

Dear COE graduate students,

As the start of a new academic year approaches, many of us no doubt are experiencing a combination of anticipation and apprehension. While we are eager to continue providing all students a transformative educational experience, the COVID-19 pandemic remains a serious concern and will continue to affect how we operate.

Our top priority at all times is the health, safety, and success of students, faculty and staff. Toward that end, OSU has committed to a reduced on-campus presence of people during fall term, as [announced Aug. 12 by President F. King Alexander and Provost Ed Feser](#). Understandably, there are a lot of questions about what the fall term will look like. This message aims to answer at least some of those questions, and express how we can keep learning, teaching, and working while contributing to the community's safety.

- The college will accommodate all requests from students who wish to take engineering courses remotely.
- Research is anticipated to continue unimpeded. Most COE research labs have developed extensive public health protocols to contribute to safety and maintain graduate student research productivity.
- The college has reduced on-campus courses as much as possible without negatively impacting student learning and experience. Therefore, most graduate teaching assistants should be able to work remotely. It is very unlikely that GTAs will need to teach face-to-face. Check the posted course schedule and if you have concerns about the modality of your teaching assignment, please consult the instructor of record or the school.
- Domestic students (or international students holding current visa) may hold graduate assistant positions without needing to be present in Corvallis.
- Most programs allow self-funded students to defer enrollment if they are unable to travel to Corvallis before the start of term.
- For students receiving support through a graduate appointment, deferrals must be approved by the school.
- The university and College of Engineering will continue to work under a scalable set of operational levels that will be based upon local public health conditions. For more information on the university's operational and public health policies and plans, please visit [COVID-19 website](#).
- All students should familiarize themselves with OSU's public health and safety policies, including those regarding [face coverings](#) and [physical distancing](#).

#### **Important Information for International Students**

- New students who are able to enter the U.S. should plan to take a full-time course schedule that includes at least one in-person component. This in-person requirement can be fulfilled by a course offered in "blended" modality, a fully in-person course, or research credits. Consult your advisor or graduate program coordinator.
- New students with F-1 visas may enter the U.S. for fall term to attend courses as long as OSU plans to offer some in-person instruction. New students who remain outside the U.S. for fall term may make progress in their academic programs by enrolling in our remote or Ecampus online learning options.
- Continuing students (students who were enrolled as of March 9, 2020) are not required to take in-person classes to maintain their visa status.
- If Oregon State's campuses are required to move to remote-only instruction, this change should not impact F-1 visa holders' ability to remain in the U.S. to complete courses remotely or online.

I encourage you to continue to engage your creativity and engineering skills to find innovative ways to support each other. Together, we can meet the unique challenges before us and I know that we will persevere.

Please refer frequently to the resources below for the latest information, and do not hesitate to ask questions or to communicate your concerns.

Sincerely,

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## Additional Information and Resources

- [COVID-19 website](#)
- [COVID-19 Safety & Success for Teaching Faculty](#)
- [OSU Safety Policies: Face Covering Policy, Physical Distancing Policy](#)
- [Fall Path 2020 video](#)
- [Academic Catalog and Schedule of Classes](#)
- [Registration for university-wide teaching modality workshops](#)

## Definitions of instructional modalities

1. **On-site/In-person:** Instruction is delivered in person at the scheduled time (synchronously<sup>a</sup>), primarily in the classroom. There may be some remote attendance.
2. **Blended:** A course format having both on-campus and remote elements. Some components include synchronous learning.
3. **Remote:** Students attend class sessions remotely at scheduled times (synchronously). If other remote work is performed outside scheduled meeting times, it must be done asynchronously<sup>b</sup>, so as not to conflict with another class or scheduled event.
4. **Ecampus:** Fully online (asynchronous). Participating via Canvas. No synchronous meetings (optional office hours via Zoom are encouraged).

<sup>a</sup>**Synchronous:** Course components for which instructor and students meet on scheduled days and times as a class (meetings may be face-to-face in classrooms, remote using Zoom, or a combination).

<sup>b</sup>**Asynchronous:** Course component with no required specific class meeting times. These components are structured around weekly tasks and deadlines, and students interact with instructors and other students using Canvas tools and other technologies.