

# F-1 Immigration Advising

# INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADVISING



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- Advising by appointment (Zoom, phone, or in person)
- Advisors also respond to email

- Advise on F-1 regulations
- I-20 Updates
- Workshops
- General Assistance
- Advocacy

Information & Forms on CGE website:  
use it!

# NOLE START

You will use Nole Start (<https://istart.fsu.edu>) to submit forms and requests to the CGE, e.g.:

- Arrival Confirmation
- SSN Letter
- Reduced Course Load
- Travel Signature Request
- Curricular Practical Training (CPT)
- Optional Practical Training (OPT)
- Appointments with your CGE Advisor

# ARRIVAL CONFIRMATION

1. Enter your SEVIS address in my.fsu.edu.  
Specific formatting required for registration of your government immigration (SEVIS) record.
2. Retrieve I-94 at <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94>
3. Have your passport available
4. Log in to Nole Start – <https://istart.fsu.edu>, scroll down and click on Newly Admitted Students, complete Arrival Confirmation.

# ADDRESS FORMATTING

Very important that your **SEVIS address in my.fsu.edu** is in **standard postal service format with the correct zip code.**  
Check at [usps.com](https://usps.com)

## **Example:**

Address Line 1: 1234 Sample Dr Apt 567

City: Tallahassee

County: Leon

Zip code: 32304

**You are required by federal immigration regulations to update your U.S. address within 10 days of any move!**

# NEW REGULATION

All announcements regarding regulation updates, including the recent F-1 regulation update, can be found on [cge.fsu.edu/f-1-and-j-1-immigration-updates](https://cge.fsu.edu/f-1-and-j-1-immigration-updates) – check regularly

## CENTER FOR GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

Click here

[ABOUT US](#) [INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS](#) [J-1 SCHOLARS](#) [FOR DEPARTMENTS](#) [CGE PROGRAMS](#) [GLOBAL EXCHANGES](#) [GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP CERTIFICATE](#) [FORMS](#)

**PLEASE READ: Important F-1 AND J-1 Immigration Updates!!**

CGE's International Student & Scholar Services office is open Monday-Friday (M-F) from 8 am-5 pm for document pick up and quick questions.

Students can submit SSN Forms, travel signature requests, CPT/OPT applications, etc. through NoleStart and do not need to go to the CGE.

Fall 2026 New International Student Orientation Power Point slides are available [here](#)

[CLICK HERE](#) to find your advisor and schedule a Zoom-in Advising Appointment (from 2-4 pm, M-F)

For information about Employment-Based Immigration Assistance for International FSU Employees [CLICK HERE](#)



# F-1 Status: Documents & Important Dates

# F-1 ELIGIBILITY – I-20

- Issuing entity – FSU CGE (through SEVIS)
- Establishes ONLY eligibility for F-1 status, does NOT grant or guarantee legal immigration status
- Educational level & major = educational objective
- Program end date + issue date are important
- Some I-20 updates will require a USCIS application or review at US Port of Entry

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: N0005312268

|                                           |                                   |                                                           |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME<br>SEVIS             | GIVEN NAME<br>Sandra              | Class of Admission<br><b>F-1</b><br>ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE |
| PREFERRED NAME                            | PASSPORT NAME                     |                                                           |
| COUNTRY OF BIRTH<br>BELGIUM               | COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP<br>BELGIUM |                                                           |
| CITY OF BIRTH<br>Brussels                 | DATE OF BIRTH<br>20 OCTOBER 1988  |                                                           |
| FORM ISSUE REASON<br>CONTINUED ATTENDANCE | ADMISSION NUMBER                  |                                                           |

**SCHOOL INFORMATION**

|                                                                                 |                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SCHOOL NAME<br>SEVP School for Advanced SEVIS Studies                           | SCHOOL ADDRESS<br>126 N WAYNE ST, ARLINGTON, VA 22201            |
| SEVP School for Advanced SEVIS Studies                                          |                                                                  |
| SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL<br>Mark Twain<br>Immigration Specialist | SCHOOL CODE AND APPROVAL DATE<br>BAL214F4444000<br>03 APRIL 2015 |

**PROGRAM OF STUDY**

|                                       |                                                                 |                                           |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| EDUCATION LEVEL<br>MASTER'S           | MAJOR 1<br>Biochemical Engineering 14.4501                      | MAJOR 2<br>None 00.0000                   |
| PROGRAM END DATE<br>21 SEPTEMBER 2017 | ENGLISH PROFICIENCY<br>Student is proficient                    | EARLIEST ADMISSION DATE<br>21 AUGUST 2017 |
| START OF CLASSES<br>21 SEPTEMBER 2017 | PROGRAM START/END DATE<br>20 SEPTEMBER 2017 - 20 SEPTEMBER 2020 |                                           |

**FINANCIALS**

|                                        |           |                                  |           |
|----------------------------------------|-----------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FOR: 12 MONTHS |           | STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR: 12 MONTHS |           |
| Tuition and Fees                       | \$ 10,000 | Personal Funds                   | \$ 20,000 |
| Living Expenses                        | \$ 5,000  | Funds From This School           | \$        |
| Expenses of Dependents (0)             | \$        | Funds From Another Source        | \$        |
| Other                                  | \$        | On-Campus Employment             | \$        |
| TOTAL                                  | \$ 15,000 | TOTAL                            | \$ 20,000 |

**REMARKS**

Tuition may increase each year.

**SCHOOL ATTESTATION**

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.

**SIGNATURE OF:** Mark Twain, Immigration Specialist **DATE ISSUED:** 07 February 2020 **PLACE ISSUED:** ARLINGTON, VA

**STUDENT ATTESTATION**

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. Parent or guardian, and student, must sign if student is under 18.

**SIGNATURE OF:** Sandra SEVIS **DATE:**

**NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN:** **SIGNATURE:** **ADDRESS (city/state or province/country):** **DATE:**

# F-1 STATUS– I-94

I-94 Official Website - Get Most Recent I-94 Response



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

## Most Recent I-94

### Note to employers, local, state or federal agency granting benefits:

Please visit the CBP I-94 Public Website and click on the tab for "Get Most Recent I-94" to perform a search for the applicant to confirm that the biographic and travel information displayed on this I-94 printout matches the "Get Most Recent I-94" returned results for this applicant. I-94 FAQs: (<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/faq>)

**Admission I-94 Record Number:** 123456789

**Arrival/Issued Date:** 2024 July 02

**Class of Admission:** F1

**Admit Until Date:** D/S

**Details provided on the I-94 Information form:**

**Last/Surname:** XXXXX

**First (Given) Name:** XXXXXX

**Birth Date:** MM/DD/YYYY

**Document Number:** 987654321

**Country of Citizenship:** Croatia

▶ 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.

OMB No. 1501-0111  
Expiration Date: 08/31/2024

- Issuing entity – US Department of Homeland Security (USCIS or CBP)
- Grants legal immigration status for a specific period (despite the D/S notation)
- Will change upon re-entry from international travel or with USCIS applications
- Admit Until Date (AUD) is important
- I-20 shortening or termination will change status end date, even if not reflected on an I-94

# F-1 VISA



- Issuing entity – US Department of State (US consulate or embassy OUTSIDE US)
- Allows travel to a US Port of Entry to apply for legal immigration status
- Does NOT guarantee F-1 status will be granted or extended
- Expiration date IS NOT important inside the US
- Expiration date IS important for international travel



- You will need document copies for future USCIS applications
- I-94 documents are archived each time you re-enter the US and every 2 years
- I-20's are deleted 3 years after your final program end date at each school
- There is no way to request a copy of your visa stamp if your passport is lost or stolen.
- You should have a passport bio page copy in case it is lost, stolen, or being renewed

# DATES TO RECORD IN YOUR CALENDAR

- Is the end date on your current I-20 later than November 14, 2030?
  - On the date May 18, 2030 enter "Extend F-1 Status?"
- Is the end date on your current I-20 earlier than November 14, 2030?
  - Subtract 180 days from the program end date on your I-20 and on that date enter "Extend F-1 Status?"
- If you travel internationally on or after September 15, 2026, replace the above date with a date 180 days before the Admit Until Date (AUD) on your I-94 EVERY time you travel.
- Enter the day after your visa expiration date on your calendar with the notation - "Cannot re-enter U.S. without applying for F-1 visa"
- Subtract 6 months from your passport expiration date and enter "Renew/Extend Passport"

# REQUIRED IMMIGRATION REGISTRATION

I-94 Official Website - Get Most Recent I-94 Response



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

## Most Recent I-94

### Note to employers, local, state or federal agency granting benefits:

Please visit the CBP I-94 Public Website and click on the tab for "Get Most Recent I-94" to perform a search for the applicant to confirm that the biographic and travel information displayed on this I-94 printout matches the "Get Most Recent I-94" returned results for this applicant. I-94 FAQs: (<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/faq>)

**Admission I-94 Record Number:** 123456789

**Arrival/Issued Date:** 2024 July 02

**Class of Admission:** F1

**Admit Until Date:** D/S

**Details provided on the I-94 Information form:**

**Last/Surname:** XXXXX

**First (Given) Name:** XXXXXX

**Birth Date:** MM/DD/YYYY

**Document Number:** 987654321

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▶ 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.

OMB No. 1545-0111  
Expiration Date: 06/01/2024

- Carry a paper printout of your most recent I-94 with you at all times while inside the U.S.
- The I-94 is your immigration registration and proof of legal immigration status
- If law enforcement asks for your immigration registration, provide only the paper I-94
- When flying inside and outside the U.S., take all of your documents – I-20, I-94, passport, transcript, verification of enrollment

# START YOUR PERSONAL PERMANENT RECORD

Everyone in the room today will likely have a future USCIS application that will require the following from you:

- Every I-20 you received from all U.S. institutions (if you transferred your immigration status, collect your I-20's from your previous institution now)
- All DS-2019 forms if you were ever in J-1 status and copy of J-1 visa
- Paystubs for each payment received from all employers
- Documentation of legal authorization for every payment received or documentation that authorization was not required (on-campus, CPT, OPT, payment received when outside US, scholarship, loan, reimbursement for travel expenses)
- Documentation of timely filed USCIS extensions or I-94's that extended status (no gaps)
- Documentation of course enrollment that meets all F-1 regulations or documentation of reduced courseload approval in your government immigration record (SEVIS)
- Documentation supporting any authorized reduced courseload (doctor's recommendation)
- Documentation of the funding indicated on your I-20's
- Documentation of any encounters with law enforcement and the outcome
- Documentation of insurance payments for expenses associated with children born in US

You are responsible for keeping your own records and ensuring they are accessible. We recommend keeping a spreadsheet too.

# F-1 Status: Enrollment

# F-1 FULL COURSE LOAD REQUIREMENTS

| Semester      | Graduate Students                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fall & Spring | At least <b>9</b> hours (6 hours of these must be in-person)                                                                                                                                                   |
| Summer        | Annual break, enrollment not required (but check with depts and/or scholarship)                                                                                                                                |
| Final Term    | <b>#</b> needed to graduate, at least 1 in-person (can't be exclusively online) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>If in thesis or dissertation: 2 hours of thesis or dissertation minimum</i></li></ul> |

# OTHER COURSELOAD REQUIREMENTS

- Graduate Assistants are required to be enrolled in at least 9 credit hours for their assistantships (including summer if working the long session)
- Academic programs may require more than 9 credit hours to ensure timely completion
- Student loans and scholarships may have different enrollment requirements (like no online or a minimum to receive payment)

# REDUCED COURSE LOAD

## Academic Difficulties

- *Initial* difficulty with English language or reading requirements
- Unfamiliarity with U.S. teaching methods
- Improper Course Level placement
- Only allowed 1 time in your first semester studying in the U.S.
- Not for: worrying about how a grade will influence GPA, didn't like class
- Must still have minimum of 6 hours and no more than 3 of those credit hours online\*

## Medical

- Requires documentation from licensed M.D., D.O, or Clinical Psychologist
- Partial (less than FT) or complete (0 credits) reduction\*
- Limited to 12 months per academic level, authorized one semester at a time

*\*Assistantships, scholarships, or loans may have minimum enrollment requirements that cannot be reduced without forfeiting this funding source*

**Must be authorized in advance!**

Submit Form and Letter via NoleStart

# REDUCED COURSE LOAD TIMING

- Reduced course load or withdrawal from all courses cannot be approved retroactively after the semester has ended.
- Seek advice and assistance early in the semester.
- Enrolling in more than the minimum required for immigration purposes allows for more flexibility for a late drop due to grades (but assistantships may limit this option).

# ACADEMIC RESTRICTIONS

- Graduate students cannot change major or level unless graduating from the degree/major and level indicated on the current I-20
- Only progression to the next higher degree level is permitted (no lower degree or second degree at the same level)
- Poor academic performance will eliminate possibility for extension, transfer, or OPT
- Carefully document in-flight Masters

# F-1 Status: Employment

# EMPLOYMENT

## On-Campus

- State mandated screening is required for work in an academic department or when conducting research for any part of FSU.
- All on-campus employment is limited to 20 hours/week or less in Fall and Spring and in Summer if Summer is your final/graduation semester.
- Authorization ends on diploma date of graduating semester or your shortened program end date (whichever is first).
- Employment during Winter Break between Fall and Spring enrollment at the same degree level, Spring Break, and summer break between Spring and Fall enrollment in the same degree program can exceed 20 hours per week.

## Off-Campus

- Restricted – must be authorized by CGE or USCIS in advance if students are eligible.
- Curricular Practical Training – paid or unpaid. Must be integral to your academic program.

# EMPLOYMENT

## Employment Requires:

- A social security number
- U.S. bank account
- FSU employment requires a completed Glacier record

*Authorization to work on-campus ends on your graduation date or your shortened program end date, whichever comes first. Any work done after graduation requires special authorization.*

**ASK US!!!**

# CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING (CPT)

Federal regulations at 8 CFR 214.2(f)(10)(i) define Curricular Practical Training (CPT), as “alternative work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship/practicum that is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school.”

*It must be **INTEGRAL** to your degree completion! Keep all documentation.*

CPT may be an option after your first academic year (Fall and Spring) if:

- Your academic program requires training (Internship, Practicum), or
- An internship or DIS can be used as an elective toward your degree completion, or
- You require training to prepare for or complete your thesis or dissertation

Full-time CPT of 12 months or more cancels OPT

# UNAUTHORIZED EMPLOYMENT

Anything *not* on-campus or *not* approved as CPT/OPT is *not* authorized and will result in termination of a student's eligibility for F-1 status. Status ends immediately.

Unauthorized employment includes ANY service for ANY type of compensation performed for ANYone ANYwhere!

This includes working remotely for an employer outside the U.S., posting on social media for compensation, selling products or services, or running a business.

# UNAUTHORIZED EMPLOYMENT

- You are responsible for ensuring that you are working legally.
- Your employer can be fined \$10,000 per employee for improperly verifying your authorization.
- If a disgruntled customer, fellow student who is following the rules, or unhappy family member reports illegal employment to Immigration and Customs Enforcement, that agency will require us to terminate your F-1 eligibility immediately.

# F-1 Status: SEVIS

# SEVIS

## Electronic Record

- You have a SEVIS record which contains your current contact information, employment authorizations, funding information, entries and exits, visa and passport details entered by the consulate, each semester's registration (based upon your proper enrollment)
- I-20 shows Program end date, given as estimate
- Provides government agencies F-1 eligibility information

## Your Responsibilities

- Update your SEVIS address within 10 days of change – [my.fsu.edu](https://my.fsu.edu)
- Request employment authorization: except on-campus
- Notify F-1 advisor if studying abroad, leaving university
- Request any reduced course load IN ADVANCE/DURING SEMESTER
- Request for transfer, extensions IN NOLESTART

# SEVIS

Department of Homeland Security Designated School Officials at the CGE (international student advisors) will:

- Send your address and contact information updates to SEVIS
- Verify full-time enrollment and compliance with online class limits every semester
- Terminate student records for violations: enrollment, online, unauthorized employment
- Process student requests: I-20 extensions, Curricular Practical Training (CPT), Optional Practical Training (OPT), transfers, reduced course load as permitted by federal regulations
- Issue I-20s for F-2 dependents
- Shorten the program end date upon graduation
- Change educational level – next higher only

# F-1 Status: Travel

# TRAVEL

For international travel, carry in a purse, pocket, or personal item that you will not gate check:

- Passport – valid at least 6 months beyond date of re-entry
- F-1 Visa Stamp that will be unexpired on re-entry (unless using a passport from Canada or Bermuda)
- PAPER I-20 with a future program end date and travel signature dated within 6 months of travel
- Transcripts and verification of enrollment
- Funding documentation
- Social media handles
- Documentation of health insurance
- Receipt for USCIS extension if applicable

# TRAVEL

## Travel signature process

- Check <https://cge.fsu.edu/f-1-and-j-1-immigration-updates> for any changes that may impact your travel plans
- Before booking travel, complete a request in Nole Start – <https://istart.fsu.edu> under F-1 Student Services
- Estimated travel dates are ok
- A CGE advisor will review all aspects of your immigration status and planned travel to advise you
- We will not withhold travel signatures
- Travel signatures are not approval to travel and do not guarantee re-entry; only documentation that you are maintaining status at the time of the request
- Plan travel only during school breaks and plan visa renewal during a summer break, preferably in the month of May

# TRAVEL

- Check entry requirements for the countries to which you will travel. If you normally need a visa, you will likely need to apply for a visa.
- When booking your ticket, check that your passport name and DOB are correct and in the order used in the US

# TRAVEL

- Cruises require that you present your U.S. immigration documentation as you board the cruise.
- Cruise lines will not allow you to board the ship to exit the U.S. if you cannot show a paper printout of your I-20 with a travel validation signature, passport valid for 6 months, and valid F-1 visa (F-1 visa may not be required if you are a citizen of Canada or Bermuda).

# TRAVEL

- Remember that the US Port of Entry is evaluating your purpose for entry and your status every time you re-enter
- Port of Entry officers are trying to determine your purpose for entry when they ask things like: Where are you headed today?
- Place your I-20 in the page of your passport that contains your F-1 visa. Do not wait for them to ask for it.
- DO wait for them to ask for additional information or documentation like funding, transcripts, social media

# TRAVEL

After re-entry to the U.S.

- Go to <https://i-94.cbp.dhs.gov/home>
- Retrieve your I-94 immediately after passing through immigration to ensure that it shows the correct F-1 status and try to ask for a correction if not
- You will have a specific Admit Until Date (AUD) - check that it extends through at least the current semester plus 30 days
- Add your AUD to your personal calendar with a reminder 180 days in advance "Extend F-1 Status?"
- Print I-94 to paper (adjust margins 6 in top, 4 in left) for your proof of immigration registration
  - **Have it with you while out and about!**
  - Keep it in your permanent records! The records expire in 2 years.
  - Future immigration applications may require you to report all entries.
- If you are employed on-campus, provide your hiring department's HR representative a copy to reverify your I-9 using the new AUD as your employment authorization end date.
- Future driver license renewals may be tied to your I-94 end date, rather than your I-20 end date

# TRAVEL

- Re-entry to the U.S. on or after September 15, 2026 will end your transition period
- Your AUD granted upon entry should match your I-20 program end date plus 30 days or 4 years and 30 days past your re-entry, whichever is shorter, but CBP has broad discretion
- Your F-1 status ends on your AUD with NO grace period
- Staying beyond your AUD causes accrual of unlawful presence and can result in a bar on re-entry to the US in any status