FACULTY & STAFF: PANDEMIC SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

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* Please note the information presented in these slides is current as of **May 4, 2020** and is subject to change.

** For the most up to date information, you are advised to visit the [Immigration, Refugees & Citizenship Canada (IRCC) website](https://www.canada.ca)
Overview

- FGSR Update
- Impacts to Current Students
  - Study status (part-time/leave) and immigration implications
  - Online studies and immigration implications
  - Capstone/oral defense extensions without registration
  - Financial
  - Other (Social Insurance Number, Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan)
- Impacts to New Students
  - Travel restrictions
  - IRCC service disruptions
  - Online studies and immigration implications
- Question time
FGSR: We’re Here to Help!

- New policies and procedures continue to be developed as the university navigates the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis
- FGSR provides regular e-updates to students (hosted on our COVID-19 page) and department coordinators/administrators
- Ideally, the first point of contact for students with questions is their departmental graduate contacts
- Students and administrators are always welcome to reach out to us with questions about how to navigate situations
Impacts to Current Students
Study Status and Working On/Off Campus:

- Leave or part-time studies due to COVID-19 will not affect the students’ eligibility for working on or off-campus (as long as all other conditions are met)

- Support letter from FGSR may be needed (student emails grad.mail@ualberta.ca to request letter)
Temporary Removal of Off-Campus Work Restriction for Students Working in Essential Services and Functions:

- Thesis-based students will still be restricted to working a maximum of 20 hours/week except for students who are working in
  - health care
  - critical infrastructure (water, sewage, water testing, communication maintenance etc)
  - supply of food or other critical goods

- Food workers include:
  - Workers supporting groceries, pharmacies and other outlets (such as convenience and pet food stores)
  - Restaurant employees necessary to support take-out and food delivery operations
Study Status and Post Graduation Work Permit (PGWP):

- Leave or part-time studies due to COVID-19 will **not** affect the students’ eligibility for PGWP (as long as all other conditions are met)

- Support letter from Faculty confirming this will be needed

- Student emails grad.mail@ualberta.ca to request letter
Online Course Delivery and Working:

- Students are still eligible to work on- and off-campus

- Students remain eligible for PGWP (as long as all other conditions are met including having a valid SP during online studies)

- The total length of program will be considered when determining the length of PGWP including the online portion
Capstone Project or Oral Defense Extensions with No Registration:

- If extension is a result of COVID-19 & extends beyond a couple of weeks of following term
  → a support letter is required to support student’s PGWP application

- If extension is not a result of COVID-19 & extends for a month or more
  → student is advised to register for that term
Financial Impacts:

- Student Financial Support (SFS) and International Student Services (ISS) have been working to facilitate emergency funding for students with financial shortfalls related to COVID-19 for Spring/Summer terms.
- Emergency Funding will continue to those eligible for Spring and Summer.
- For the latest information on financial support through SFS and ISS visit: [uab.ca/bursaries](http://uab.ca/bursaries)
Financial Impacts:

- Students who meet eligibility requirements can apply for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)
- Students who meet requirements can apply for Employment Insurance (EI)
- Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB) is not open to international students at this time.
Social Insurance Number

- Students whose SIN will be expiring soon or has already expired and are waiting for a new study permit can need for a SIN renewal online once the **new study permit has arrived**.


- Expired SIN will not affect their employment status. If their employers ask for valid SIN, they can show the expired SIN and still be able to work and get paid. If their employers have any concerns, they can contact Service Canada.
Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan (AHCIP)

- Alberta Health will extend health coverage for international students 90 days from when their study permit expires, if they have applied to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada to change or extend their study permit.
- To receive the extension, international students can call 780-427-1432.
- The call centre is open from 8:15am-4:30pm, excluding holidays.
Health Care Insurance - COVID 19

All international students will be covered for COVID-19 related medical assistance regardless of whether or not they have health insurance coverage.

- Treating international students with symptoms/illness related to COVID-19 is in the public interest, and these health costs will be covered by Alberta’s pandemic response.
Other Implications:

Student who may be faced with other issues whether personal or immigration related can contact the ISS International Student Advisors:

- Email: advising@ualberta.ca

- Online: through our daily advising sessions from M-F between 10 am & 4 pm using this link: meet.google.com/yyd-aido-xnz
Impacts to New Students
Travel Restrictions Implications:

- As of March 18, 2020 travel restrictions have been put in place on foreign nationals including new students.

- Travel exemptions are in place for international students but only for those who were approved or issued a study permit before March 18th.

- If nothing changes over the summer months, new students may not be able to enter Canada in time for September start.
IRCC Service Disruptions Implications:

- All new students are required to apply ONLINE during COVID-19

- Due to closures or limited services of many Visa Application Centres; students can expect processing delays (processing times posted may not be accurate)
Online Course Delivery and Starting New Program:

- **Students admitted to start in May:**
  - Can start their studies online from home country
  - Do not need a valid study permit to study remotely
  - The online period *may* affect the length of the PGWP they are eligible for

- **Students admitted to start in September:**
  - If University decides on delivering courses online, the same applies
  - If in-person classes resume, students will be able to start only if they have been approved for a study permit AND the travel restrictions have been removed
Helpful Links

IRCC:

CERB:
https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application.html

EI: https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei.html

UAlberta COVID 19: https://www.ualberta.ca/covid-19/index.html

Instructions for Returning Travellers:
Questions

** All follow up questions can be emailed to:

advising@ualberta.ca