

Faculty FAQs for International Students

Thank you for all the work that you do to support our students here at DePaul. The below FAQs are designed to assist faculty in understanding the international student experience, and how policies and procedures may impact students' immigration status. This information is to help you better understand the students' context and should not be used to advise students regarding immigration rules. Each student's situation is unique and affects the application of the federal regulations. Please refer students with specific questions to their ISS Advisor.

1. I am teaching a Flex class and a student is asking me to sign a form. What is this FLEX form? Why do I have to sign it? Do I have to take attendance?

International students enrolled in a Flex class are expected to attend all class sessions in-person as Flex courses count as in-person courses. International in-person students must maintain the [Confirmation of In-Person Attendance Form](#) with all of the dates of in-person attendance. As the faculty member teaching the course, please sign the form at mid-term and again at finals. It is the student's responsibility to maintain attendance records. FLEX classes do not extend your responsibility to take attendance outside of the typical situations (FX grades, mid-term reports etc.) Each student is accountable for understanding the latest rules and regulations applicable to international students and their visas. If students have questions, please refer them to [International Student & Scholars Services](#) at DePaul.

2. An international student is failing my class. Why aren't they dropping it to preserve their GPA?

International students are required to maintain a full-time course load. Dropping below full-time by withdrawing from a class may jeopardize their legal immigration status which could have far-reaching consequences for them. International students have been advised to contact their ISS Advisors PRIOR to dropping any class to determine whether the withdrawal will affect their visa status.

3. Can an international student attend my class online?

International students may count one online course toward their full-time course load each term. As a result, international students may take online courses. Since FLEX courses are coded as in-person courses, international students are required to attend FLEX classes in person. Each student is accountable for understanding the latest rules and regulations applicable to international students and their visas. If students have questions, please have them contact the [International Student & Scholars Services](#) at DePaul.

4. *Can you explain what a full-time load is for an international student and what the relationship is to online classes?*

International students must maintain a full-time credit load during the academic year. This varies by program and educational level (see chart below). F-1 students may count only one online course towards their full-course of study enrollment requirement for each term, regardless of how many credits the online course is worth.

Undergraduate students	12 credits per quarter
Graduate students	8 credits per quarter
Graduate Music students	6 credits per quarter
College of Law JD students	12 credits per semester
College of Law LLM & MLS students	9 credits per semester
English Language Academy (ELA) students	4 courses per quarter

5. *Students seem to be struggling with English in my class. Where can I refer them?*

Students who are struggling with English can be referred to the International Resource Center (IRC). Referrals can be made through BlueStar or via email IRC@depaul.edu. Please continue to refer students to the [Writing Center](#) for writing support.

6. *I have an international student with an academic integrity violation. What should I do?*

The equitable application of the academic integrity policy is critical to maintaining our learning community. Faculty should apply the academic integrity policy equally across all student groups. For international students, faculty should follow the academic integrity policy and as with all students, clearly identify the violation and direct students to resources to avoid violations in the future.

7. What is the difference between an F and an FX for international students?

As stated in the catalog, a grade of F indicates “The instructor judged the student NOT to have accomplished the stated objectives of the course.”

A grade of FX indicates “Student failed to accomplish the stated objectives of the course due to non-attendance. Non-attendance is defined as never attending or ceasing to attend an in-person course (or never participating or ceasing to participate in an online course) without officially withdrawing. The FX is calculated into the student's GPA as an F. Instructors are required to provide the last date of attendance/participation.”

In the case of international students, an FX grade can jeopardize a student's legal immigration status as it indicates that a student has dropped the class due to non-attendance.

FX grades should be used in the case of students who stopped attending and did not return for the end of the quarter. Students who did not meet the course objectives due to substandard work or those who only missed the final should be awarded an “F” in accordance with DePaul Grading policies.

8. A student is requesting a grade change indicating that they are going to be deported if I don't change an FX to F. What is my responsibility?

As a faculty member, it is your responsibility to evaluate a student's academic achievement of the educational objectives for the class and assign grades in accordance with the DePaul Grading Policy. Though students may request a grade change, faculty members must use their judgment to ensure that grades are assigned in accordance with the grading policy.

F1 students have options available to them when they are out-of-status and are not at immediate risk of deportation due to an FX grade. When international students receive an FX grade, they are advised to work with their Academic Advisors. Please note, students are told not to contact the professor directly unless established guidelines for requesting a grade change allow them to do so.

9. Many international students speak English as a second language. Should I hold them to a different standard than domestic students?

To ensure an equitable and fair learning environment, all students must be held to the same academic standard. Students come to DePaul with various educational and experiential backgrounds. As a result, students may need additional support to be successful in your classroom. Students who struggle with writing should be directed to the [Writing Center](#). The [International Resource Center](#) can assist non-native speaking students with skills in reading, speaking or listening in English.

10. *I run a research center. Can I hire an international student to work with me?*

The rules for [employment for international students](#) are complex. With approval, international students may work on-campus and may take internships while enrolled in classes. If you have questions about employing an international student, please contact [International Student & Scholars Service](#) so we can assist you.

11. *Where can I get more information about and support for teaching in a global classroom?*

DePaul's [Inclusive Teaching](#) website includes articles and information about teaching a globally diverse group of students. In addition, this site includes a list of DePaul's Cross-Cultural Ambassadors who can talk to you about issues arising in your classroom and other inter-cultural conflict issues. The [Teaching Commons](#) at DePaul offers various workshops and resources to address teaching and learning in general, as well as teaching international students.

12. *A student has asked me to sign off on a form for CPT or OPT. What should I do?*

CPT and OPT are specific programs to assist international students gaining work experience in their fields. Please direct students to their academic advisor for approval of these forms.

13. *Where do I direct a student who feels isolated?*

There are many places to direct a student at DePaul who feels isolated. Depending on the students' needs, the following resources may be helpful:

[Office of Student Involvement](#) - OSI can help students get involved on campus with groups that share similar interests. For students who are new to the US and trying to meet people, this can be a great resource to make connections at DePaul.

International Student Success organizes ongoing orientation and community building programs to welcome and support international students in their adjustment to DePaul and Chicago. You can find an overview of those programs [here](#). For more information, please email globaldepaul@depaul.edu.

[The Office of Health Promotion and Wellness](#) provides support and resources for students to establish and sustain healthy behaviors.

[University Counseling And Psychological Services](#) provide individual and group counseling for students who are struggling with mental health issues.

The [Dean of Students Office](#) can help students by providing clear and critical support structures in times of need. Students who are struggling socially and emotionally should be directed here.

14. *Where can international students go to find community at DePaul?*

[International Student Success](#) provides many opportunities for our international students to get involved on campus and our Global DePaul community. From Global Coffee Hour to Fun & Games and Walk & Talk events, students come together to connect and create a sense of community.

Similar to community connections available to other DePaul students, we also encourage international students to get involved in student organizations, intramurals, Mission & Ministry programming and other community resources available to DePaul students.

15. *Some students have their first names as “FNU” (first name unknown) or have adopted nicknames or preferred names. Are we allowed to change this on D2L?*

Students can update their preferred name in [Campus Connect](#). If a student updates their preferred name, the preferred name will appear in D2L. For more information on how students can update their preferred name, click [here](#).

16. *What is the course “Academic Success?” Since it’s not on the degree program’s catalog, can an instructor point the students to a webpage?*

ESL 500 - Academic Success for International Students is a course required for all F-1 graduate students. Students are automatically enrolled in this course in their first quarter and can access it through their D2L website. Content in the course includes: communicating with professors, reading the syllabus and academic integrity. Questions about this course? Contact the International Resource Center (IRC) at irc@depaul.edu.

17. *Students have questions about immigration related issues. What’s the best place to refer them?*

Students with questions about immigration should be referred to the [International Student & Scholars Services](#) and their ISS Advisor. You can also direct students to the general office email address ISS@depaul.edu.

18. *International students sometimes are sick due to the change in climate. Can they join class online?*

International students, like all students, are expected to attend all class sessions and meet the learning objectives of the course. Students who are ill should use common sense when

choosing to attend in-person or on-line. International students must not count any sessions attended on-line as in person attendance. It is the student's responsibility to maintain attendance records.

Each student is accountable for understanding the latest rules and regulations applicable to international students and their visas. If students have questions, please have them contact [International Student & Scholars Services](#) at DePaul.

19. Are there any tips on how to manage a classroom discussion to get different opinions and perspectives, especially when there is a group of students who tend to dominate the conversation?

Preventing a dominant student or group of students from monopolizing the classroom conversation can be challenging, regardless of where students are from. When students' previous educational experiences are in a teacher-centric culture, where students are discouraged from contributing their own opinions, it can make this more challenging. Making room for all students in a discussion must be an intentional part of your classroom strategy. Be clear in your expectations from the beginning of the course regarding classroom participation and make visible what it means to "participate" in your classroom. When students are working in a second language, it may take them longer to think through an answer and gather the courage to speak.

Creating time and space for that process takes patience on the part of the instructor. For example, asking students to think about a question and make notes for a minute before starting the conversation gives students who are less brave a chance to marshal their thoughts. Also, be sure to thank and praise reticent students for their contributions to create the classroom culture you desire. Intentionally eliciting responses from reticent students ensures that it is clear that it is important that all voices are heard. Grouping students in smaller, diverse discussion groups in the classroom can give more reserved students a smaller venue in which to participate. Other tips include modeling what a good conversation looks like as well as including discussion questions that bring the background/culture of all students into the conversation, such as "What is your experience back home?" Finally, for other suggestions regarding making space for all students in a discussion, check out this page on [Facilitating Difficult Discussions](#).