

FALL 2021 Questions & Answers

April 20, 2021

Contra Costa College (CCC), Diablo Valley College (DVC) and Los Medanos College (LMC) are planning for a hybrid format for fall 2021. That is, there will be a balance of in-person, fully online and hybrid (combination of online and in-person instruction) courses. While most courses will be only be offered online, in contrast with fall 2020 and spring 2021, there will be significant increases of in-person courses that maximize student opportunities for safe learning experiences and support.

Application Deadlines

1. Are there any changes to the application deadlines at CCC, DVC or LMC? The application deadlines remain as usual for each college, with the only exception being the “inside the U.S.” deadline for CCC:
 - CCC: July 1 (outside the U.S.) / August 5 (inside the U.S.)
 - DVC: June 1
 - LMC: July 1 (outside the U.S.) / August 15 (inside the U.S.)

This information will be updated if there is any change.

Admissions Requirements

High School Graduation

1. Will CCC, DVC and LMC accept preliminary IGCSE results for fall 2021 if these tests have been cancelled or postponed? Yes. CCC, DVC and LMC will accept preliminary IGCSE results for fall 2021 admissions.

Financial Support Evidence

1. Do I need to show financial support evidence to be admitted for fall 2021 even though I will be enrolling in online courses from my home country? Financial support evidence is not needed for newly admitted students who enroll in online courses from outside of the U.S. for fall 2021. Financial support evidence will be required, however, to issue an I-20 and obtain an F-1 visa for on-campus, in-person instruction for fall 2021. Your college will communicate with you about this process. If you are transferring from a U.S. institution, please contact the international office at your college for guidance about financial support evidence, a transfer I-20 and maintaining F-1 status.

I-20s and F-1 Visas

1. Will CCC, DVC and LMC issue I-20s for fall 2021? Yes.
2. Can I study online in my home country if I do not want to or am unable to travel to the U.S for fall 2021? Yes. Students admitted for fall 2021 who are outside of the U.S. have the option of beginning their program of study online from their country of residence. Students intending to do so do **not** need a student visa. Please communicate with the International Student Office at CCC/DVC/LMC about your situation.
3. I have been admitted for fall 2021. Do I need to apply for an F-1 visa for online courses completed outside of the U.S.? No. You only need to apply for an F-1 visa for studies in the U.S.
4. Do I need to register for a hybrid or in-person course to obtain my F-1 visa? Yes, according to U.S. immigration regulations, you must register for at least one course with an in-person component to obtain your F-1 visa. Additionally, F-1 international students arriving in the U.S must be enrolled in at least one hybrid or fully in-person course for their I-20 to be registered. I-20 registration is required to maintain F-1 immigration status in the U.S.
5. I have already received an initial I-20. Do I need an updated I-20 to arrive for fall 2021? Your I-20 must have a program start date of 08/23/2021. If your I-20 program start date is different, you will need an updated I-20. Please email your college's international student office to request an updated I-20.
6. I have already paid the SEVIS fee. Do I need to pay the SEVIS fee again if my I-20 program start dates are updated for fall 2021? No. You will not need to pay the fee again if your I-20 was updated with a new program start date.
7. If I was admitted for spring 2021 and took courses online from my country, yet I am still unable to travel to the U.S. for fall 2021, am I allowed to continue taking courses online and defer my in-person enrollment until spring 2022? Yes.
8. If I've been admitted and received an I-20 for fall 2021, may I defer to spring 2022? Yes, an updated I-20 will be issued with a new program start date. Please email your college's international student office to request an updated I-20.
9. If I've been issued an F-1 visa for fall 2021 yet defer to spring 2022, do I need a new visa? You do not need a new visa if your current visa is valid past the date of your (future) entry into the U.S. Please check the visa expiration date on your visa. However, you will need an updated I-20 with a new program start date. Please email your college's international student office to request an updated I-20.

10. If I defer to spring 2022, do I need to prepare updated financial support documentation? If you have already been issued an I-20 for fall 2021 yet have not obtained a visa, it is strongly recommended that you prepare updated financial support documentation for the visa appointment.

Travel to the U.S.

1. I am a continuing student who has been studying online from my home country. May I travel to the U.S for a summer session? The answer depends on your I-20 as follows:
 - Students with Active I-20s: Please contact your college's international student office for more information. College staff will review your record to make sure your documents are up to date and that you have the appropriate signatures for travel.
 - Students with Initial I-20s: No. Students with initial I-20s are not permitted to begin in summer. Your I-20 has been updated with a program start date of 08/23/2021. You are not permitted to arrive in the U.S more than 30 days before this date.
2. Will I be able to travel to the U.S. for fall 2021? Travel to the U.S is dependent upon your ability to obtain an F-1 visa. Please [click here](#) to view visa appointment wait times in your country/region. It is also recommended that you confirm this information with your local U.S. Consulate or Embassy.
3. Should I take a printed I-20 with me in carry-on luggage on flight(s) to the U.S.? Yes.
4. Are there any special entry requirements to the U.S. for fall 2021? Yes, travelers to the U.S. must present a negative Covid-19 test before boarding any flight. Upon arrival in the U.S., you may be asked to self-quarantine for 14 days. This depends on U.S. immigration regulations in effect at that time. Official information can be found at the [U.S. Department of State website](#). It is also recommended that you contact your nearest U.S. Consulate or Embassy as well as the airline you will be flying with.
5. Where have other students self-quarantined? Students have stayed at either a local hotel or rented rooms through Airbnb for their quarantines. The need to do so depends on U.S. immigration regulations in effect at that time.


Instruction and Support

1. Will online courses be asynchronous (time zone does not matter)? Mostly, though each course will have its own schedule. Students should check the scheduling notes to determine if a given course schedule includes synchronous instruction. Here is a [link](#) to the course schedule search (searchable by college and semester).
2. How will students know which courses are asynchronous when looking at course descriptions?

- Asynchronous courses will have “ONLINE” included in the meeting days/times column, and no days or times will be listed. Also, the comments section will not include references to any required orientations or synchronous class sessions.
- Synchronous courses (offered only on specific days and on California/Pacific Standard Time) will list the days and times of instruction OR there will be specific synchronous meeting sessions listed in the comments section.

International students at **Contra Costa College** who are not able to come to the U.S. for fall 2021 should **not** enroll in courses with the following comment: *“This class is currently scheduled to meet partially or fully on campus. The mode of delivery may change, however, based on social distancing guidelines. For scheduling purposes, if you register for this section, please plan on being available at the days and times listed. Your instructor will contact you prior to the course.”*

3. What are operating system requirements for taking online courses? Students can use any operating system (PC, Mac, Android, iOS) for taking online courses.
4. What are other technical requirements for taking online courses? It is recommended that students have access to a desktop or laptop with audio and video capability and reliable Internet access. Students may use mobile phones, though they will be expected to do extensive typing.
5. What video software will online courses use? All courses will use Zoom software. Students should contact course instructors to ask if any social media such as YouTube will be used that may not be accessible in their regions.
6. How will students access online courses? All online courses will be on Canvas. Below are helpful online learning links for students at each college:
 - CCC
 - DVC
 - LMC
7. Do online courses have the same units (credits) as in-person courses? Yes.
8. Are the units for online courses accepted by 4-year universities and colleges? Yes.
9. Do I need to purchase textbooks for online courses? Yes, most online courses require the purchase of textbooks. Textbooks can be purchased online from the college’s bookstore or through other vendors such as Amazon, etc. Some courses require the purchase of an online ‘course pack,’ which includes access to reading, exercises and quiz materials. Students can purchase online textbooks or course packs using a credit card. However, many courses use open online resources and do not require purchase of course materials. Those courses are designated as Zero

Textbook Cost (ZTC) and can be identified with this logo:  Below are links to the bookstore at each college:

- 🔗 [CCC Bookstore](#)
- 🔗 [DVC Book Center](#)
- 🔗 [LMC Bookstore](#)

10. How do I get counseling help to complete my student education plan? Students can book appointments online. Online drop-in counselling may also be available, depending on your college. Please visit your college's Counseling Center website for details.

11. How do I register for online courses? Registration can be done online through [InSite](#) from your home country. Priority registration dates and times are listed in [InSite](#) under the Registration menu. Students may register for courses until midnight on the first day of classes: August 23, 2021.

12. Am I required to enroll in a full course of study (12 units) if I am outside the U.S.? The answer depends on your I-20 status as follows:

- **Continuing students** with an active I-20: Yes. To maintain your F-1 immigration status, you are required to take 12 units.
- **Students outside the U.S with an initial I-20:** No. You are not required to maintain 12 units if you plan to study **outside** the U.S for fall 2021.

We strongly encourage full-time enrollment due to the temporary provisions of U.S. immigration policy guidance during COVID-19. For additional questions, please contact the international student office at your college.

13. What is the cost of online courses? \$346 per unit.

14. By when do I have to pay the tuition for online courses? Students should pay the tuition for their online courses as soon as possible. However, if they need to pay in installments or wait to pay, they will not be charged late payment fees. Students should note that, if they have a balance on their account, a registration hold will be placed on their account. This hold will block them from being able to register for the following semester. Once the tuition has been paid, this hold will be automatically removed from their account.

15. Will I be allowed to attend the first few classes/sessions of online courses before deciding whether to continue in or drop a course? Yes, you may try online courses for several classes. You are allowed to drop an online course at no charge. The deadline to drop a course is Friday, September 3 for the Fall 2021 semester.

16. Will students be able to receive online tutoring? Yes, free online tutoring is available to all students through any Canvas course.

17. How much time per week can students expect to spend for each online course? Students can expect to spend 6 to 9 hours per week (on and offline) per every 3-unit course.

18. What other online learning expectations should students be aware of? Students should be prepared to actively participate in online courses through frequent interactions with instructors and classmates. This includes contributing to online discussions.

Orientation

1. Will CCC, DVC and LMC offer an online orientation for fall 2021? Yes. We will update students (admitted for fall 2021) once orientation details are confirmed.
2. If I have already attended a new student orientation, do I need to attend another one if I arrive in the U.S. for fall 2021? Yes, students at all colleges who are arriving in the U.S. will be required to attend an orientation check-in session.

Student Life

1. May I join a student club/organization if I spend my first semester studying online from my home country? Yes, you may still join a student club(s) as some have online meetings. The colleges have a variety of clubs that have been active in the remote learning environment. Please inquire with the club(s) you are interested in for more information. Below are links to Student Life at each college:

[CCC](#)

[DVC](#)

[LMC](#)

Health Insurance & Covid-19

1. Is health insurance mandatory for international students? If you are inside the United States, health insurance is mandatory for all F-1 students.
2. How much is the health insurance? The cost of health insurance is \$1,524 for 2021-2022. This cost is divided into two payments:
 - Fall 2021: \$635. Students must pay this before classes begin in August 2021.
 - Spring 2022: \$889 Students must pay this before classes begin in January 2022.

3. If I arrive in the U.S., when will my health insurance coverage begin? Health insurance coverage for international students begins August 1, 2021.
4. If I stay in my home country, do I need to pay for the health insurance? No.
5. Does the mandatory health insurance cover covid-19 vaccinations? No, however, the vaccinations do not cost anything. Students need to show a photo I.D. and proof of international student health insurance to schedule a vaccine appointment.
6. Am I able to get vaccinations when I arrive in the U.S.? Yes. Please visit the [Contra Costa County Health Services site](#) for information.
7. Am I required to be vaccinated against COVID-19 before arriving on campus in fall 2021? No, the colleges will not require proof of vaccination.
8. If I am going to stay with a host family (Diablo Valley Homestay), what COVID-19 information do I need to share with Diablo Valley Homestay prior to arriving in the U.S.? While it is recommended that students staying with families be vaccinated against COVID-19, the minimum requirement required by [Diablo Valley Homestay](#) is proof of a negative Covid test before arrival into the U.S. Students should email the results to info@diablovalleyhomestay.com 1-2 days before departure.
9. Is there any safety information I should be aware of before reporting to campus? Yes, please review the [Student Safety Checklist](#) for our colleges.