

## SPRING 2023 Questions & Answers for International Students

Contra Costa College (CCC), Diablo Valley College (DVC) and Los Medanos College (LMC) are planning for a hybrid format for spring 2023. Courses will be predominantly only online but, compared with fall 2022, there will be a significant increase in the number of in-person courses (includes hybrid = combination of online & in-person instruction).

- CCC will offer in-person 44%, asynchronous 32%, synchronous 8%, hybrid-asynchronous 4%, hybrid in-person, asynchronous 8%, hybrid, in-person synchronous 4% courses.
- DVC will offer a balanced selection of online, in-person, and hybrid courses. However, not all courses will have an online option. This includes all Math courses.
- LMC will offer 36% in-person, 14% hybrid and 50% (40% asynchronous & 10% synchronous) fully online courses.

### Admissions Requirements

#### Financial Support Evidence

1. **Do I need to show financial support evidence to be admitted for spring 2023 even though I will be enrolling in online courses from my home country?** Yes. Please contact your college's International Student Office if you have specific questions and concerns.

#### **I-20s and F-1 Visas**

1. **Will CCC, DVC and LMC issue I-20s for spring 2023?** 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 spring 2023?** Yes. Students admitted for spring 2023 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 spring 2023. 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 enter the U.S.?** Yes, according to U.S. immigration regulations, F-1 international students arriving in the U.S must be enrolled in at least one partially online (hybrid) or fully in-person course to enter the U.S. and 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 spring 2023?** Your I-20 must have a program start date of 01/23/2023. 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 spring 2023?** 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 2023 and took courses online from my country, yet I am still unable to travel to the U.S. for spring 2023, am I allowed to continue taking courses online and defer my in-person enrollment until fall 2023?** Yes.

### **Deferring Enrollment**

**1. If I've been admitted and received an I-20 for spring 2023, may I defer to fall 2023?** Yes, an updated I-20 will be issued with a new program start date. Please email your college's international student office to request a *Deferring Enrollment Form* and updated I-20. If you must defer for more than one semester, please contact your International Student Office for details about deferral requirements.

**2. If I've been issued an F-1 visa for spring 2023, yet defer to fall 2023, 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.

**3. If I was admitted for spring 2023 but would like to defer enrollment to fall 2023, do I need to prepare updated financial support documentation?** If you have already been issued an I-20 for spring 2023 yet have not obtained a visa, it is strongly recommended that you prepare updated financial support documentation for the visa appointment.

**4. May I defer enrollment for more than one (1) semester?** Yes, however, you must request a *Deferring Enrollment Form* and:

1. Submit a new application for admission.
2. Pay another application fee.
3. Provide updated financial support evidence (e.g., bank statement).
4. Provide updated English language proficiency documentation (if your test score is more than two years old from the start date of your program of study).

### **Travel to the U.S.**

**1. Will I be able to travel to the U.S. for spring 2023?** 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.

**2. Should I take a printed I-20 in carry-on luggage on flight(s) to the U.S.?** Yes.

**3. Are there any special entry requirements to the U.S.?**

Yes, please note that non-U.S. citizens who are nonimmigrants and arriving in the U.S. by air must present proof of being fully vaccinated from an official source to airlines before travel.

Vaccines approved by the FDA and those that have an [Emergency Use Listing from the World Health Organization](#) will be accepted. Official information can be found at the [Department of Homeland Security](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) websites. It is also recommended that you contact your nearest U.S. Consulate or Embassy as well as the airline you will be flying.

Foreign national travelers entering the U.S. through a land border land or ferry terminal must be fully vaccinated and provide proof of vaccination. For more information about entering the U.S. by land or ferry, please visit this [site](#).

There are limited exceptions to the vaccination requirement. Those under 18 are exempt from vaccination requirements. As well, and as determined by the CDC, there are exceptions for students travelling from countries with limited vaccine availability. Information can be found [here](#). Students from these countries must “show an official U.S. Government letter (paper or digital) documenting approval of the exception.” Students who receive exemptions will be required to get vaccinated in the U.S.

### **College Requirements: Covid-19 & Health Insurance**

1. **Are vaccinations required to study at CCC, DVC and LMC?** No, effective January 2, 2023, the Covid-19 vaccinations are *not required* for students taking in-person classes or who need to visit any campus facility. You can read more [here](#).
2. **If I am already in the U.S. and have not yet been vaccinated but would like to be vaccinated, where can I do so near CCC, DVC and LMC and how much will it cost?** There is no cost!
  - a. The nearest option to CCC is the Walgreen’s Pharmacy at 14280 San Pablo Avenue. Students can schedule an appointment online [here](#).
  - b. The nearest option to DVC is Safeway Pharmacy at 707 Contra Costa Boulevard. It is recommended that students [schedule an appointment online](#). More information can be found [here](#).
  - c. The nearest option to LMC is the Walmart Pharmacy at 2203 Loveridge Rd. Students can schedule an appointment online [here](#). Students can also visit <https://www.losmedanos.edu/safety/tips.aspx#notice> for updates.
3. **Is health insurance mandatory for international students?** If you are inside the United States, health insurance is mandatory for all F-1 students.
4. **If I stay in my home country, do I need to pay for health insurance?** No.
5. **How much is health insurance?** The cost of health insurance is \$920.50 for the spring 2023 semester. Coverage goes until August 9, 2023. Students must pay this before classes begin on January 23, 2023.

**6. If I arrive in the U.S. for spring 2023, when will my health insurance coverage begin?** Health insurance coverage begins January 3, 2023.

**7. 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.

**8. Is there any safety information I should be aware of before reporting to campus?** Yes, please review the [Student Safety Checklist](#) for our colleges.

### **Accommodation/Housing**

**1. Will accommodation be easy to find in January?** No, accommodation may be limited. Students are encouraged to secure housing as soon as possible.

**2. Is there any Covid-19 related requirement for Diablo Valley Homestay?** Yes, all homestay students must be vaccinated and send [Diablo Valley Homestay](#) by email ([info@diablovalleyhomestay.com](mailto:info@diablovalleyhomestay.com)) a copy of their proof of vaccination. Note that the placement fee is \$450, and the monthly homestay rate is \$1,200.

### **Courses and Support**

**1. Will online courses be asynchronous (time zone does not matter)?** Mostly, though each course section will have its own schedule. Students should carefully check the scheduling notes for each course section to determine if a given section of a course includes synchronous instruction. Here is the [course schedule search](#) for each college.

**2. How will students know which online courses have set class meetings when looking at course descriptions?**

- Asynchronous courses (no set class meetings) 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 (online courses that have set class meetings on specific days using Zoom software 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.

**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](#). 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 delivered through the online management system. 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 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 help over the summer (e.g., pre-arrival workshops, Canvas page, etc.)?** Please contact your college's International Student Office. You may also wish to visit your college's Counseling Center website for helpful information:

- [CCC Counseling Center](#)
- [DVC Counseling Center](#)
- [LMC Counseling Center](#)

11. **How do I register for 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: January 23, 2023.

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 enroll in a minimum of 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 spring 2023.

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?** Students should pay the tuition for their courses as soon as possible after the drop/add deadline on February 3, 2023. 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 before deciding whether to continue in or drop a course?** Yes, you may attend online courses for several classes. You are allowed to drop an online course at no charge as long as you do so by the drop deadline listed on your course schedule. The deadline to drop a full-term course for the spring 2023 semester is February 3, 2023. If you do not drop by the drop deadline, you will be responsible for paying for the class even if you do not attend.

**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 outside of class time for an online course?** Expect to spend 6 to 9 hours per week (on and offline) for a 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. Students should carefully review course syllabi.

## Orientation

- 1. Will CCC, DVC and LMC offer an online orientation for fall 2022?** Yes.
  - CCC's in-person Orientation will be January 17, 2023 in Fireside Hall.
  - DVC's in-person Orientation will be January 18, 2023 in the Cafeteria.
  - LMC's hybrid Orientation will be January 12, 2023 from 10:00am - 1:00pm in the Student Union (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room).

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 spring 2023?** Yes, students at all colleges who are arriving in the U.S. will be required to attend orientation.

### **Student Life**

1. **May I join a student club 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/online 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](#)