The following rules only apply to the following visa types:

- F-1 visa (degree seeking)
- J-1 visa (non degree seeking, usually exchange student)
- The rules below do NOT apply to students who are permanent residents or who are here on other visa types. Please contact the International Student Services Director if you have questions regarding other visa types.

**International students must be enrolled in a “full course of study” in fall and spring semesters (students are not required to take summer classes).**

- A “full course of study” for undergraduate students is 12 credit hours.
- A “full course of study” for graduate students is 8 or 9 hours.

- Only one online course may be taken per semester towards the “full course of study” requirement.
  - If a student is taking 12 undergraduate credits, only one 3 credit online class may be taken per semester.
  - However, if an undergraduate student takes more classes than required by the “full course of study” requirement, that student may be enrolled in more than one online class.
    - For example, if a student takes 15 credit hours, that student can enroll in two 3 credit hour online classes.
  - Please note that government scholarship students from Saudi Arabia also have rules regarding online classes through the Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission (SACM) that are more stringent than the U.S. federal government requirements. Those students are individually responsible for following SACM requirements. We also have an increasing number of government sponsored students from other countries who are individually responsible for meeting their scholarship requirements.

- If a student drops or withdraws from classes at any point in the semester and falls below full time (i.e. no longer meets the “full course of study” requirement), that student is automatically “out of status” and the International Student Services Director should be notified immediately.
  - International Student Services places holds on students’ accounts that are lifted when registration begins for the next semester to help prevent this problem.

- F-1 and J-1 students are allowed to work on campus only 20 hours per week during fall and spring semesters. During school breaks and summer, students can work up to 37.5 hours.

- Any student who wishes to intern or complete a practicum off campus while taking classes must see the International Student Services Director to apply for Curricular Practical Training (CPT).
  - During CPT, the same “full course of study” requirements apply.
  - If a student wishes to intern or complete a practicum outside of St. Joseph and cannot take classes on campus, the student is still only allowed to take one 3 credit online course per semester towards the “full course of study” requirement. The student must take in person courses such as independent study, special projects, and internship classes.
  - “Hybrid” courses, which are partially online and partially in person, are a grey area. Often times even if a course is only partially online, it may be considered a full online course towards the “full course of study” requirement. These courses need to be evaluated on a case by case basis with the International Student Services Director.
  - To apply for CPT, an international student must submit an application to the International Student Services office. The application includes a form that the student’s academic advisor must sign. Please look out for this document.

- Optional Practical Training (OPT) is an opportunity for F-1 visa students to work off campus for a limited period of time after graduation. Students should visit the International Student Services Director if they are interested.

Please note: The rules regarding international students are ever changing. This document is a work in progress.

If you have any questions, please contact Amy Kotwani, International Student Services Director, at akotwani@missourirwestern.edu, x5998.