Yesterday, the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the agency within the Dept. of Homeland Security with oversight of the F-1 student visa program, issued policy guidance related to COVID-19 course adaptations made by colleges and universities for the fall 2020 academic term. The new policy states that the U.S. Department of State will not issue visas to students enrolled in schools and/or programs that are fully online for the fall semester nor will U.S. Customs and Border Protection permit these students to enter the United States.

Importantly, the University of Chicago, including all our BSD graduate programs, will offer “a hybrid model” of mixed online and in person classes for Autumn Quarter. This approach is expected to allow our international students to enter the United States and comply with revised visa requirements. We will of course continue to update you as we learn more.

As a reminder, if your relocation to the US ahead of the September 29th 2020 start of Autumn Quarter proves impossible, due to travel restrictions or inability to secure a visa in a timely manner, we remain prepared to defer admission to your graduate program until Autumn Quarter 2021. In that case, both entry to your graduate program, and your fellowship support, will be automatically postponed for one year.

Sincerely,

Victoria Prince, Ph.D.
Dean for Graduate Education
Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs
Biological Sciences Division