July 30, 2020

Dear U.S. Department of State, U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE)/Student & Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) and U.S. Customs & Border Patrol (CBP) officials:

Middlebury College, a small, private, residential liberal arts college in Vermont, has invited all of our students to return to campus for fall semester 2020, if they choose to do so. We will provide courses, housing, meals and other support via methods that follow the current federal, state and local guidance for COVID-19 health and safety precautions. The arrival day for new and returning international students is August 26, 2020. (Orientation and other student leaders will arrive August 18.) We will complete rigorous virus testing upon arrival and before classes begin, with follow up assessments during the semester. With appropriate and stringent protocols in place for isolation, quarantine, and contact tracing, as needed, we will be vigilant.

The College will offer a hybrid academic plan for the fall semester 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and worldwide emergency, the College is modifying its academic offerings to enable students to participate in a variety of course modes. This will allow all students to participate depending on their individual needs while at the same time upholding our rigorous academic standards and co-curricular offerings. Our faculty have created viable course options that will allow for the greatest participation by our students in these ever-changing times. Course registration will occur during the month before the start of classes on September 8, 2020. This is an earlier start to the semester so we could adjust end of term dates. We will advise students on how to maintain their F-1 status and will take action in their SEVIS records if they fail to comply.

This letter confirms that Middlebury College’s academic program this fall will not be entirely online. We will offer an array of courses in a range of modalities (in-person classes, hybrid—both blended and hyflex—courses that require in-person presence, as well as fully online courses that can accommodate on-campus and remote students). We provide this letter to support our students in their efforts to obtain or renew their F-1 visa, to request entry at the U.S. border, and to acquire or continue their F-1 status once they are in the U.S. The U.S. government rescinded the July 6-7 ICE/SEVP directives so we did not include specific Fall 2020 enrollment remarks on the I-20 and provide this clarifying letter instead. We are following updated guidance provided in the July 24 SEVP broadcast and FAQ, and the March 2020 directives now.

Please contact our office if you have any questions regarding this matter or the student’s status. Thank you for your understanding and assistance during these unpredictable times.

Very respectfully yours,

Kathy M. Foley
Associate Dean/Director of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)