



**December 20, 2022**

[ISSS HOLIDAY WISHES](#)

[UNIVERSITY OPERATING STATUS FOR SPRING 2023](#)

[COVID RELATED GUIDANCE FOR SPRING 2023](#)

[OBTAIN A TRAVEL SIGNATURE ON AN I-20 OR DS-2019 BEFORE INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL](#)

[UPDATES AND REMINDERS](#)

### **ISSS HOLIDAY WISHES**

Your friends at Rutgers Global wish you a happy and healthy holiday season. We are proud of your resilience, learning, and success as we come to the end of this semester. We hope you find joy in whatever makes you happy during the winter recess, and we wish you a safe and prosperous New Year.

### **UNIVERSITY OPERATING STATUS FOR SPRING 2023**

Rutgers will continue to operate in a primarily in-person mode of instruction in spring 2023. The spring semester begins on January 17, 2023 and all students are expected to be on campus and in classes from the first day of the semester (in-person or remote, based on your academic schedule). Please plan your travels accordingly.

For international students who are unable to arrive on time because of extenuating circumstances (e.g., visa, travel or health-related circumstances), we encourage you to discuss your academic schedule and plan with your program/school.

### **COVID RELATED GUIDANCE FOR SPRING 2023**

Current guidance from SEVP/ICE will continue through the spring semester. Please review the following resources for current information:

- [COVID Related International Student FAQ](#)
- [Rutgers Global – Alerts](#)
- [Universitywide COVID-19 Information](#)

All students must be compliant with the [COVID-19 Immunization Record Requirement for Students, Policy 10.3.14](#). Up to date means completing a primary series (2 doses of Pfizer, 2 doses of Moderna, or 1 dose of J&J OR a full series of a WHO authorized vaccine) as well as a booster once eligible. Students must upload proof of COVID-19 vaccination OR have an approved exemption request.

If you are not compliant with policy, please submit your records as soon as possible through the [Rutgers Immunization Portal](#). Failure to comply with the Policy may impact current and future registration and access to official university documents.

## **OBTAIN A TRAVEL SIGNATURE ON AN I-20 OR DS-2019 BEFORE INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL**

If you are planning to travel internationally during the upcoming holidays, please exercise caution and review the [Travel and Visa Information webpage](#) for further detailed travel guidance, resources, and tips. The travel signature on the I-20 or DS-2019 is valid for 12 months (6 months for students on OPT) and confirms that the student is in valid legal status and eligible to return to the United States to resume their programs.

### **APPLYING FOR A TRAVEL SIGNATURE**

1. Visit the [Travel Signature Request Procedure](#) page on our website. Check your I-20 or DS-2019 to see when it was last signed for travel. If you have received a travel signature within 12 months of your anticipated return to the United States, you do not need a new signature at this time. Visit the travel signature page on our website for guidance on whether you need a new travel signature on your I-20 or DS-2019.
2. Complete the [Travel Signature Request E-Form](#) on the RGlobal Portal.
3. **Your document will be ready within 5 business days.** We will email you an I-20 that has been digitally signed for travel. J-1 students will require an original DS-2019 and will need to complete the [Document Mailing Request E-Form](#) on the RGlobal Portal. Be sure to safely keep all your previous I-20s/DS-2019s.
4. **Report International Travel.** Any time you have international travel planned (departing and/or entering the U.S.), we ask that you report this to us via the **International Travel Plans e-form** in the [RGlobal portal](#) (found under Travel & Location Information). It is separate from the existing [Travel Signature Request E-form](#) referenced above in Step 2.

## **UPDATES AND REMINDERS**

## **REDUCED CREDIT/COURSE LOAD – SPRING 2023 DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2023**

To maintain legal status, all F-1 and J-1 students must pursue a full course of study at all times. This means being registered for a full credit load (12 credits for undergraduates and 9 credits for graduate students). There are cases, however, in which regulations consider a student to be pursuing a full course of study even though he or she is NOT actually registered for a full credit load. For example, undergraduates who only need 1 or 2 classes to complete their program, or graduate students who have completed all coursework but are still conducting thesis or dissertation research, might be considered to be pursuing a full course of study even though not registered for 9 credits.

If you will be registered for less than a full-time credit load in Spring 2023, you **MUST** submit a "Reduced Credit/Course Load" e-form to ISSS using the [RGlobal portal](#). You need approval from our office for less than full-time enrollment in any semester. The form can be completed online and will require your graduate program director/academic dean's approval. Please review our website for instructions and information about the process to submit this form. The deadline for submitting the form is **Friday, February 10**.

Please check the [University's academic calendar](#) for the appropriate add/drop dates for the last date to drop classes without a "W" grade.

Bear in mind that it takes 3-4 days to process the form after receipt and we cannot guarantee timely processing of forms received after the deadline. This could mean loss of legal status and you will need to leave the country or apply for a reinstatement process with the government. Remember, the "Reduced Credit/Course Load" e-form can be submitted at any time before the deadline, even before the semester starts.

### **FINAL SEMESTER?**

Are you finishing your degree requirements this semester? If so, congratulations! Be sure to review our [graduating students page](#) for important guidance on your next steps. Please note that we do not recommend traveling outside the U.S. if you have already completed your degree requirements and plan to re-enter the U.S. in your current status. If you have questions about traveling during your grace period, please visit our [advising services page](#) and consult with an international student adviser.

### **EXTENSION OF PROGRAM**

If you will not complete your program before the end date on your I-20/DS-2019, you must request an extension of your program. Please remember that any delay in completing

program requirements must have been caused by compelling academic reasons (such as a change of major, change in research topic, or unexpected research problems) or medical reasons (documented by a licensed medical practitioner). Please review the [Extension of Program webpage](#) for more information about eligibility requirements and instructions.

## UPCOMING OFFICE AND UNIVERSITY CLOSURES

Please note that ISSS will offer only remote advising appointments and QQA on Thursday, December 22 and Friday, December 23. Remote advising and QQA will be suspended after 12:00 p.m. on Friday, December 23. There will be no in-person services available at 180 College Avenue starting Wednesday, Dec 21. We remain available to assist you remotely until we close for the holidays on Dec 23. For details about how to attend remote QQAs, please visit our website at: <https://global.rutgers.edu/advising>.

The office will be closed for the holiday break from Monday, December 26, 2022 through Monday, January 2, 2023. We will reopen at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, January 3, 2023.

Take care, stay safe, and happy holidays!  
Rutgers Global – ISSS

This periodic update from the Rutgers Global – International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) office provides you with important information regarding your legal status, upcoming programs, and useful resources. Previous updates can be found on our [Email Notices page](#).

These notices are automatically sent to all nonimmigrant students enrolled at Rutgers–New Brunswick and Rutgers–Biomedical and Health Sciences. Most messages, however, apply only to F–1 and J–1 students. We label most messages to facilitate your identification of which messages may apply to you personally. All F–1 and J–1 students on Rutgers’ visa sponsorships are required to know the information that is provided in these notices and to follow reminders and instructions that apply to their own situations.

This is NOT a subscription email list. These notices are sent periodically to an automatically generated list. If you are a permanent resident or citizen of the U.S and should not be receiving these notices, please contact ISSS:

### **New Brunswick**

848–932–7015

[iss-students@global.rutgers.edu](mailto:iss-students@global.rutgers.edu)

### **RBHS**

973–972–6138

[iss-rbhs@global.rutgers.edu](mailto:iss-rbhs@global.rutgers.edu)