again, if it is a non-approved vaccine, we will work with you, including with the Virginia Health Department, to see whether or not we will be vaccinating you with another vaccine that we have here in the United States. And there is good availability to do that. That is partially based on the concerns by the WHO, so that may not be as efficient as we would like. But again, that may change. We are seeing others vaccines recently added to the [Emergency Use Listing](https://www.fda.gov), and in the transition between now and your arrival that may occur for additional vaccines, in which case we would accept it if the WHO accepts it.

**Question:** If I cannot arrive on time for International Student Orientation due to visa issues will UVA allow me to start late?

**Rachel Most**

In terms of arrival, new students need to be here for the first day of class. When classes start, they hit the ground running. By the end of the first week, they are well into the course material, and we found over the years that students just cannot catch up and be successful. So for any new undergraduate student (first-year or transfer student), you really need to try to get here on time. If you cannot, you should contact the ISO and us to discuss a leave of absence or deferral. If you are a returning student, it depends on your program and the courses you are taking. You might be able to catch up, but it is very difficult to come in a week late and catch up on five classes at any level. We see students struggle when they are already a week behind or sometimes two weeks behind. It is not a good way to start. Each case will be a little different, but overall new students need to plan to be here for Orientation, which starts a few days before classes, and certainly by the first day of class.

**Susan Davis**

I will echo what Rachel shared. Regarding Student Affairs, we begin programming at [Move-In](https://www.movein.virginia.edu) and we want you to be able to participate in that, particularly if you are a first-year student who is required to live in residence. We have a number of programs related to health and safety, and a lot of community
bonding with other students on your floor and your Resident Advisor (RA), so we like you to arrive on time so you can experience all of that.

Phil Trella

If you are a graduate student this is one of those areas where you want to be in close contact with your program. Without knowing your program or school, it would be difficult to say. There is no question that every program will want their students to arrive on time before the first day of classes and before the orientation. Depending on your program, there may be contingency plans if you are unable to arrive on time. In other cases it might be impossible for you to arrive after that date. Be in contact with your school and specific program, and if you have any questions about who that might be or how to get an answer to that question, please reach out to me and ask, and I will help.

Richard Tanson

For graduate students, it is always up to the department as to whether you can arrive late and by which date, but remember your Form I-20 or DS-2019 Form has a start date on it. So if you are going to arrive with your department’s permission beyond that date, you also need to reach out to the ISSP as we would need to revise your start date.

Question: What are the quarantine requirements for students arriving from outside the United States?

Chris Holstege

There will be more guidance forthcoming on this topic. First of all, for those who are fully vaccinated with a vaccine on the WHO Emergency Use List, there is not a quarantine requirement. The State of Virginia does not have a quarantine requirement, however they do recommend after international travel to quarantine for seven days for those who are unvaccinated. At the University we are currently discussing how that might look if quarantine becomes required. There is more to come on that for those who are unvaccinated. But for fully vaccinated people, we are not anticipating any quarantine.

Susan Davis

We believe the expectation will remain in place that if you are not fully vaccinated you would test on arrival. We had a Pre-Arrival Testing process last year for students. We have convenient saliva testing locations on Grounds that you can access. The process we had in place last year was to work with the International Studies Office partners to understand your individual arrival dates, then direct you to be tested as needed if you are not fully vaccinated, and ask that you self-quarantine until negative results were back, typically about 48 hours. I expect that same process will continue in fall and do not see that changing for students who are unvaccinated.

Chris Holstege

Another consideration is the Virginia Department of Health’s recommendation about quarantine. For students, the University’s quarantine process has been perfected, and we have run through many
iterations. As Susan Davis said, testing facilities are really what ease of access and rapid turnaround with [PCR testing](https://www.uvahealth.com/services/lab-services/tests/rapid-covid-testing) are about.

**Question:** Regarding the University’s requirement that students upload proof of vaccination, is it sufficient to provide the certificate issued by my home country, or do I need to provide any additional documentation, since the certificate is issued by a foreign country? If I’m not coming to Grounds until the fall, must I upload my vaccination information by July 1, or could I upload it any time before I arrive on Grounds?

**Susan Davis**

I would say if you have a complete vaccination record please upload it now. We have over 10,000 students returning in the fall that have already done that. We are really trying to keep on track with our vaccine compliance, and this information helps us answer questions related to quarantine and other public health policies that we are considering. The other thing I want to share that is important to you all is that we are going to have separate forms that will soon be released. If you are not fully vaccinated and unable to upload that proof of vaccination document before July 1, we have a Religious Exemption Form, as well as a Medical Exemption Form that is available to all students, and particularly for the international students, we will have what we call a Temporary Waiver Form. If you are not going to be fully vaccinated by July 1, you will complete this Temporary Waiver Form and upload that instead. What that form reflects is that you are committed to be fully vaccinated by arrival or to start your vaccination process upon arrival, in which case we would give you some additional time to complete the vaccination series in a safe way. So that would be your proof that you have complied with the University’s vaccine process on or before July 1. Then when you complete the vaccination series here, you would upload that complete vaccination record. Those forms are not yet available. They are being reviewed and vetted now, and we anticipate they will be available within the coming days.

**Question:** As a research-only Ph.D. student, is it compulsorily that I attend UVA in-person in order to comply with SEVIS guidelines, and if not would I be able to teach remotely?

**Phil Trella**

Let me address the remote research and teaching question first. If the question is, “Can I conduct my teaching and research duties remotely from my home country?” then the answer is, “No.” The University actually has little control over this. Due to international tax law considerations, anyone who is working and earning wages from the University of Virginia for duties based here at the University, including teaching and research, needs to be within the U.S. in order to be able to receive their wages. There are other requirements too. You have to have an active [Form I-9](https://www.i-9central.com), a U.S. Social Security Number, a U.S. bank account, and so forth. You definitely cannot, even if you do have those things, conduct your duties from outside of the United States and do duties that are here at the University of Virginia. There are different considerations when it comes to working remotely from within the United States. I want to emphasize the point already made at the beginning of the session that we are expecting a fully residential, in-person experience in the fall. If you are conducting teaching-related duties, the expectation is that you would be here at UVA conducting those duties in-person. If you are engaged in research-related duties, then that is a discussion you should have with your Principal Investigator (PI) and supervisor, which would be the case under any circumstances. Even were COVID not an issue, you would still need to be working with
your supervisor and Principal Investigator in your department on whatever kind of plan you would have to work remotely. Under no circumstances could those duties be conducted while you are outside the borders of the United States.

Richard Tanson

It really is not an issue that is impacted by SEVIS. From an immigration perspective, as long as you are fully enrolled at the University, then you are maintaining status. So it really does devolve to University policy, which is if you are outside the United States, you cannot expect to receive funding under a Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA) or Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA).

**Question:** What advice do you have for students in India, for example, who are even unable to make a visa appointment until well after the start of classes in the fall?

Richard Tanson

It is an excellent question, and it is an unfortunate one that we even have to address. Obviously, we are all aware of the terrible events happening in India. Consulates are closing from north moving south, so the demand is far greater than the number of visa appointments available. This is not across the board, but generally speaking, students who have impending enrollment or matriculation do qualify for expedited or emergency appointments. Depending on the consulate, you can make the request for an expedited appointment either within 60 or 30 days. Make sure you go to the consulate website first, as in general you can only make this request once. You have the I-20, or whatever your document is, to show enrollment is pending, and the University can also provide letters that would support your application, but unfortunately your only recourse is to ask for the expedited appointment.

**Question:** If I have a late visa appointment that prevents me from arriving in time for start of classes, but I am able to make an arrangement with my dean's office to allow for a later start by a week or two after the date on my I-20, what proof do I need to show the visa officer that I will be able to enroll late?

Richard Tanson

Do remember that the start date on the I-20 is your arrive-by date. When you arrive at the port of entry, which is the airport for most students, and the Customs and Border Protection officers are inspecting your documents, they expect the date on your I-20 or DS-2019 to be on that same day or in the future. So if you made an arrangement with the department and you have approval, you want to forward that approval to the ISSP office (issp@virginia.edu) so we can change the start date of your visa document, assuming we are the ones who issued it, as is most likely the case.

Dudley Doane

If Student Affairs and a school approves a late arrival, then ISO/ISSP staff will be very happy to work with those students on getting to Charlottesville and settling-in, as we will with other students. Please remember to check the ISSP webpage (issp.virginia.edu) weekly for the remainder of the summer, as that is where we will post all pertinent updates, links to any important forms, like the ones Susan Davis mentioned earlier.
**Question:** If I applied for on-Grounds housing but am unable to come, because I am unable to get a flight or visa on time or whatever reason, will I be able to refund my housing or are there other remedies?

**Susan Davis**

There may not be refund remedies. Candidly, I am not fully up to speed on that particular matter. We did have refund programs in place last year. I really encourage all students, if you know now that it is unlikely you will make it, to let us know that soon, so you do not incur that cost. Some students choose to hold the room and pay for the room with the hope that they will get here, but that is really a personal choice. If you are uncertain that you will make it, I would encourage you to let us know now, and then when you are able to come, we will work with you to figure out a housing situation.

**Question:** Will UVA help organize buses, as they have in past years with the UVA Express, to transport students from Dulles airport to Charlottesville?

**Dudley Doane**

What we can say at this point is that we are ready to assist students with their transportation needs from their airport of arrival to Charlottesville. Whether or not we will have UVA Express organized is unknown at this point, because we will be looking at the actual student arrival information. With airline schedules somewhat in disarray and flights with less capacity, we are unsure there will be large numbers of people arriving on any particular day, for example at Dulles International Airport (IAD), but that could change, and we will be ready to assist students whether they come to Richmond International Airport (RIC), our regional airport in Charlottesville (CHO), or to one of the other Washington, D.C. area airports. Please look to the webpage for updates.

**Question:** I am a fourth-year international transfer student and have a visa from my previous college that expires on July 28. Will I be able to enter the United States with that visa, and if so by which date do you recommend I enter?

**Richard Tanson**

If you are transferring-in your status to UVA from another U.S. university, you can certainly use that visa until the expiry date. Frankly, it depends on what country you are from. If you are from a country that is operating under a National Interest Exemption of the travel restrictions for your country, such as China or India, as long as you enter within 30 days of August 1, so no earlier than July 2, then you should be able to enter.

**Question:** I am wondering if I need to get here extra

**Steve Mull**

Dr. Holstege, we still have a few more questions on vaccinations. We have explained a few times already that if you are not vaccinated, do not worry, you should come here and we will work with you to get you vaccinated, and until your vaccine takes effect you would need to be tested regularly and will need to wear a mask until your vaccine takes effect. Some students are wondering if they need to get here extra
early to allow time to be vaccinated and for the vaccine to take effect so they can start the semester without any of these restrictions.

**Question:** Do you recommend that students try to come early to get vaccinated?

**Chris Holstege**

That depends on housing for the students and their availability with time. Certainly, if they have the housing and availability of time, the vaccines are here. They are available readily to the public. We can help to facilitate vaccination, but there are a number of factors related to the personal life of those students, such as availability and some of those other aspects, that others can better address.

**Susan Davis**

I think that is a personal choice. I just received updated numbers since we have been on the webinar, and there are now over 11,000 students who have uploaded vaccines, so many students will be fully vaccinated when they arrive. If you are not vaccinated, then you would need to test weekly. A lot of students wanted to be vaccinated as soon as possible, so they could stop the weekly testing. If you are able to arrive early and you have off-Grounds housing, we can certainly help start your vaccination series over the summer and possibly you would be fully vaccinated before school starts in mid- to late-August.

**Question:** I have already received my first dose of the vaccine, but not the second. Is it okay to come to Charlottesville and get the second dose once I arrive, and how would that process work? Specifically, I received the first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine overseas, which is not being used in the United States, so how would that work for the second dose?

**Chris Holstege**

It is good to get the first vaccination. That will provide immunity and I would encourage everyone, if you have the availability, to do that. Once you come here, because you are not fully vaccinated, you would still be undergoing the prevalence testing and you would still have to be masking until you were fully vaccinated. We would have Student Health work with you to coordinate where you would get the vaccination here. If it was one that was not available in the United States, we would work with the Virginia Department of Health as to what your series would be with the vaccines here, most likely with a different vaccine in full series, but that guidance has been changing over time. We would work with the best information we have from the WHO, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Virginia Department of Health to make sure you got fully vaccinated and keep your immunity up too.

**Steve Mull**

So your advice is if you have the opportunity to get even one vaccine before coming here, then get it, and we will work with you to complete the process after you arrive.

**Chris Holstege**
I cannot stress that enough. I have said it a number of times: please get that vaccination. Even the first vaccination will get your immunity up and keep you safe during travels especially.

*Question: Will there be an option for virtual orientation?*

**Susan Davis**

Summer Orientation by Student Affairs is two components. There is a program in July that includes our academic colleagues, who play a big role in that, which is entirely virtual for everyone. Students in the U.S. and outside the U.S. will all participate in that virtually. The second component is around Move-in Weekend in August, and that orientation programming is in-person. It is for first-year students and based on their dorm configurations and is done in-person. It is not done remotely.

*Question: As a visiting scholar, when can I apply for the DS-2019 Form?*

**Richard Tanson**

It is not the visiting scholar who applies for the DS-2019. It is the sponsoring department. You need to reach out to the department that is sponsoring you to begin the process, and then ultimately part of that application will come to you, but it has to be initiated by the department. I would reach out to them, and it is not too early to do so.

*Question: I have stayed in China for more than five months. Will I need to apply for a new visa even if my current visa and I-20 are both valid?*

**Richard Tanson**

You do not need to apply for a new visa. The Five-Month Rule has been suspended since last year under the COVID allowances and those allowances are still intact for this academic year, so you do not have to worry about that.

*Question: What is the earliest date that I can move in to the dormitory?*

**Susan Davis**

This varies depending on whether you are an undergraduate or graduate student. We do not have a large number of graduate student housing. Those tend to be 12-month leases that begin in the summer, typically in July. For returning undergraduate students, those move-in dates are still being set, because we may bring students back a couple days earlier for orientation programming, but the third week in August is what we are targeting right now. That is roughly the time frame. If you have a need for a move-in date earlier in the week, but not much earlier, then sometimes we are able to accommodate that. Once we know your travel plans through our colleagues in the International Studies Office, we will work with you the best we can.

*Question: As a graduate student, will I be able to teach from abroad to meet my teaching requirement?*
Phil Trella

I will repeat the prior answer in brief. There are a couple of different layers to this consideration. The first question is, “Can any student or any UVA employee conduct University-related duties from outside the country?” The answer is, “No. You cannot do that.” I cannot do that. Steve Mull cannot do that. No one here can do that. We cannot conduct our university-related duties for extended periods of time while sitting outside of the country. The answer to that question is, “No,” whether you are conducting research or whether you are conducting teaching. If you are asking whether you can conduct those duties virtually from within the United States, then that is a different consideration. If you are teaching, our expectation is to have a fully in-person, residential experience here at the University of Virginia. The students you are teaching will be in classrooms here, which means in all likelihood the expectation will be for you to teach in-person here at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville where your students are. If it is research, it might be a little bit different. I would strongly encourage you to discuss with your supervisor. This is not a COVID-related consideration. At any time, students or employees may receive special dispensation to do pieces of their work remotely, such as from home, but that is really a program-specific question and a question to discuss with your supervisor.

**Question:** As a graduate student, I count on a stipend as part of my work at the University, so if I cannot come to the United States because of a visa-related issue will I still be paid?

Phil Trella

I would encourage students to reach out to their department. It may be possible for students to receive a full fellowship with no associated duties or employment-related duties whatsoever. In the case of a full fellowship, if a student has the things they need in order to receive funding from the University, such as an active visa, a U.S. Social Security Number, a completed Form I-9, and a U.S. bank account, then it may be possible for those students to receive fellowship aid that is independent of—and does not require service to—the University. So if it is not teaching or research related duties, then it may be possible, but do reach out to your department first to see if that is even an option, and feel free to reach out to me and we can work with your department on any other associated questions.

**Question:** Is it acceptable to upload proof of vaccination that is in a foreign language?

Chris Holstege

In regards to the vaccine, that is an excellent question. I would upload whatever official documents you have, and we will work on those documents with our colleagues, especially if they are in a foreign language. If we have questions about those documents in a foreign language, then we will contact you. From my team’s standpoint, the earlier you upload those documents, the better. They are usually fairly quick in getting those processed so you can be checked off the list.

**Question:** I know I am not going to be able to get vaccinated before arrival. Do I need to proactively notify Student Health or Student Affairs that I will arrive unvaccinated, and if so how would that work?

Chris Holstege
If you are not vaccinated, we will know that when you arrive. We are keeping a list of all the unvaccinated students, as Susan Davis had stated, and we will work with those students to get vaccinated.

**Susan Davis**

There will be a form you will sign. This mandate takes effect on July 1. Prior to that date, if you are not in the country and are not fully vaccinated and so have not uploaded your vaccine record, you will complete the Temporary Waiver Form that asserts you are in a country where supply is limited. We understand some countries may have vaccine, but may be restricted to certain age groups, for example, which is restricting your ability to get vaccinated in your country. So you would upload that Temporary Waiver Form on or before July 1, instead of your vaccine record. We anticipate having those forms available very soon.

**Steve Mull**

There continues to be a number of questions about quarantine, and students are saying they still do not understand if they will need to quarantine or not. That is totally understandable, because as we have said, we do not yet know what the quarantine requirement will be when the semester begins in August. As Dr. Holstege mentioned in the beginning, this is a rapidly developing situation that involves getting guidance from both the Federal Government, the Virginia Department of Health, and knowing what the emerging COVID picture will be like here in the Charlottesville area, which as Dr. Holstege mentioned is quite low-risk now.

*Question: Is there anything further you can say about quarantine?*

**Chris Holstege**

To reiterate, I know everyone is concerned about this. If you are fully vaccinated with one of the approved emergency-listed vaccines, we are not anticipating any quarantine for you. If you are not fully vaccinated, there will be some type of quarantine that is yet to be determined, so we can test to assure that you do not have the disease, have not picked up the disease, and will not introduce it into the community. The specifics of that requirement is still forthcoming. We expect certainly no later than June 15 to have clarity on that requirement. The only caveat being the Federal Government and the State Government may change the rules, in which case we will communicate that to you if that does occur.

*Question: If I arrive and am not yet fully vaccinated, will I be allowed to move in to on-campus housing?*

**Susan Davis**

Yes. We anticipate allowing students to move in to on-campus housing even if they are not fully vaccinated. Again, you will be testing weekly, as students did this year. We had students in residence halls this year, and there was not vaccine available in the United States for them until late this spring. That was the regimen last year. But yes, you will be permitted to enter if you have a housing contract.

*Question: I have changed my passport nationality, how should I apply for a new I-20?*
Richard Tanson

Just send your request to our general email (issp@virginia.edu) along with a copy of the new passport data page (ID page).

**Question:** My passport is due to expire in May 2022. Is it possible to upload my current passport for the I-20 Form and continue with the application through ISSP, and then update my passport once I receive the new one?

Richard Tanson

Absolutely. Do not worry about the passport issue. Just get working on the I-20 process. For everyone, you should be working on the visa document process as soon as possible.

**Question:** Is there an option for online instruction available for students who cannot enter the U.S. due to delay in flights or visa issuance?

Steve Mull

The answer to that is, as we said at the beginning, our goal is to have a fully in-person experience this fall. As of now, we are not anticipating to open an option for everyone to take online instruction. We are really urging everyone to get here to participate in-person if possible. However, if you believe you will not be here on-time, please complete the survey we sent out a couple weeks ago, identify yourselves to us as having that problem, and we will work with you to see what will be possible. In some cases, the most realistic option, as Rachel Most said earlier, will be to defer admission. If you are a first-year student and cannot be here on the first day of classes, it will be very difficult for you to have a full semester experience. So we will get in touch if you are in that situation to figure out what your options are. To defer either for the spring or for a whole year are both options. There is a possibility we will have a small number of online classes available, and we can work with you to get you in those classes if it fits your degree program, and then supplement what you would otherwise miss through the J-term in January or next year’s summer term. There may be any number of ways to accommodate that.

**Question:** What is the latest date I can confirm my decision to defer admission?

Steve Mull

Traditionally it has been July 1, so any time before July 1 will be fine. If people need more time to make the decision, let us know, and we will see what we can do.

**Question:** What would happen if I arrive in Charlottesville and when I take my first test upon arrival I test positive for COVID?

Chris Holstege

That depends in part on where that student is living. We certainly had plenty of this in the last two semesters. If they are in a University of Virginia housing unit, we do have housing units that are dedicated
for isolation. Currently that isolation would be seven days for resolution if there are no associated symptoms. If off-campus, the person who tests positive can either isolate in their off-campus housing or there is a potential to be put in on-campus housing if necessary. There is housing that is set aside for isolation for those who test positive.

**Question:** If I can only get a flight that arrives a week earlier than I normally would have arrived, is there any way to arrange for an early move-in to the dormitory?

**Susan Davis**

Again, the best thing to do is communicate through that [survey](mailto:issp@virginia.edu) to ISO what your travel plans are, and we will work with you. If we cannot get you in immediately, you may be directed to a local option, a private hotel for example, until we can move you in. So please continue to communicate with the International Studies Office so we can work with you.

**Steve Mull**

With that, I want to thank everybody in our audience for tuning-in around the world from different time zones and to everybody on our distinguished panel. We have tried to get to as many of your questions as possible, but if we have still not been able to answer yours, please communicate it to [issp@virginia.edu](mailto:issp@virginia.edu), and we will do our best to answer questions. And once again, if you have not completed the [survey](mailto:issp@virginia.edu), please do so. Thank you all very much for joining us. We are so excited to get you here in the fall. We look forward to seeing you all then.

All the best to you. Thank you.

**Thank you for joining us for the Town Hall. Send your questions to:**

issp@virginia.edu

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*The above audio transcript has been edited for clarity and brevity by the UVA China Office.*