

Options to matriculate international first year students, Fall 2020
Sense of the Faculty Senate
April 24, 2020

The Faculty Senate endorses providing the below options to matriculate international first year students beginning in the Fall 2020 term. The proposal is intended to enable admitted first-year international students to matriculate to Lehigh University in the Fall 2020 term given the unprecedented effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Options to matriculate international first year students, Fall 2020:¹

This proposal summarizes a plan to enable admitted first-year international students to matriculate to Lehigh University in Fall 2020. Lehigh's target for matriculating international first-year students this fall is 144. However, with over 260 US consulates worldwide currently shutdown, and consulates in large sending countries, such as China, reporting that students will not be able to schedule visa interviews until November, it is very unlikely that many of these students will be able to obtain their visas by the beginning of the Fall semester

In an effort to yield as many of the admitted international students as possible, Dan Warner and I are proposing that Lehigh collaborate with a small number of partner institutions who will agree to accept these students as visitors for the fall 2020 semester. We will arrange for the remote delivery of some Lehigh-specific content to brand the experience. This partnership will be an opportunity to provide a residential learning experience, as well as to build Lehigh's global identity by affiliating with highly regarded local institutions. What follows is a summary of this alternative path for matriculation.

Admitted students

Goal:	144 new international students
ED I&II:	92
Admitted RD:	339

Countries of origin for RD students:

Australia	Jordan	South Africa
Brazil*+	Kazakhstan	Spain+
Canada	Korea+	Sri Lanka+
China*+	Mexico	Sudan
El Salvador+	Nepal+	Taiwan
Georgia	New Zealand	Thailand*
Ghana	Pakistan	Trinidad and Tobago
Guatemala+	Panama+	Turkey
Hong Kong+	Peru+	United Arab Emirates
India*	Saudi Arabia	United Kingdom
Indonesia+	Seychelles	Venezuela+
Japan+	Singapore+	Vietnam

*Largest number of admitted non-US citizens

+Countries in which Lehigh has a potential partner to host visiting students

¹ Developed by Cheryl Matherly, Vice President and Vice Provost for International Affairs in consultation with Patrick Farrell, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Patricia Johnson, Vice President for Finance & Administration, Dan Warner, Vice Provost for Admissions and Financial Aid, and Steve Wilson, Assistant Provost for Academic Affairs, Registrar. Endorsed by Education Policy Committee, 15 April 2020.

Proposed partners

(China) Sichuan University-Pittsburgh Institute (SCUPI): SCUPI is a new academic entity jointly established by Sichuan University (SCU) and the University of Pittsburgh (Pitt). The joint institute is housed at SCU, and follows the Pitt curriculum. All courses in SCUPI are taught in English. The program design and curriculum encourage active learning, creative thinking, teamwork, and leadership. The matriculated Lehigh students would live in SU housing, as do all SCUPI students. Lehigh alumnus Dr. Jian Shih (PhD English '95) is a former SCU vice president and has agreed to be a resource for the Lehigh cohort. Nathan Urban served on the SCUPI advisory board when it was first established.

(India) Ashoka University: Current Lehigh partner Ashoka University has agreed to accept admitted Indian undergraduates as visitors for fall, with access to any of the undergraduate courses that Lehigh agrees to accept. Ashoka may also be able to assist with admitted students from Sri Lanka and Nepal.

Other partner universities: University of Campinas (Brazil); Hong Kong University of Science & Technology; Kanazawa University or Nagoya Institute of Technology (Japan); Sogong University (Korea); UPC: Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas (Peru/Americas); Singapore University of Technology and Design; Victoria University (Spain)

Academic program

The admitted cohort of students will matriculate to Lehigh in Fall 2020 with their peers and be considered visitors at the partner university, similar to the model for study abroad. Students will take most of their courses in person with the partner university, with one course taught remotely from Bethlehem. The key to this arrangement is that the courses that students complete at the partner university must be recognized by Lehigh in order that the students may seamlessly transfer to Bethlehem in January. The simplest way to do this is to identify a set of courses available at the partner institution that will satisfy requirements for a first semester at Lehigh. The work previously completed for Lehigh Launch can provide a suitable template for this review.

We suggest that students also take at least one remote course delivered from Lehigh in order to reinforce a connection with campus in Bethlehem. The easiest course to offer would be English 3, a writing course (required for most international students) that can also incorporate elements to prepare the students for enrollment in January. Because ICAPE instructors already teach English 3 virtually, this would require no new preparation. Other courses may be identified as this program is developed.

Bethlehem engagement

It is key for retention that these students identify and be treated as a cohort of Lehigh students. Maintaining their status as visitors (not regular students at the partner, planning to transfer at a future date) is important to ensure that they begin on the Lehigh campus in January as planned. To do this, we should deliver content and experiences that uniquely build identity with Lehigh. As a few examples:

- We arrange for students to receive their Lehigh ID cards and a Lehigh T-shirt in the fall
- Lehigh hires a recent graduate as an RA to support students at SCUPI and prepare their entry to Lehigh
- Students participate in special bLUprint workshops, including 5X10s
- The local partner will host global Lehigh/Lafayette viewing parties
- We engage local alumni to host regular home dinners and offer 'send-off' parties to the Lehigh cohorts
- Lehigh staff or faculty visit each site at least once during the fall (assuming we can travel)
- We host regular chat sessions with Lehigh leadership or Lehigh student groups throughout the semester

Summer programs

As another way in which Lehigh can reinforce that the Lehigh cohorts quickly develop identity with the university, all of the students admitted to this track will be offered participation in ICAPE's Virtual College Success Academy, through which they can earn up to 3 credits in Summer 2020. Students enroll in ENGL 015 (Speech Communication for International Speakers), which will be offered with 50/50 synchronous/asynchronous instructional delivery. This online course will involve helping students begin to engage new international students in virtual communications with Lehigh teachers, staff members, and students via the virtual medium and to develop their oral communications skills within the virtual environment. Specifically, students will practice their English formal and informal communication skills while learning about the University in more depth.

Key topics addressed in the five-week summer course include the following:

- Lehigh history and campus culture
- University student resources for success
- Teacher/student communications (e.g., office-hours, emails, voicemail messages)
- Talking to advisers and getting things done
- Making friends and communicating informally
- Participating orally in the classroom
- Giving effective presentations

Orientation to Lehigh

Students will enroll in classes in Bethlehem, beginning in December 2020 or January 2021. To facilitate enrollment and adjustment to campus, we will offer a special winter orientation for these students.

Tuition and Budget

The estimated cost per student for students to enroll as a visiting student is \$10K, inclusive of the partner school tuition, local room and board, summer school, and Lehigh staff travel and support. Given the substantial difference from a regular semester at Lehigh, I advise that we offer some significant discount for the fall term, for example 30%. This would be offer a significant discount for families, given that in addition to the tuition discount, they will also not pay room and board. This gives Lehigh an opportunity to message our support for families who have financial situations affected by COVID-19 without requiring additional financial aid from the university.

We need to make a quick decision if we are going to offer this alternative to admitted students, so that it can become a factor in their decision to accept the offer come to Lehigh. There remains a risk that the virus will keep national systems in students' home countries from opening – this could be a particular risk should the virus reappear in China. In that event, there would be no option but to offer online instruction. This plan is an opportunity for Lehigh to present a bold and innovative approach to attracting and retaining admitted students, by offering them a chance to begin with a residential experience that is not currently being offered by any of our peers to international first years.