

International Student FAQ

(Last update: August, 2025)

Whether you're exploring online options from your home country or wondering how current U.S. policies may affect your plans, this guide is for you.

Can I begin my studies from outside the U.S. and take online classes?

Yes. Both Foothill and De Anza offer high-quality online classes you can take from anywhere. Some of our associate degrees and transfer pathways can be started (or even completed) fully online.

[Foothill College Online Degrees and Certificates](#)

[De Anza Online Degrees page](#)

I'm admitted, but the consulate in my country is closed and I can't get a visa. Can I study online from my home country?

Yes. We understand that many consulates around the world may be closed. You can begin your studies outside the U.S. and can choose to join us in -person for a future quarter. For more guidance please read the [Updates and Resources for New International Students](#)

Will I be considered a full student if I study online?

Absolutely. Online students have access to academic advising, tutoring, library resources, student clubs, and virtual campus life.

Can I switch to in-person learning later on?

Yes. If you're admitted but not yet in the U.S., we'll help you transition to on-campus study when you're ready, including issuing your I-20 for an F-1 visa.

Will I be in F-1 status while studying online from outside the U.S.?

No. You must enter the U.S. and activate your SEVIS record to be in F-1 status.

Are online courses still transferable to U.S. universities?

Yes. Online courses at Foothill and De Anza are fully accredited and transferable to UC, CSU, and many other top public and private U.S. universities.

Are all majors and classes available online?

Not all. Some programs with lab or in-person components may require on-campus participation. Talk to an academic counselor for help building your online schedule.

NOTE: Some online classes may require occasional in-person meetings or exams. Be sure to review course syllabus or outline carefully and confirm any requirements with the instructor during the first week of classes. Double check class meetings times in your local time zone. Choose synchronous classes only if the schedule works realistically for your location.

What if I get my student visa late? Can I arrive after the quarter begins?

In most cases, you must arrive before the first day of the quarter to activate your F-1 visa status. If you experience delays, contact the ISP office for your campus for guidance on your specific situation.

Can I start online and then arrive mid-quarter if my visa is approved?

No. The program start date on your I-20 must align with the start of an academic term. U.S. immigration rules usually require you to be in the U.S. before your program start date, so you need to enter before the current term begins or wait for the next term.

What happens if I can't get my visa or travel to the U.S.?

You may begin your first quarter or continue your education fully online. If you're admitted but can't enter the U.S., we can defer your I-20 and enrollment to a later term.

If I enroll and later decide not to attend, can I get a refund?

Foothill-De Anza has a clear refund policy based on timing. If you withdraw by the published refund deadline, you may be eligible for a tuition refund.

[Foothill Refund Policies and Procedures](#)

[De Anza Refund Policies and Procedures](#)

Can I defer my admission to a future quarter?

Yes, you can defer your admission up to 3 consecutive times without re-applying by completing the Deferral Request Form available in the admission portal.

Is it safe for international students to live and study in California?

Yes. California, and especially the Bay Area, is known for being diverse, inclusive, and welcoming.

What if my country is on a Travel Ban list? Will my F-1 visa be revoked?

If a federal travel ban prevents you from entering the U.S., you can continue your studies online. We follow federal guidance closely. If policies shift, we will advocate for you and contact you by email to inform you of reasonable options.

Who can I contact about my specific situation

Foothill International Admissions: fhintladmissions@fhda.edu

De Anza International Admissions: daintladmissions@fhda.edu