

**From:** [OUR](#)  
**To:** [FAC&STAFF](#); [AllStudents](#)  
**Subject:** A Message from Chancellor Sartarelli and Provost Winebrake: Support for International Students  
**Date:** Thursday, July 9, 2020 5:46:01 PM

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JOSE V. SARTARELLI, PH.D.

CHANCELLOR

Dear Seahawk Community:

UNCW deeply values our international students and the global perspectives they bring to our campus community. As our strategic vision indicates, UNCW “will be recognized for excellence in everything it does, for its global mindset, and for its community engagement.” A recent announcement by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has the potential to derail international students’ academic progress at UNCW and degrade the university’s relationships with partner universities around the world.

Under the new federal guidelines, international students who are enrolled at universities operating in a completely online status for fall 2020 will not be granted visas to enter or remain in the United States. The guidelines permit international students to obtain or retain F-1 visa status for hybrid academic programs that combine in-person and online instruction.

These guidelines, announced during a global pandemic, have made a difficult time even more challenging for our international students. As a university, we are dedicated to doing all we can to support our international students and their commitment to continue their education at UNCW. Fortunately, UNCW is currently deemed a “hybrid school” under the most recent guidance, which means our planned mixture of in-person, online and hybrid courses will permit our international student population to continue to study with us as long as they take at least one face-to-face or designated hybrid course in the Fall 2020 term.

If UNCW were required to move to fully online instruction at any point in the Fall 2020 term, we will use all available measures to enable international students to remain on campus. However, there is the possibility that students would be required to leave the U.S. and continue their UNCW courses online elsewhere.

UNCW also is collaborating with the UNC System and its Congressional delegation, as well as other higher education organizations and partners, to advocate for a policy that is more supportive of international students, both on our campus and at colleges and universities across North Carolina and the United States.

At this time, the UNCW Office of International Programs has already reached out to the students on an F-1 visa who could be affected by this policy change to ensure they have the information they need to register for courses that are compliant with the current regulations. The office has connected with academic advisors to apprise them of the situation as well. International students should monitor their campus inboxes for additional information from OIP and reach out to [international@uncw.edu](mailto:international@uncw.edu) with questions.

We will continue to closely monitor this situation and share updates with the campus community as we learn more. As always, we want our international students to know that we believe “once a Seahawk, always a Seahawk,” and your campus community will be here for you during these trying times.

Sincerely,

JOSE V. SARTARELLI  
CHANCELLOR

JAMES J. WINEBRAKE  
PROVOST

