



My Immigration Status Hurts!

Ouch!

What to do when F1 students
need to take time off for medical
reasons.



When there is an owie.....

- Make sure that students are aware that they must keep you informed about anything that may effect their F1 status.
- Make sure that students are fully informed about their health insurance coverage.

What qualifies in SEVIS?



- As long as the injury or medical problem is serious enough to merit the student staying out of classes, it can qualify (note that this does include mental illness/severe emotional trauma).
- The student must provide a doctor's note (from a licensed doctor) that specifically states that the student cannot attend classes and for how long they must be out of class.



What to do in SEVIS?

- Go into SEVIS and authorize the student to be out of classes for the semester.
- Go to “Authorize to Drop Below Full Time Status” in SEVIS record and select “Medical” for the reason. In the remarks field, briefly explain the student’s particular issue and that a doctor certified that they are not well enough to attend classes.
- This can only be done one semester at a time. A new doctor’s note is required each semester the student is sick/injured.

What's the Catch?



- Student's cannot be authorized indefinitely unless there are extenuating circumstances, i.e. hospitalization. After two consecutive semesters, the student must return to school or they must go home.
- Student must continue to provide current, written proof from a licensed doctor to continue authorization in SEVIS.
- If proper notification and documentation is not provided by the end of SEVIS registration, then student is out of status.

Some Good Ideas...

- Be sure to have emergency contact information for your students.
- Be sure that students tell their emergency contacts that the DSO must be informed with a written doctor's note if the student is incapacitated.
- Have a release form for students to sign at orientation stating that we as the DSO are allowed to be involved and to help with their legal/medical affairs here in the US.
- Strongly encourage students to fully review their health insurance information, and make sure they know it is mandatory for them to carry the health insurance cards.
- Have an attendance policy in place for cases where hospitalization is required.
- Have a policy in place in the case that a student must be escorted back to their home country.

Discussion Case #1

- A student comes to you and says that they have a serious illness and the doctor says that they must stay home for the semester. The doctor's note they give you does not specifically state that the student cannot attend classes. It simply excuses the student from "strenuous activities." What do you do? Are they eligible to be excused from classes according to SEVIS?

Discussion Case #2

- The doctor's note a student brings you does specifically state that they should be out of classes for the semester; however, it does not seem legitimate somehow. Upon further investigation, you find that the doctor is a cosmetic dermatologist, and not licensed to diagnose the condition the student claims to have, nor excuse the student from classes. What do you do?

Discussion Case #3



- You get a call in the middle of the semester from a student's emergency contact. They tell you that the student has been in a car accident, and is currently in a coma in the ICU. This student is fully enrolled in classes. The doctors do not know if or when the student will recover. What do you do? Are you responsible for notifying the professors? Is the emergency contact allowed to deliver the doctor's note? If the student does not recover enough to return to school, but can leave the hospital, what must be done?

Discussion Case #4

- A student comes to you and says that they are in need of a serious surgery, but they plan to return to their home country for the procedure and recovery. They will be gone for one semester. Once they have recovered, they wish to return to the US to complete their program. What do you do? What type of authorization is needed in SEVIS in this case? Should the five month rule apply? What needs to be done for the student to return and complete their program?