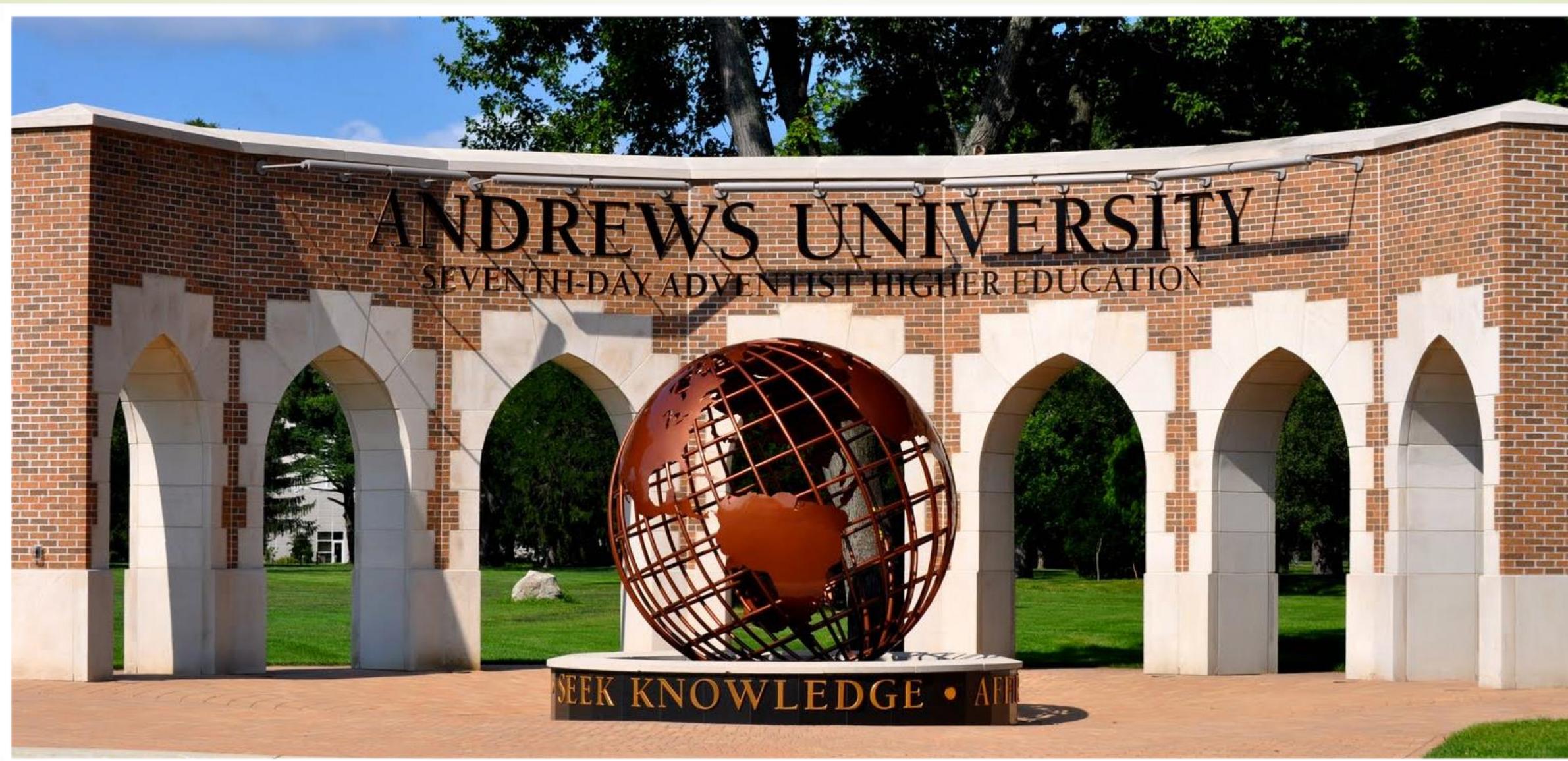


Spring 2021



Welcome New International Students!

Office of International Student Services and Programs

This orientation session is for new undergraduate and graduate international students in Spring Semester 2021.

Much of the information is for students already on campus, but we also have some important messages for our students who are studying remotely.

Welcome to all of you!

International Student Services Staff

- **Christian Stuart**
Executive Director / PDSO
- **Silmara Ferreira**
Associate Director / DSO
- **Jackie Yates**
International Financial Advisor

Administrative Support

- **Sarai Martinez**
International Education Assistant
- **Angel Pereira**
Office Assistant

Contact Information

Email contact: iss@andrews.edu

All meetings with International Student Services staff members this semester will occur through **Zoom**. To schedule an appointment, please go to

www.andrews.edu/services/international

Click on “Contact Us” and “Schedule an Appointment”

F-1 Immigration Orientation

This presentation will cover:

1. Important terminology
2. Immigration documents
3. Maintaining status
4. FAQ answers to remember
5. A special message to remote-learning students

1. Important Terminology

You may have come across the following acronyms:

DHS, SEVP, SEVIS, DSO, and USCIS

DHS and SEVP

DHS = Department of Homeland Security

This is the government agency that has oversight over non-citizens in the U.S.

SEVP = Student and Exchange Visitor Program

This agency is a part of DHS. SEVP manages schools, as well as F-1 students and F-2 dependents.

SEVIS

SEVIS = Student and Exchange Visitor Information System

This is a web-based database used by SEVP to maintain information on SEVP-approved schools and F-1 students and their dependents.

Your I-20 is issued and maintained through SEVIS.

SEVIS

SEVIS = Student and Exchange Visitor Information System

Any changes that happen regarding your program (example: change in name, major, degree level, or program end date) must be reported through SEVIS.

DSO

DSO = Designated School Official

DSOs are the contacts between a school and SEVP, and most communication happens through SEVIS.

Only a DSO may issue, update, and sign an I-20 or make changes to your SEVIS record.

Your DSOs at Andrews are **Silmara Ferreira** and **Christian Stuart**. We are here to help you maintain your F-1 student status and answer any questions you have.

USCIS

USCIS = United States Citizenship and Immigration Services

This is an agency within DHS that authorizes immigration benefits for non-citizens.

These benefits can include off-campus work authorization and changing to another visa status while inside the United States. Most benefits require an update to your SEVIS record before you can apply.

2. Immigration Documents

As an international student, you have several different immigration documents that can affect your status inside the United States:

- Passport
- F-1 student visa stamp in your passport
- Form I-20
- Form I-94

Passport

Your **passport** must be valid at all times. This means that it cannot be expired while you are in the United States. If your passport is close to being expired, you must renew your passport within 6 months of the expiration date.

F-1 Student Visa

Your **F-1 student visa** is used for your entry into the United States as a student.

Your visa may expire while you are in the United States, and you do not have to renew it until you travel outside the U.S. and reenter in F-1 status again.

Visas may only be renewed at U.S. embassies and consulates outside of the United States.

(If you have a J-1 visa, please email isfs@andrews.edu for more information, or for any other kind of visa, please email iss@andrews.edu.)

Form I-20

Your **Form I-20** is what permits you to study in the United States.

It should always reflect your current academic status, including your correct degree level and major.

Form I-20

Your I-20 must be valid at all times. If it is about to expire and you are not finished with your program, you will need to request an extension.

Keep all original copies of your I-20 – you will need them later.

If you need to make any changes to your I-20 (examples: major changes, extending program end dates), please send an email to iss@andrews.edu.

Form I-20

Because of COVID-19, many of you received your I-20 through email.

In the next several weeks, you will receive an email to pick up a new version of your I-20 with “ink signatures” from a DSO. The new version will also have the **travel endorsement** on the second page.

Please watch for this email and follow the directions carefully for how to pick up your updated I-20.

Form I-94

Your **I-94** is your Arrival/Departure Record. It is evidence of your admission to the U.S., immigration status, and authorized period of stay.

A new I-94 is automatically generated each time you enter the United States.

You can access your current I-94 and your complete travel history online. Google “I-94” and click on **I-94 - Official Website.**

3. Maintaining Status

While you are studying in the United States, you must maintain your legal status at ALL times. For F-1 students, this includes maintaining and monitoring:

- ✓ Initial Check In
- ✓ Reporting Requirements
- ✓ Academics
- ✓ Health Insurance
- ✓ Work During Program
- ✓ Travel
- ✓ Program Completion

Initial Check In

Please send the following to Silmara Ferreira at silmara@andrews.edu ASAP:

- Scanned copy or photo of your signed I-20 (front page)
- Scanned copy of your visa page
- Copy of your I-94 (Google “I-94” and click on **I-94 - Official Website**)

Reporting Requirements

You are required to report the following information to International Student Services within **10 days** of the date of change so it can be updated in your SEVIS record:

- Change in name
- New address or phone number
- Change in program (major) or degree level
- Change in student status (i.e., withdrawal or in-absentia)
- Change in immigration status

Academics

To maintain status, students must meet the following academic requirements:

- Attend all your classes and make satisfactory progress towards the degree programs stated on your I-20
- Enroll full time in 12 or more credits (undergraduates), 8 or more credits (graduates), 9 or more credits (MDiv), in the Fall and Spring semesters
- Summer is considered “annual vacation” and you can choose to take classes or to take a break

Academics

To maintain status, students must meet the following academic requirements:

- Take at least one class in person if you are on the Berrien Springs campus (requirements for remote-learning students will be discussed shortly)
- Obtain authorization from ISS before dropping below full-time enrollment

Work During Program

There are two types of work an F-1 student may do during their program of study:

- On-campus employment in an assistantship and/or in a student wage position
- Off-campus employment in an internship that is an integral part of their study and directly related to their program. This is called Curricular Practical Training, or CPT

Work During Program

- You may work up to 20 hours a week when school is in session in both the Fall and Spring semesters; during school breaks you may work more than 20 hours a week
- If you are on a full internship off campus, you cannot work in any additional on-campus positions
- If your internship is less than 20 hours per week, you can work additional on-campus wage positions as long as your **total hours** do not exceed **20 hours per week**
- DHS authorization is not required prior to beginning on-campus employment

Travel During Program

- F-1 students can apply for Curricular Practical Training, or CPT, to work full-time off campus during their program
- To be eligible for CPT, you must maintain F-1 status for at least two academic semesters (9 months)
- CPT is approved for one academic semester at a time
- CPT will not be authorized for a student in their final semester and cannot cause a delay in the time it will take to complete the program of study

You may not begin employment until AFTER your CPT application is approved by International Student Services, and you may work only for the authorized period of time on the I-20.

Travel During Program

International students may leave the United States for short period of time and reenter to continue their program if they hold the appropriate travel documents:

- Unexpired I-20 signed by a DSO on page 2. Note: a travel signature must be less than 12 months old at the time of re-entry to the United States
- Valid passport
- Valid F-1 visa

If you plan to leave the U.S. for more than a short period of time, please consult International Student Services before leaving the United States; not doing so may impact your I-20.

Program Completion

Once you graduate, you have a 60-day grace period after the end of your program. During this grace period, you have the following options:

- Apply for a post-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT)
- Transfer Out to another SEVP-approved school
- Begin a new degree program at Andrews University
- Leave the United States

You must choose to do one of these options before the end of your 60-day grace period.

Failure to Maintain Status

Failure to maintain status may jeopardize the benefits of your F-1 status, including your ability to:

- Work in the United States
- Continue your education in the United States
- Reenter the United States
- Bring dependents to the United States
- Attempt any future entries into the United States

4. FAQ Answers To Remember

During your program, it is important to know the **answers** to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that international students have – you might have some of them right now.

Here are some common questions and their answers.

When should I see a DSO?

Contact a DSO in International Student Services if you are:

- Traveling outside of the United States soon
- Changing your name
- Requesting a program extension or shortening your program
- Adding dependents
- Needing to drop below full-time enrollment
- Planning to perform research outside of the Berrien Springs campus
- Planning anything that you think may have an impact on your immigration status

When and how should I extend my I-20?

If you are near the program end date on your I-20 but will not finish your program before the end date, you must request an extension.

This should be done a minimum of **30 days** before your program end date to allow time for processing. Please contact International Student Services at **iss@andrews.edu**.

If you do not request an extension before your program end date and you do not graduate, you will be out of status.

Can I take online classes in Spring 2021?

If you are on the Berrien Springs campus with an active I-20, you must take at least **one in-person class** in Spring 2021. Your other classes can be in-person or online. Please communicate with your academic advisor for details.

If you are outside of the United States in Spring 2021, you can take online classes. We will share more details about this later in the presentation.

How long does it take to receive an answer when I email iss@andrews.edu?

Depending on when you email, it can sometimes take a little bit of time, but your email matters to us.

If you don't receive a response after a few days, feel free to email back again. You can also schedule a **Zoom appointment** (click on "Contact Us" on the ISS webpage).

It is best to only email iss@andrews.edu instead of sending your email to multiple addresses.

What do I need to know about COVID-19 testing?

If you are on campus in Spring 2021, you are required to take a COVID-19 test.

Many of you have scheduled one for this week. Please note that the university asks international students to wait 4 days after arriving on campus to take the test.

If you have any questions about the COVID-19 test, please contact Dean Alyssa Palmer at alyssap@andrews.edu.

Do I need to purchase the Andrews University health insurance plan?

Yes – in most cases.

For the academic year 2020-2021, international students are required to purchase the university plan. For details, please email the Student Insurance office at stuins@andrews.edu.

If you are a remote-learning student studying outside of the United States this semester, you do not have to purchase the plan.

How do I obtain a Social Security Number and Card?

Once you find a job on campus, you will need to go to the Social Security office in Benton Harbor to obtain a social security number and card.

Because of COVID-19, the Social Security office requires that you call and make an appointment. Please call **877-405-5457** after you have a job offer and receive a letter from the Employment office (also signed by ISS).

How do I obtain a Social Security Number and Card?

If you would like to use Andrews University transportation to go to the Social Security office, please contact the Transportation office at **trans@andrews.edu**.

Please note that there will be a **fee** to pay to use this service.

When can I take vacation?

Andrews University is on a semester system. Your I-20 requires you to take a full load of classes in both the Fall and Spring semesters.

Summer (early May to early August) is the university's annual vacation period. You can take a break or work during summer without taking classes; you can also choose to take classes (a full load or less), but you are not required to.

Where do I go if I have a question about tuition, finances, and/or my financial statement?

If you have already arrived on campus and have an active I-20, please email your **financial advisor**.

If you are still working on receiving your initial I-20 or if you are in the process of extending the program end date on your active I-20, please contact Jackie Yates at **isfs@andrews.edu**.

What is the EVP?

EVP = Exchange Visitor Program.

Most international students are at Andrews University on an F-1 student visa (with an F-2 visa for dependents).

Some visiting scholars and students in non-degree programs come to Andrews University as an **exchange visitor** on a J-1 visa (with a J-2 visa for dependents).

If you have a J-1 visa, please contact Jackie Yates at **isfs@andrews.edu** for more information and further instructions.

Where do I go if I have a question and I don't know the answer?

If it is a general question about maintaining your status or any aspect of your life as an international student at Andrews University, please email **iss@andrews.edu**.

If you have questions about finances (and you have already emailed your financial advisor), please contact Jackie Yates at **isfs@andrews.edu**.

Remember to email only one email address – if you email multiple addresses, it might take us longer to respond.

5. Special Message

Greetings, **remote-learning students!**

You are an important part of the Andrews University family. We are excited you are studying with us, remotely for now, and we look forward to seeing you soon on campus!

Here is some specific information for remote-learning students in Spring 2021.

Remote-learning and I-20s

If you are studying outside of the United States, you should not have an I-20.

If you received an I-20 for Spring 2021, but you are in fact outside of the United States in Spring 2021, you will need to either **postpone or cancel** your I-20 for now.

If you are in the United States, you cannot study remotely – you must be on the Berrien Springs campus taking at least one in-person class.

Postponing your I-20

You can **postpone** your I-20 (without having to start the I-20 process again or pay the SEVIS fee again) if:

- You received your I-20 for Spring 2021 and have not postponed it from an earlier semester
- You are taking classes remotely from outside of the United States in Spring 2021
- You plan to come to the Berrien Springs campus either in the summer or in Fall 2021

Please email christians@andrews.edu to postpone your I-20 if you meet **ALL** of the above criteria. Note that SEVIS will automatically cancel your I-20 if you do not contact us.

Canceling your I-20

You **must** cancel your I-20 if:

- You received your I-20 for Spring 2021 but you have already postponed it from an earlier semester
- You are also postponing your acceptance into your academic program (i.e., you are not taking any classes in Spring 2021)
- You do not plan to come to the Berrien Springs campus either in the summer or in Fall 2021

Please email christians@andrews.edu if you meet ANY of the above criteria so that we can help you with next steps. Note that SEVIS will automatically cancel your I-20 if you do not contact us.

Canceling your I-20

If you need to cancel your I-20, when you know in the future when you will be able to come to the Berrien Springs campus, please email Jackie Yates at **isfs@andrews.edu**.

You will be able to obtain a **new I-20**, but you will have to go through the I-20 process again, which includes paying the SEVIS fee again.

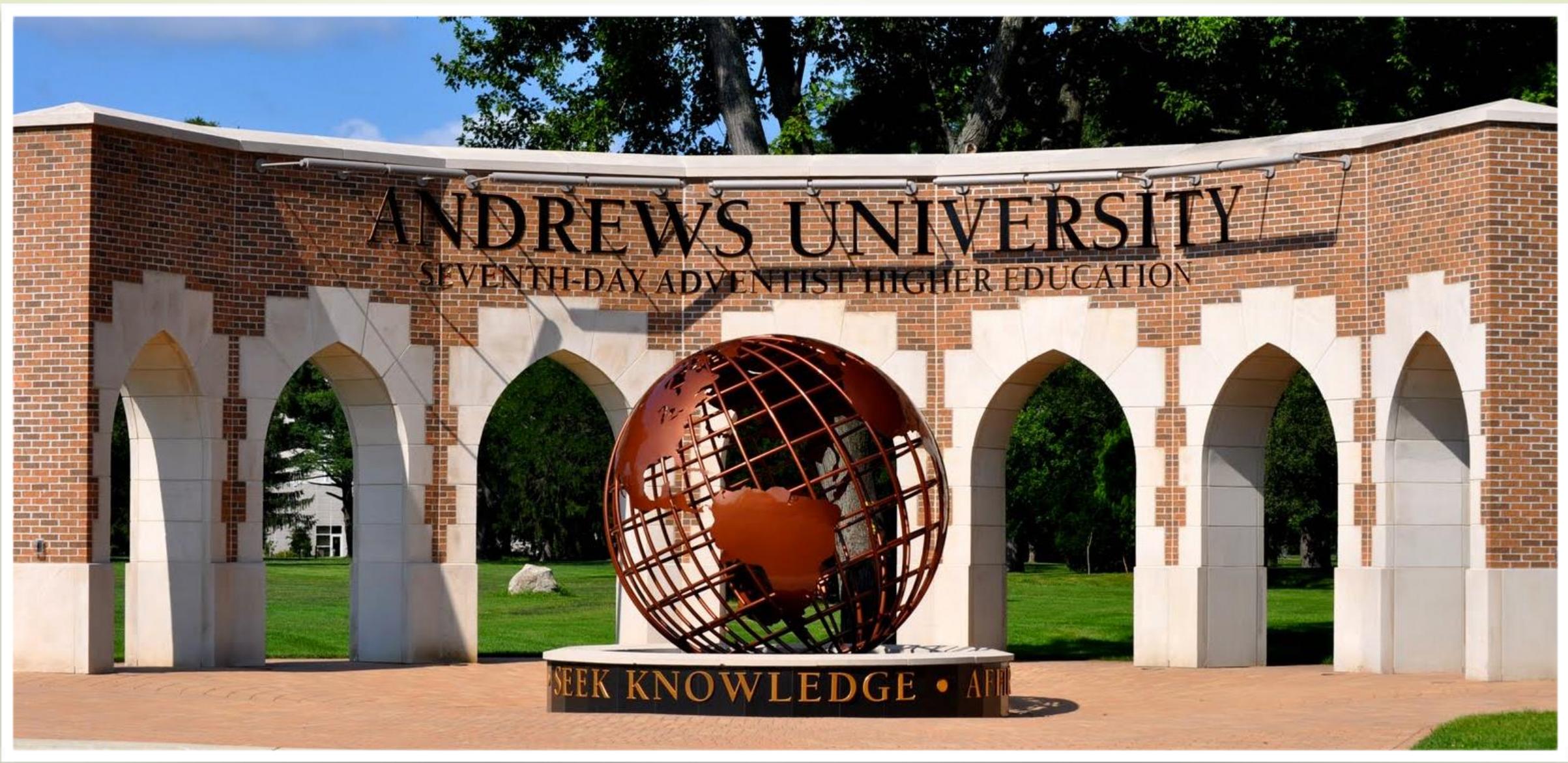
Finally...

Please email me directly at **christians@andrews.edu** if you are studying remotely this semester to:

- Confirm that you will be outside of the United States in Spring 2021
- Request the health insurance requirement be lifted
- Postpone or cancel your I-20 (if you received an I-20 for Spring 2021)
- Ask any remaining questions that you might have

Please remember to only email me and not multiple addresses!

Thank you!



Have a great semester!