Note - This is referring to students who are currently enrolled not incoming students who are set to matriculate for the Fall 2020 semester

**Can independent studies count as an in person class?**

Yes if there is an in person component, it is still not clear what percentage of the class has to be in person versus online.

**Is there a threshold of how many classes/hours in person?**
**Would 5 in person sessions - would that work for a hybrid?**

At this time there is no guidance on the percentage of sessions that have to be in person versus online.

**If we are online and an international student is abroad can they get paid?**

We don't have an answer for this yet. We have reached out to an attorney to find out what our legal options are. We do know that if a student is not on a F1 visa, they can't be employed. We don't know if we can send payment for fellowships abroad as we don't know what the law is regarding transferring funds to foreign nationals. We know that tuition fellowships can be disbursed, regardless of the student's location or visa status.

**Level 2 who needed one course - Could they take an online course and register for 3 WIU Is that good enough?**

There has to be an in person component as we have to write in their sevis record and certify that the school is not operating totally online.

**Is there any explicit indication that the level 3 student exemption will continue?**

We expect level 3 students and level 2 students who have completed their coursework to be registered either for Dissertation Supervision or for 7 weighted instructional units (WIU) and this would be acceptable to maintain their status.

**Can students return in spring 2021 and take a leave in the fall?**

Yes, but unless it is a medical leave they would need to depart the US, and their SEVIS record would need to be closed for the fall 2020 semester. We would submit a request to SEVP to reactivate their SEVIS record, to be able to use an I-20 with the same SEVIS Number and their current F-1 visa (if it has not expired) to enter the U.S. for spring 2021.

**Leaves**
If a student decides to take a leave please make sure to remind your students to apply for a fellowship deferment which is additional documentation beyond leave of absence

NEW POLICY DUE TO COVID- We will allow for a third semester of deferment

Is the international student office connecting with the wellness center and the union as the situation is causing anxiety?

Yes - they are offering webinars and are actively working with students to assist in relieving their anxiety among other things. The international student office forwards all wellness center announcements to their listserv.

Can CUNY join the lawsuit with Harvard and MIT?

It would be a CUNY decision not a Graduate Center decision

Do we need to know options for F1 students - will it impact students still in the country?

If the SEVP policy for hybrid is the way it was originally released - if people are outside of the US and cannot come back and we are hybrid they will need to remain outside the US and we would need to close their sevis record and F1 status. If it came to that we could submit a request to reactivate their status when the time was right. We are seeking additional clarification to see if this scenario is a realistic one.

How does this impact students who might need to leave the country for field research?

If the course work is completed and these students are registered for dissertation supervision it won’t impact them as they are considered to be enrolled full time and working on their dissertation overseas. The international students office needs to check the appropriate box in the students’ sevis record to indicate that they are doing their dissertation research abroad. The International Students Office requires an email from the academic program confirming the student will be enrolled full-time for fall 2020 while working on their dissertation research abroad.

If a course is designated hybrid - is there any oversight?

How would they know?

The Office of International Students is required to register the SEVIS record of international students each semester. This requirement remains unchanged by the SEVP policy guidance released 7/6/2020 and 7/7/2020. Prior to registering the SEVIS record, the Office of International Students must check that international students are enrolled full-time and are in compliance with Federal Regulations. The Office of International Students is unable to register a SEVIS record if a student is not enrolled per the regulatory requirements and will contact
students directly to review the enrollment requirements and encourage the student to enroll accordingly to comply with the federal regulations governing their legal status in the US.

The Graduate Center is also susceptible to audits as there are SEVP field representatives who meet with the international student services office to review compliance with the Federal Regulations and reporting requirements. The operational plan for fall 2020 will also be submitted to SEVP and they will have access to the course schedule data.

We need to submit our operational plan to CUNY

The operational plan for the Hybrid model must be submitted to SEVP by August 1, 2020. The Office of International Students will be required to issue all our international students updated I20s indicating the fall 2020 operational plan by no later than August 4, 2020.

If students were doing independent research in a lab that would that count as an in-person class?

Two immigration attorneys that the international students office consulted said a lab would meet that requirement.

Can we announce that we are going to be hybrid?

No, not yet. We are working with the EOs and Masters Program Directors to create a hybrid plan that will have to be submitted for formal approval.

Can off campus locations work?

No - we are not accredited for other locations. The I-17 which is our accreditation documentation in SEVIS covers all of the CUNY campuses so it would be possible to hold in person sessions on CUNY campuses other than The Graduate Center.

Students who are medically compromised?

We can try and get an exemption for them by submitting a doctor’s letter and applying for a medical reduced course load authorization or an accommodation.