



# **F-1 ADVISING: A TWO-PART SERIES**

**GAIE Winter  
Conference 2019**

# PRESENTERS, NORTH BY WEST

**Ronda Dowell**

International Student & Scholar Advisor

ronda.dowell@ung.edu



**UNG** | UNIVERSITY of  
NORTH GEORGIA™

**Brett Reichert**

Director, International Admissions &  
Programs

breicher@westga.edu

UNIVERSITY of  
**West Georgia**

*Slides adapted from Charlie Hammond (Emory University) with Contributions from Ashley Johnson and Marie Goodwin (University of Georgia) with GIFs from [international.tumblr.com](https://international.tumblr.com)*

# AGENDA



- DSO Terminology (Handout)

- Gaining F1 Status

- Issuing the I-20 (Handout)
- I-901 Fee
- Immigration Documents

- Travel

- Maintaining F-1 Status

- Enrollment Requirements
- SEVIS Reporting
- SEVIS Terminations
- Reduced Course Load (RCL)

- Other Record Updates

- Program Extension
- Transfers
- Dependents

- Employment

- On-Campus
- CPT/OPT
- Economic Hardship

- Resources

- Questions

# DSO TERMINOLOGY

- **DHS:** Department of Homeland Security
- **CBP:** Customs and Border Protection (Port of Entry and Departure)
- **ICE:** Immigration and Custom Enforcement (SEVIS & investigations)
- **USCIS:** U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (benefit processing & adjudication)
- **P/DSO:** Primary/Designated School Official
- **D/S:** Duration of Status
- **F-1:** The status associated with a degree-seeking student issued an I-20
- **SEVIS:** Student and Exchange Visitor Information System

# DSO TERMINOLOGY

**I-17** – SEVIS application for school

**I-94** – Arrival/Departure record verifying status

**I-20** – Certificate of Eligibility

**I-515** – Deferred inspection

**I-539** – Change of status, Reinstatement

**I-765** – Employment





# GAINING F-1 STATUS

- Timeline
- Initial I-20 Issuance
- Documents

# **TIMELINE (PART 1)**

## **GAINING F-1 STATUS**

### **PRE-ARRIVAL**

- Student applies to school for academic admission
- DSO creates I-20 in SEVIS
- I-20 is sent to student
- Student pays SEVIS I-901 fee
- Student makes visa appointment at US Consulate or Embassy for F-1 visa.

# I-20 ISSUANCE

## GAINING F-1 STATUS



### From the Student:

- Completed Application for Admission
- Transcripts and other Documentation to meet Admissions Requirements
- Proof of language proficiency
- Financial Certification (at least 1 year of financial support for all school and living expenses in liquid form)

### From the DSO:

- Verify academic admission for full-time enrollment in a Program of Study
- Verify student's financial and program information
- Create SEVIS record and print "initial" I-20
- Must issue I-20 form within the U.S.

**8 C.F.R. § 214.3(k)**



SEVIS ID: N0000000001

SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME Doe	GIVEN NAME John	<b>Class of Admission</b>  <b>F-1</b>  <b>ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE</b>
PREFERRED NAME John Doe	PASSPORT NAME	
COUNTRY OF BIRTH United Kingdom	COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP INDIA	
DATE OF BIRTH 30 JUNE 1980	ADMISSION NUMBER	
FORM ISSUE REASON CONTINUED ATTENDANCE	LEGACY NAME	

<b>SCHOOL INFORMATION</b>	
SCHOOL NAME Pawnee University	SCHOOL ADDRESS ISSS, Pawnee University, P.O. Box 3000, Pawnee, IN 30000
SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL Leslie Knope International Student Advisor	SCHOOL CODE AND APPROVAL DATE ATL000F00100000 24 JANUARY 2003

<b>PROGRAM OF STUDY</b>		
EDUCATION LEVEL MASTER'S	MAJOR 1 Computer and Information Sciences, General 11.0101	MAJOR 2 None 00.0000
PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY Required	ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTES Student is proficient	EARLIEST ADMISSION DATE 09 DECEMBER 2017
START OF CLASSES 08 JANUARY 2018	PROGRAM START/END DATE 08 JANUARY 2018 - 01 MAY 2018	

FINANCIALS			
ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FOR: 12 MONTHS		STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR: 12 MONTHS	
Tuition and Fees	\$ 41,100	Personal Funds	\$ 30,754
Living Expenses	\$ 13,704	Funds From This School	\$
Expenses of Dependents (0)	\$	Sponsor: family overseas.	\$ 28,089
Health Insurance	\$ 2,076	On-Campus Employment	\$
TOTAL	\$ 56,880	TOTAL	\$ 58,843

<b>REMARKS</b>

<b>SCHOOL ATTESTATION</b>		
I certify under penalty of perjury that all information provided above was entered before I signed this form and is true and correct. I executed this form in the United States after review and evaluation in the United States by me or other officials of the school of the student's application, transcripts, or other records of courses taken and proof of financial responsibility, which were received at the school prior to the execution of this form. The school has determined that the above named student's qualifications meet all standards for admission to the school and the student will be required to pursue a full program of study as defined by 8 CFR 214.2(f)(6). I am a designated school official of the above named school and am authorized to issue this form.		
X	DATE ISSUED 26 January 2018	PLACE ISSUED Atlanta, GA
SIGNATURE OF: Leslie Knope, International Student Advisor		

<b>STUDENT ATTESTATION</b>			
I have read and agreed to comply with the terms and conditions of my admission and those of any extension of stay. I certify that all information provided on this form refers specifically to me and is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I certify that I seek to enter or remain in the United States temporarily, and solely for the purpose of pursuing a full program of study at the school named above. I also authorize the named school to release any information from my records needed by DHS pursuant to 8 CFR 214.3(g) to determine my nonimmigrant status. <b>Parent or guardian, and student, must sign if student is under 18.</b>			
X			
SIGNATURE OF: John Doe		DATE	
NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN	SIGNATURE	ADDRESS (city/state or province/country)	DATE

Student's **SEVIS** number

Level of education that the student is pursuing or will pursue in the U.S., as well as major field of study.

Normal program length; program start date and end date.

Estimated average costs (left)  
Student's funding information (right)

# SEVIS (I-901) FEE

## GAINING F-1 STATUS



### Purpose:

The SEVIS fee is mandated by Congress to support the program office and the automated system that keeps track of students and exchange visitors and ensures that they maintain their status while in the U.S.

### Uses:

- Maintain and update SEVIS
- Hire and train SEVIS Liaison Officers
- Staff and manage the SEVP office
- Maintain enforcement oversight

### Who needs to pay?

- All prospective F-1 students seeking admission at a U.S. Port of Entry (POE).
- Any nonimmigrant in the U.S. applying for a change of nonimmigrant status to F-1 status
- An F-1 applying for reinstatement
- An F-1 student who has been absent from U.S. for more than 5 months and wishes to re-enter in F-1 visa status.

### Who does not need to pay?

- A dependent of an F-1 student who will be applying for an F-2 visa
- Any F-1 student with continuous F-1 status even when applying for a new visa or transferring schools.

# SEVIS (I-901) FEE

## GAINING F-1 STATUS

### Payment Options:

- \$200 for F-1 visa type
- Country of citizenship or country of birth of Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria or Gambia must pay by money order, Western Union Quick Pay or certified check drawn from a U.S. bank.
- All others also have the option to make a credit/debit card payment on [www.FMJfee.com](http://www.FMJfee.com)
- SEVP will also accept third party payments; someone else can pay the I-901 for student's behalf.

### When to pay?

- Must be paid at least 3 days before:
  - Initial visa appointment, or
  - Initial entry when a visa is not required (Canada/Bermuda), or
  - Before submitting an I-539 to request a change of visa status to F-1



# VISA

## GAINING F-1 STATUS

### Applying for a Visa:

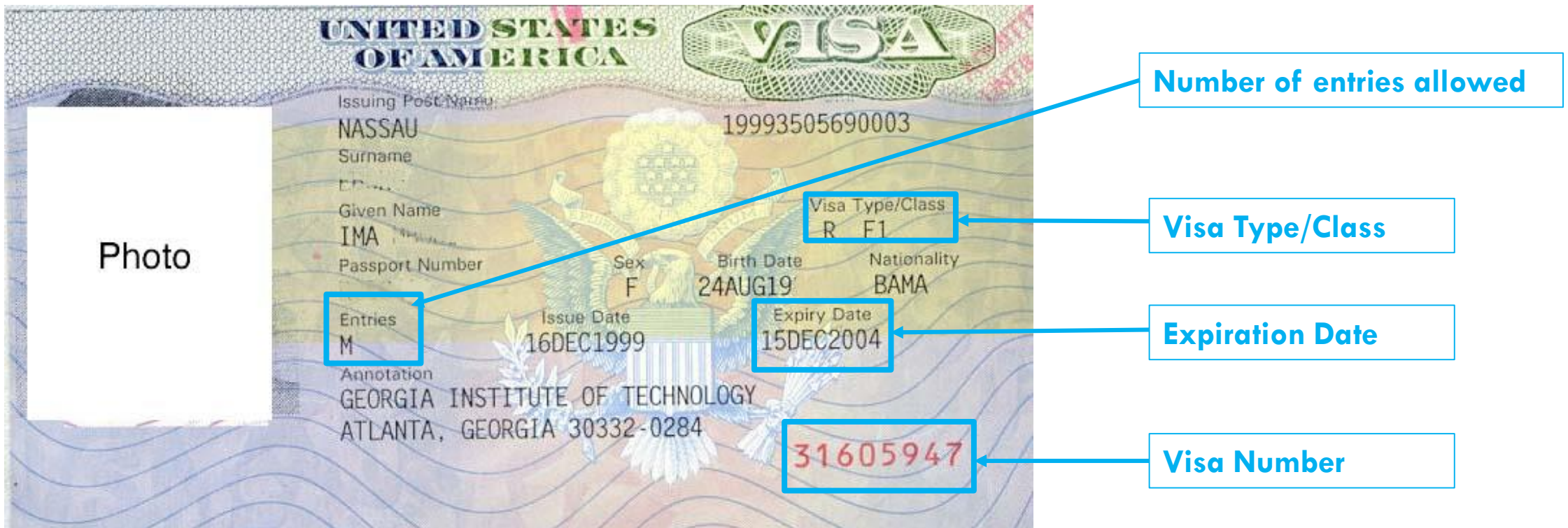
1. First, obtain the I-20. The SEVIS Number is required to pay the I-901 fee and make Visa Appt.
2. Locate the nearest United States Embassy <https://www.usembassy.gov/>
3. Complete the Visa Application – Form DS-160 (Provide the DSO Point of Contact)
4. Pay fees, if applicable (depends on Embassy)

### Visa Interview:

1. Have copies of all documentation – I-20, I-901 (SEVIS FEE) Receipt, DS-160, Acceptance Letter, Financial Documents
2. Prepare your educational plan and goals. It may help to type these
3. Prepare your non-immigrant intent. How will this degree help you in your country?

## GAINING F-1 STATUS

The visa is issued by the US embassy.



# TIMELINE (PART 2)

## GAINING F-1 STATUS

### Arrival in the U.S.

- Student presents immigration documentation to CBP:
  - Passport with F-1 visa
  - I-20
  - I-901 fee receipt
- CBP inspects and approves entry
- DSO reports the student's arrival by registering the student's record in SEVIS

# PORT OF ENTRY

## GAINING F-1 STATUS

- Students may enter the U.S. no more than 30 days before the program start date on the I-20
- CBP will stamp the passport with the following information:
  - Date of entry
  - Port of entry
  - Admission status (F-1)
  - Duration of their stay (D/S means duration of status)
- CBP will also issue the student an I-94 record
- Students with insufficient documents may be granted a 30 day provisional admission and issued an I-515A form





# I-94

## GAINING F-1 STATUS

- Most I-94 records are now electronic
  - Accessed online at [cbp.gov/i94](http://cbp.gov/i94)
- The paper version (stapled into the passport) is still in use.

Departure Number OMB No. 1651-0111

624833440 12

I-94  
Departure Record

14. Family Name  
STUDENT

15. First (Given) Name  
Example

16. Birth Date (Day/Mo/Yr)  
09/06/82

17. Country of Citizenship  
INDIA

CBP Form I-94 (10/04)  
STAPLE HERE

See Other Side

U.S. Customs and Border Protection  
Securing America's Borders

OMB No. 1651-0111  
Expiration Date: 11/30/2014

Get I-94 Number I-94 FAQ

Admission (I-94) Number Retrieval

Admission (I-94) Record Number: 68523424920

Admit Until Date (MM/DD/YYYY): D/S

Details provided on Admission (I-94) form:

Family Name:

First (Given) Name:

Birth Date (MM/DD/YYYY):

Passport Number:

Passport Country of Issuance: India

Most Recent Date of Entry (MM/DD/YYYY): 06/04/2013

Class of Admission: F1

► Effective April 26, 2013, DHS began automating the admission process. An alien lawfully admitted or paroled into the U.S. is no longer required to be in possession of a preprinted Form I-94. A record of admission printed from the CBP website constitutes a lawful record of admission. See 8 CFR § 1.4(d).

► If an employer, local, state or federal agency requests admission information, present your admission (I-94) number along with any additional required documents requested by that employer or agency.

► Note: For security reasons, we recommend that you close your browser after you have finished retrieving your I-94 number.





# TRAVEL

- Documentation
- Automatic Visa Revalidation

**“I DON’T NEED A TRAVEL SIGNATURE, BECAUSE I DIDN’T  
HAVE ONE THE LAST TIME I CAME BACK TO THE U.S.”**



**NO!!!!!!**



# TRAVEL SIGNATURES

- Travel signatures are signed by DSO on page 2 of the I-20
- Travel signatures are valid for one year
  - Best practice:** Recommend that students make sure their travel signature is less than 6 months old at the time of re-entry.

“Just this once, can my friend sign my I-20 for me?”

“ My professor signed it for me.”

“ I copied your signature to save you time.”



## NEW Version of I-20

Department of Homeland Security  
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

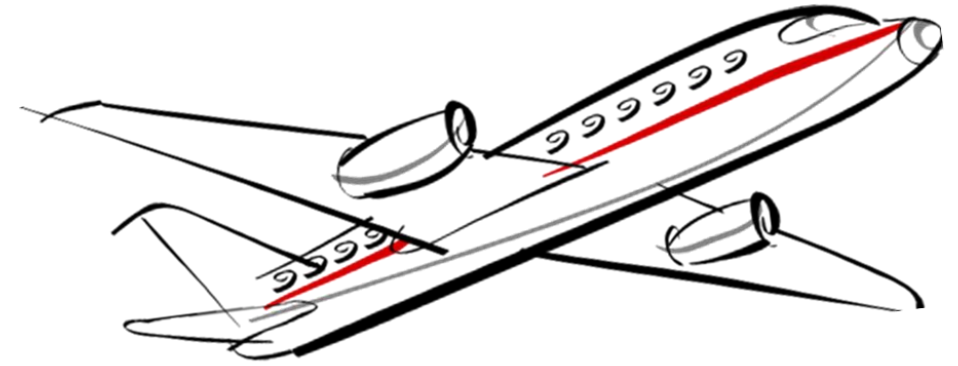
I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status  
OMB NO. 1653-0038

SEVIS ID: (F-1)	NAME:			
EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION				
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	TYPE			
EMPLOYMENT START DATE	EMPLOYMENT END DATE			
EMPLOYER NAME	EMPLOYER LOCATION			
COMMENTS				
CHANGE OF STATUS/CAP-GAP EXTENSION				
REQUESTED VISA TYPE	REQUEST/PETITION STATUS	RECEIPT NUMBER	BENEFIT START DATE/REQUEST DATE	
EVENT HISTORY				
EVENT NAME	EVENT DATE			
Registration	02 SEPTEMBER 2015			
OTHER AUTHORIZATIONS				
AUTHORIZATION	START DATE	END DATE		
TRAVEL ENDORSEMENT				
This page when properly endorsed, may be used for reentry of the student to attend the same school after a temporary absence from the United States. Each certification signature is valid for one year.				
SCHOOL OFFICIAL	TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE ISSUED	PLACE ISSUED
		X		
		X		
		X		

↑ Date Signed  
↑ Travel Signature

# DOCUMENTATION

## TRAVEL



### Documents required for travel:

- I-20 with valid travel signature
  - Travel signatures are valid for 12 months
- Valid Visa
  - Except for visa waiver and automatic revalidation
- Valid Passport
  - Passport must be valid for at least 6 months into the future at the time of return to the U.S.
- Students on Post-Completion OPT should also bring:
  - EAD
  - Proof of employment (job offer letter)
  - I-20 with valid travel signature

### Length of Absence

- Temporary Absence: 5 months or less
  - Exceptions:
    - Enrolled for study abroad or research abroad
    - Approved leave of absence
- Non-Temporary Absence: 5 months or more
  - Requires a new initial I-20 for re-entry

### F-2 Travel

- Individual documents – Passport, Visa
- Copy of Primary's documents – Passport, Visa, SEVIS Fee, Enrolment Verification

# AUTOMATIC VISA REVALIDATION

## TRAVEL

- In Automatic Visa Revalidation, the expired F visa is considered to be “extended” to the date of re-entry
  - This eliminates the need to obtain new visa at U.S. consulate before reentry
- Requirements regarding the travel:
  - The student is traveling for less than 30 days
  - The student is traveling ONLY to Canada, Mexico, or adjacent islands in Caribbean (except Cuba)
- Requirements regarding the student:
  - Not a national of one of the countries identified as supporting terrorism in DOS (eg. Iran, Syria, Sudan, Cuba)
  - Has maintained and intends to resume F status, and is reentering prior to expiration of program
  - Must present valid I-20 with valid travel signature, possess valid passport, and unexpired I-94
  - Has not applied for a visa while abroad



# THE TRAVEL BAN

---

## Travel: U.S. Departure and Re-entry

*Updated December 4, 2017:*

*Pursuant to Executive Order 13780, eight countries are subject to partial or full restrictions for entry to the United States. The restrictions are country specific and tailored to the situation in each of the following countries: Chad, Iran, Libya, N. Korea, Syria, Venezuela, Yemen and Somalia. Please see the [NAFSA Executive Order Travel Ban Resource page](#) for the most recent updates, in addition to "Know Your Rights" in the Important Reminders section below.*





# MAINTAINING F-1 STATUS

- Enrollment Requirements
- SEVIS Reporting
- Reduced Course Load

**“BUT MY FRIEND TOLD ME...”**





# CHECKLIST

## MAINTAINING F-1 STATUS

TO DO LIST

<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	

- Maintain a valid passport
- Attend authorized school
- Complete a full course of study
- Make 'normal' progress
- Update addresses within 10 days
- No unauthorized work
- Obey state & federal laws
- File timely requests if any program edits are needed:
  - Extension
  - Transfer
  - Change of education level
  - Change of status
- Depart U.S. in a timely manner
  - Complete program – 60 day grace period
  - Authorized Early Withdrawal – 15 day grace period
  - No grace period if there is a violation of visa status

# ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

## ENROLLMENT

Graduate Study	Undergraduate Study	Post Secondary	Other Post Secondary	Special Circumstances
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•College/Univ.</li><li>•MS, PhD</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•College/Univ.</li><li>•BS</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•School</li><li>•Assoc., Other</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Schools w/ ESL program</li><li>•Certificate</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Any Institution</li><li>•Any level</li></ul>
Full course of study as certified by DSO (should be reinforced by institute's policy)	At least 12 credit hours (or the equivalent) per term	At least 12 clock hours per week (per regulations); minimum 12 credit hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•18 clock hours per week (classroom dominant)</li><li>•22 clock hours per week (lab dominant)</li></ul>	As certified by DHS due to special circumstances affecting a country, group of people, or area of the U.S.
RCL not required for final term				
<p><b>*Only 1 class (3 credit hours) of online or distance learning courses may count toward meeting the full-time enrollment requirement</b></p> <p><b>Concurrent enrollment (attending 2 approved schools at the same time) is OK if the hours meet the requirement of a full course of study.</b></p>				

# SEVIS REPORTING

## GAINING F-1 STATUS

DSO Action: Reporting the arrival of a student in “initial” SEVIS status



Student Situation:	DSO Action:
Initial Student Reports to School	<b>Register</b> <u>within 30 days</u> of Program Start Date <i>⇒ changes Initial SEVIS record to active</i>
Initial Student with POE Records does not report (Not consistently reported in SEVIS)	<b>Terminate</b> record <u>within 30 days</u> of Program Start Date
Initial Student with NO POE Records does not report	<b>Cancel</b> record <u>within 30 days</u> of Program Start Date

# SEVIS REPORTING

## MAINTAINING F-1 STATUS

DSO Action: Reporting requirements during a student's program of study

### Periodic (Initial 30 days)

- Via SEVIS registration
  - Full-time enrollment
  - Student's addresses (local & international)
  - Current term's ending date
  - Start date of next required term
- Reduced Course Load Authorizations
- Failure to enroll

### Event-based (within 21 days)

- Student failed to maintain status
- Change in name or address
- Completed early
- Disciplinary action by school as result of a criminal conviction
- Notification request about student's status

# SEVIS TERMINATIONS

- A DSO needs to terminate student SEVIS records when they are in violation of their terms of their status or are no longer in their program due to authorized circumstances.
- It is important to clarify the facts as much as possible before terminating a student's record
- Note: If the violation is one that may be 'fixed', the DSO has 21 days to report it to SEVIS.
- If a student's record has been terminated, the student may be able to apply for reinstatement

## Common termination reasons used by the DSO:

- No show - manual termination
- Otherwise failing to maintain status
- Suspension
- Transfer student no show
- Unauthorized drop below full course of study
- Failure to enroll
- Authorized early withdrawal
- Unauthorized withdrawal
- Change of status approved (this is usually updated by USCIS)

**“CAN I TAKE SPRING TERM OFF BECAUSE IT’S  
TOO COLD HERE?”**



# REDUCED COURSE LOAD: ACADEMIC REASONS

## ENROLLMENT

### Academic Exceptions to a Full Course of Study

The DSO may authorize an F-1 student in advance to engage in less than a full course of study in the following academic situations:

#### RCL due to Academic Difficulties

- Initial difficulties with the English language
- Initial difficulties with reading requirements
- Unfamiliarity with American teaching methods
- Improper course level placement

#### Restrictions on RCL due to Academic Difficulties:

- Can only be used once per program level
- Usually only used in first semester

#### RCL during the final semester

- Students in their final semester are eligible for RCL if they have less than a full course load remaining in their program

#### Restrictions on RCL during the final semester:

- Applies only to students in degree programs
- “0” hour enrollment is not an option
- Must be enrolled in at least one course with physical presence requirements



# REDUCED COURSE LOAD: MEDICAL REASONS

## ENROLLMENT

### Medical Exceptions to a Full Course of Study

The DSO may authorize an F-1 student in advance to engage in less than a full course of study in the following medical situations:

#### RCL due to Medical Conditions

- An illness or other medical condition may justify an interruption or reduction in a full course of study
- Per recommendation of US licensed practitioner: MD, Doctor of Osteopathy, Clinical Psychologist

#### Restrictions on RCL due to medical conditions:

- May not exceed 12 month total
- Possible reduced course load or no course load





# BREAK TIME!

We will be back at 9:50am to talk about **SEVIS Updates** and **Employment!**





# OTHER UPDATES TO A STUDENT RECORD

- Program Extension
- Transfer
- Dependents

# PROGRAM EXTENSIONS

**Extensions can not be granted when the student is not completing on time due to poor academic performance**

## I-20 Extensions

- Student must apply prior to program end date on the I-20
- Student has “continually maintained status”
- DSO can certify the delay in completion is “caused by compelling academic or medical reasons”
  - **Examples:** changes of major or research topics, unexpected research problems, or documented illnesses
- Student must show new financial documents – documents showing the student’s ability to continue financing studies for the period of the extension
- SEVIS reporting: new end date and explanation
- Issue a new I-20 with the extension of up to 12 months
  - Multiple 12-month extensions can be done back to back if necessary.



# TRANSFER OF A SEVIS RECORD

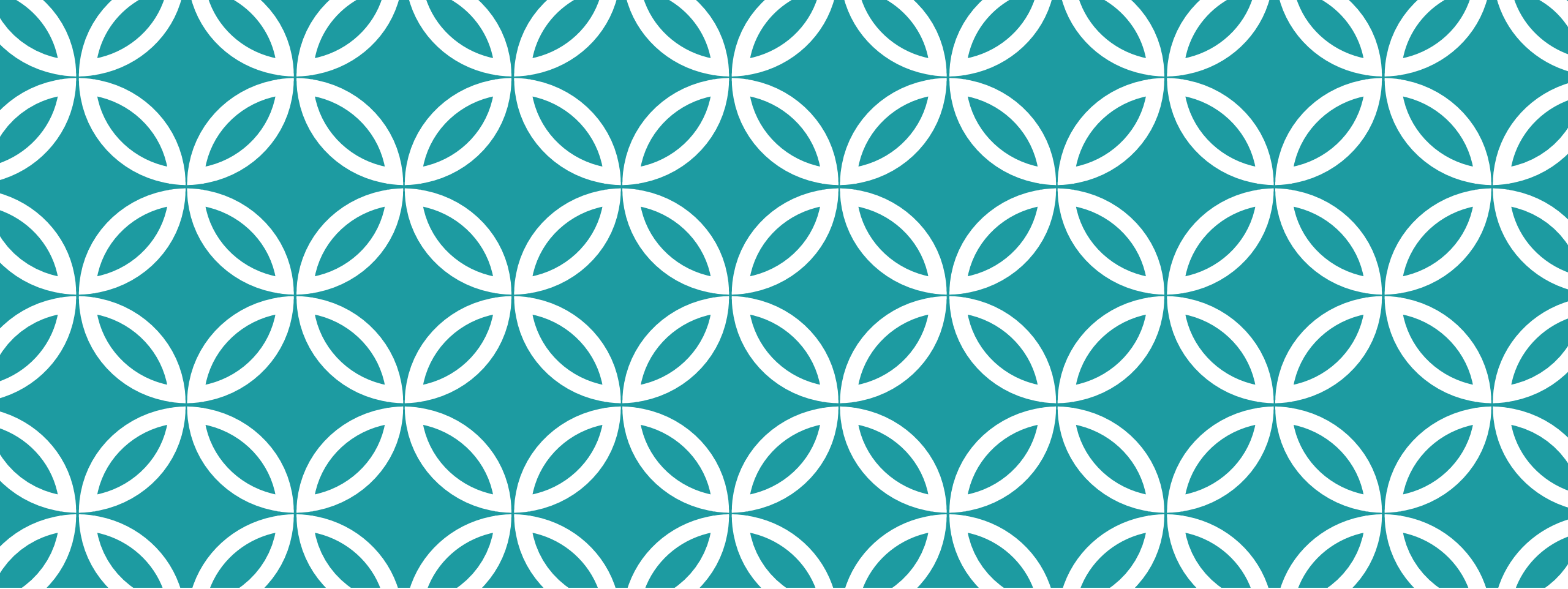


- Must be transferring from/to a DHS approved school
- Classes at the transfer-in school must begin within 5 months of completing classes at the transfer out school or ending OPT employment
- Student must be fully accepted and SEVIS release completed within the 60-day grace period
  - It is good practice to request documentation of admission before releasing SEVIS record
- Some schools will not assist with reinstatement application
  - Check with transfer-in DSO before releasing the SEVIS record of a student who violated status.

# F-2 DEPENDENTS



- A dependent can be a spouse or child (unmarried minor under age 21).
- The F-1 must show proof of funding to support their dependents
  - The financial section of the F-1's SEVIS record must be updated to reflect the increased estimated expenses and the new amount of funding shown.
    - For spouse: \$4,500
    - For child: \$2,500
- F-1 must provide passport copies of each dependent
- Generate new I-20 for primary
- Generate I-20(s) for dependent(s)
- Schools are not required to verify relationship (but this might be required for visa or change of status applications)
- The status of a dependent is based upon the status of the principal
- F-2 dependents cannot accept employment
- F-2 dependent **children** may enroll full-time at a K-12 institution
- F-2 dependent **spouses** may study part-time (but not full-time)



# EMPLOYMENT

- On-Campus
- CPT/OPT
- Economic Hardship

# ON-CAMPUS JOBS

## EMPLOYMENT

- F-1 students are permitted to work on campus; no special authorization is needed
- Restrictions:
  - The job must take place on campus
  - The job must be paid by the school OR be a service which is directly provided to students
    - For example, a company contracted by the university to run the university bookstore
  - Students may work on campus up to 20 hours/week while classes are in session
  - During official school breaks, full-time on-campus employment is permitted
- Any **off-campus** work or training must be specifically authorized before employment begins.

# ON-CAMPUS JOBS

## EMPLOYMENT

“Is there someone I can speak to about waiving the 20 hour per week rule while taking classes?”





# CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING (CPT)

## EMPLOYMENT

- CPT employment authorization is granted by the DSO and reported in SEVIS
  - Noted on the second page of the I-20
- CPT is used in cases where the employment is an “integral” part of student’s program of study
  - Used during (not after) the student’s academic program
- CPT is appropriate for:
  - Internships
  - Co-ops
  - Training required for the student’s degree program



# OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)

## EMPLOYMENT

- OPT employment authorization is recommended by the DSO and then **requires further adjudication by USCIS** (submission of I-765 application)
- OPT employment must be related to the student's major
- Pre-Completion OPT (C-3-A)
  - Used before the student graduates from the academic program
  - Limited to 20 hours/week or full-time during breaks
  - May require multiple applications and fees (student needs to re-apply for Post-Completion OPT)
- Post completion (C-3-B)
  - Used after the student graduates
  - Must be at least 20 hours/week, paid or volunteer
  - Cap-Gap OPT extension:
    - Used when an H-1B is filed for the student before OPT EAD expires
    - Successful cap-gap extension is documented with new I-20



# STEM OPT EXTENSION

## EMPLOYMENT

### Extension of Optional Practical Training (C-3-C)

- Must currently be on approved period of post-completion OPT
- Extends employment authorization for 24 months
- Limited to specific majors
- Must complete a new application to USCIS for the STEM extension
- May apply for a 2<sup>nd</sup> STEM extension at a higher degree level

### Specific STEM Requirements

- I-983 Training Plan
- 6-month Employment Verification
- Annual Self-Evaluations

For more information, see: [studyinthestates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub](https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub)

# OPT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

## EMPLOYMENT

- Form I-765
- Fees: the I-765 application fee is now \$410
- OPT I-20 prepared by DSO
- Two passport style photos
- Copy of Passport
- Copy of Visa
- Copy of I-94
- Duplicate copies of any Full-Time CPT I-20s, if any
- Copy of I-797 Change of Status Receipt, if any
- STEM: copy of previous EAD; official transcript; form I-983

# OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT) & TRAVEL

“My application is PENDING. Do you think it would be ok to travel outside the U.S.?”



# OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT) & TRAVEL

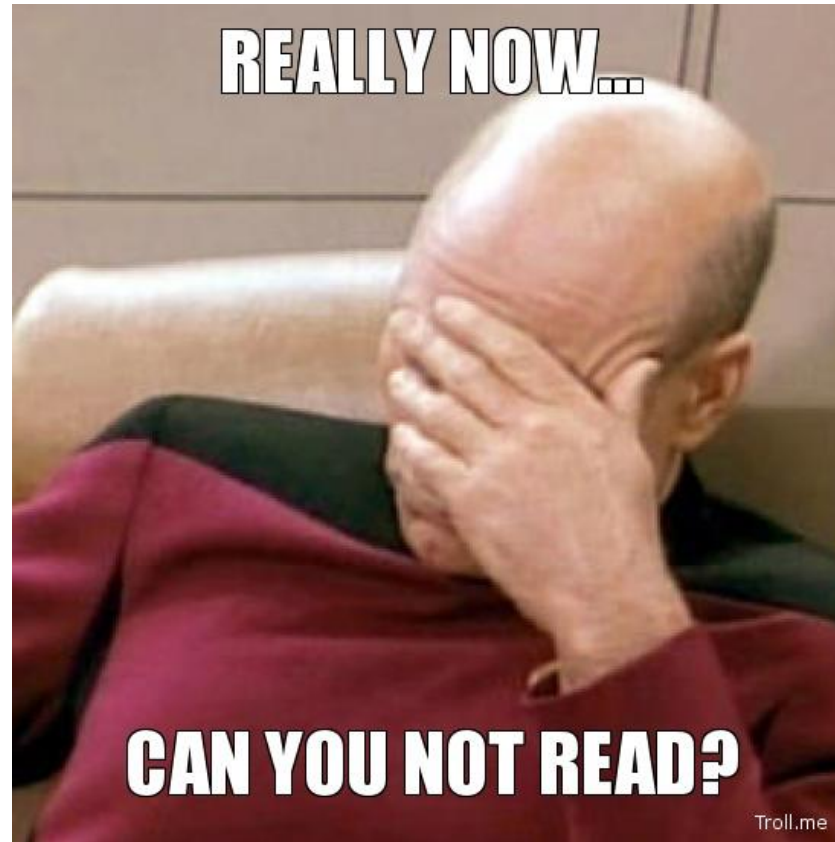
“My application is APPROVED, I have my EAD, and my employer wrote a letter...can I travel?”



# OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)

## EMPLOYMENT

When students ask you what they need to do to apply for OPT after you have just given them a detailed list.



# OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)

## EMPLOYMENT

Yes, I totally have control to  
have your OPT expedited.





# OPT REPORTING

## EMPLOYMENT

### Standard Reporting:

- Report any change of address within 10 days
- Report any change of employer within 10 days

### OPT STEM Reporting:

- 6 Month Employment Verifications
- Annual Employment Evaluations

# **OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)**

## **EMPLOYMENT**

When a  
student reports  
their OPT  
employment at  
a gas station...

# ECONOMIC HARDSHIP

## EMPLOYMENT

- An F-1 student can apply for off-campus employment authorization due to severe economic hardship
- Requires an I-765 application to USCIS
- Student must be experiencing unforeseen economic problems due to no fault of their own:
  - Substantial fluctuations in the value of student's home currency
  - Unexpected changes in the student's source of financial support
  - Medical bills
  - Other substantial, unexpected expenses

FINALLY...



# RESOURCES/QUESTIONS

NAFSA: [www.nafsa.org](http://www.nafsa.org)

GAIE: <http://www.gaie.org>

ICE SEVIS pages: [www.ice.gov/sevis](http://www.ice.gov/sevis)

Travel information: [http://www.ice.gov/sevis/travel/faq\\_f.htm](http://www.ice.gov/sevis/travel/faq_f.htm)

Study in the States (DHS): <http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov>

Custom and Border Protection (CBP): [www.cbp.gov](http://www.cbp.gov)

