



Dartmouth College • Office of Visa and Immigration Services

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Email: Visa.and.Immigration.Services@Dartmouth.edu • Web: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~ovis/>

F-1 Student Nonimmigrant Status:

In order to maintain legal F-1 student status once you arrive in the United States, you must comply with the following requirements:

- Keep all of the documents listed below updated, valid, and in your possession at all times.
- Do not accept off-campus employment without authorization. (See your advisor in the Office of Visa and Immigration Services (OVIS) for more information on F-1 employment options.)
- Carry a full course load (generally 3 courses, sometimes 2) every term, except during vacations.
- Make normal academic progress toward achieving your program goals.
- Check in with (OVIS) within two weeks of your arrival on campus or during your scheduled orientation session. The immigration check in form is found online (see following hyperlink), and must be completed prior to your in-person check in at OVIS:
https://fs8.formsite.com/Rcatmur/checkinform/secure_index.html
- Notify OVIS in writing and as soon as possible, of any planned changes to your academic program.
- Notify your registrar and OVIS within ten days if you move and/or have a mailing or residential address change. Please make note to the Registrar that you would like to change your Banner Local Residential address.

FAILURE TO CHECK IN WITH THE OFFICE OF VISA AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES WILL RESULT IN A LOSS OF LEGAL IMMIGRATION STATUS IN THE U.S.

Student & Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS):

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) implemented the web-based Student & Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) in 2003. Colleges and universities that admit and host international students and scholars on F, J or M visas are required to use SEVIS in order to issue Department of State (DOS) DS-2019 forms and to inform SEVIS of any change to the student or exchange visitor's personal information or to the program of study or research. Institutions have been required by law to track this information in the past, and to relay it to the DHS and DOS, if requested, by paper. SEVIS now requires more regular and timely electronic information updates to the government. **In order to comply with SEVIS regulations, an F-1 student must inform OVIS before making any change to his or her academic program, funding source or amount, or personal information, including any change of mailing or residential address.** The institution has the responsibility of accurately notifying SEVIS in a timely fashion, of these changes.

If you have any questions about SEVIS, please contact the Office of Visa and Immigration Services.

Required Documents in the U.S.:

U.S. law requires you to carry your photo ID (valid passport) and your alien registration information (I-94 card and your I-20 form) with you at all times.

Passport:

This is a legal document issued by your home country, and it must be valid (unexpired) at all times. It should be valid for at least 6 months into the future at the time of entry to the U.S. Your passport can be renewed through your embassy or consulate in the U.S. Some countries have agreements with the U.S. that their passports will be considered valid for up to 6 months after they expire. Check with OVIS, or a U.S. consulate/embassy for more details.

I-20 Form:

The form you will be given is the SEVIS Form I-20, generated from the DHS Student & Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) database. It shows your SEVIS ID # on the top right corner, above the barcode. When you receive the I-20 form (Certificate of Eligibility) from Dartmouth College after you have been accepted, read and verify the information on page 1 of the I-20, and also carefully read over the information on the reverse of page 1 under "Instructions to Students". After you have read and understood this information, print your name, sign and date the bottom of page 1, # 11.

The I-20 form authorizes you to apply to a U.S. embassy or consulate in your home country for an F-1 (student) visa (**Note: Canadians are exempt from the visa requirement but must possess an I-20 form to enter the U.S. as F-1 students**). Once the visa is issued, you present your passport, I-20 form, and other required documents (evidence of admission to the institution, and evidence of funding sources and amounts) to the U.S. immigration officer at the Port of Entry.

When you first arrive at Dartmouth, you must check in with the Office of Visa and Immigration Services on campus at our offices on 44 North College Street, or during a scheduled orientation session given by your school or program at Dartmouth. You must complete the online Immigration Check in form before you attend an in-person check-in appointment or session. The online form is found here: https://fs8.formsite.com/Rcatmur/checkinform/secure_index.html

At your in-person check in appointment, we will make sure your papers are in order, take photocopies as required by federal law, and, if needed, will endorse page 3 of your I-20 form with a "travel signature", if we have not already done so, to allow you to travel and re-enter the U.S. Make sure you have a recent travel signature (less than nine months old) on your I-20 form before any temporary departure from the U.S., or you could be denied re-entry when you attempt to return. You must present your valid I-20 form to U.S. immigration officials each time you return from traveling outside the U.S. The I-20 form must never be allowed to expire while you are still in the U.S. as an enrolled student (see #5 on the I-20 form for your program expiration date). If you are within 30 days of the expiration date on your I-20, and will not be graduating or leaving school, you must see your international advisor to discuss the possibility of a program extension.

F-1 Entry Visa:

This is a stamp or a sticker with your photo that is placed in your passport by a U.S. Embassy or Consulate. It allows you to enter the U.S. and is valid until the expiration date shown. If it expires you cannot renew it from within the U.S. You do not need to renew it until you are planning to travel outside the U.S, as you are allowed to remain in the U.S. past the F-1 visa end date, for as long as your I-20 form is unexpired and you are maintaining normal academic progress in your academic program. If the visa has expired, and you are leaving the U.S. and plan to return, you must apply for a new entry visa to the U.S. at the U.S. embassy or consulate in your home country. Alternatively, you could make an appointment at a U.S. consulate in any foreign country, and apply for a new visa there. It is always best, however, to apply for the visa in your

country of citizenship or legal permanent residence. (NOTE: Canadian students are exempt from the visa requirement but must still have the I-20 form to enter the U.S.)

I-94 Card:

This is the small white card (some versions look like an airline boarding pass) you complete before passing through U.S. immigration inspections at your point of entry to the U.S. You must keep this card stapled in your passport at all times. It will be surrendered to airline or border officials when you depart the U.S., and then a new card will be given to you upon your return. If you are ever issued a green I-94 card, please come to the Office of Visa and Immigration Services immediately, as these indicate a temporary tourist status.

Duration of Status (“D/S”):

When certain non-immigrants are admitted to the U.S., the immigration officer makes a notation on their I-94 card indicating “Duration of Status” (“D/S”) instead of an expiration date. This means that the institution sponsoring them can extend their program of stay, even if the visa itself has expired. If you are ever admitted as an F-1 or F-2, and your I-94 card does **not** indicate “D/S”, but instead indicates a date by which you must depart the U.S., please come to the Office of Visa and Immigration Services immediately.

Full Course of Study:

You must be enrolled in a full course of study for each term. You are allowed one vacation term per year, only after being enrolled for nine consecutive months. You may not enroll in a part-time program of study unless OVIS has authorized this for you, in advance. There are limited reasons we can authorize part-time study, including a medical condition, trouble with the English language, improper course placement, or enrollment in the final term of study when less than a fulltime course load is required.

Academic Progress:

International students are expected to maintain normal academic progress during the course of their degree program. If you fail a course, if you require a leave of absence for personal or medical reasons, or if you are placed on academic probation or suspension, you may jeopardize your legal F-1 student status. Please contact your OVIS advisor immediately if any of these situations might occur.

Program Extensions:

You may apply to OVIS for an extension of your I-20 form if you need more time to complete your academic program. You must apply for an extension prior to the end date listed on your I-20 form. You will be required to submit an application form, evidence of new financial support, and your reasons for needing an extension. Your reasons must show that they are beyond your control, according to the regulations. Please allow two to four weeks for processing of any extension application.

Transfers:

You may transfer your F-1 student status to a new school in the U.S. This process is separate from your academic transfer, and must be completed in a timely fashion. Please contact your immigration advisor at OVIS if you need to transfer to a new school.

Employment:

Do not ever work illegally, on or off campus. As an F-1 student, you are allowed to work on-campus, paid by Dartmouth College, for 20 hours per week or less during academic terms, and 40 hours per week during College breaks and holidays. Fully funded graduate students are

considered to be already working the maximum amount of time allowed. You must receive authorization from DHS, or in some cases, from your immigration advisor, before accepting employment off-campus (called Optional Practical Training (OPT) or Curricular Practical Training (CPT)). OPT can take several months to process, and CPT can take several weeks. Working without proper authorization will result in a loss of your student status. Please see our information sheets on CPT and OPT for details on procedures and applications.

F-2 Dependents:

Dependents with F-2 visa/status may not accept any employment. They may volunteer only if the position is a bona fide volunteer position, and is always unpaid. F-2 dependents are allowed to study full-time in academic programs from Kindergarten to 12th grade. F-2's may not study full-time or part-time in college-level or degree programs, until they have applied for and received a change of status to F-1 from the DHS. F-2's may take an occasional course, as long as it is casual, or in the pursuit of a hobby.

Additional Information:

You may find comprehensive information on the F-1 student visa on the U.S. State Department website, here:

http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1268.html#public

Please contact us to make an appointment with an immigration advisor if you have any questions about your nonimmigrant status.

Welcome to Dartmouth College!