

# International Student Support Guide

## Academic Support & Retention

While it is important to understand the impact virtual learning will have on all University of Iowa students, it is especially critical to support international students.

**2,568**

According to data collected in fall 2019:  
2,568 international students are attending the University of Iowa

Students will likely be facing different circumstances this fall. Whether that is serving in care taking roles or navigating multiple time zones, it is important to communicate with each student to support their success.

It is important to ask students where they will be logging in from. Familiarize yourself with common home countries for our international students and the corresponding time zone differences.

### Student Demographics

GEOGRAPHIC ORIGIN		
Region		Percentage:
Asia (2,180 students)		84.9%
Europe (152 students)		5.9%
Caribbean (10 students)		0.4%
Africa (88 students)		3.4%
North America (49 students)		1.9%
Australia & New Zealand (19 students)		0.7%
South America (70 students)		2.7%

Below are examples of how differing times zones can alter the scheduled class time.



Iowa City (11:30 AM)

Barcelona (6:30 PM)

New Delhi (10:00 PM)

Beijing (12:30 AM)

Sydney (2:30 AM)

**If an international student is completing classes back home, it is possible that their home environment may impact their classroom experience.**

Some issues to think about:

- Other siblings completing coursework at the same time
- Issues with internet connection or lack of technology available
- Care-taking roles
- Time zone changes
- Lack of quiet, distraction free areas

**Among the burdens of physically being away from campus, international students are also taxed with a variety of added circumstances. These include constantly changing policies and xenophobia that add an increased amount of anxiety to international students' lives.**

### **Utilize proactive communication**

Moving to virtual learning may require more proactive communication. Reach out and communicate with students before they reach out to ask for help.

#### **Contact students:**

- Before the semester begins
- Around the time of major assignments
  - Including exams and papers
- When you think they might be struggling

#### **How to proactively communicate:**

- Update ICON with any changes
- Email students individually with concerns
- If possible, call students if they are not responding

### **Determining clear expectations**

One way to ease the feeling of uncertainty is to create clear expectations for students.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Determining whether your course is synchronous versus asynchronous
  - Will you provide a recorded version of the class for students who cannot attend?
- Updating ICON with course assignment expectations
- Developing a plan for how group projects will be handled with varying time zones
- Creating flexible plans for office hours to accommodate students abroad
- Communicating your policy regarding technology issues

### **Signs a student might be struggling**

- Missing due dates for quizzes, discussion boards, etc.
- Not attending virtual instruction
- Not responding to emails
- Turning in incomplete or low quality work
- No longer engaging in class discussion

**For more  
information:**

Email-  
[isss@uiowa.edu](mailto:isss@uiowa.edu)