Immigration Regulations for F-1 Students

Updated: 01/03/2017
International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO)

3248 Memorial Union

Office hours

Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
(During Break – 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)

Phone: (515) 294–1120
E–mail: isso@iastate.edu
Appointments with Advisors

How to meet with an ISSO advisor:

- Schedule an appointment through ISSO homepage: www.isso.iastate.edu
- 20 minutes
Appointments with ISSO Advisors

www.isso.iastate.edu

Office Hours
Monday - Friday 8am to 5pm
Scholar Check-in
10:00am: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday

Schedule An Appointment
https://appointments.isso.iastate.edu/

Links
Cystart

Student Advising Appointments

Select your immigration status
Choose your Visa type

Select the Reason for your Appointment

Select an International Student Advisor
Choose your Advisor:

- Select a date & time
- Fill in your information:
  - Name, contact, in-person/via phone, detailed reason
ISSO: Advising Services

Other options to contact an ISSO advisor

- **Phone**
  - (515) 294-1120
- **E-mail**
  - isso@iastate.edu

Please do not send the same e-mail to several advisors.
Immigration Documents

- Passport
- Visa
- I-20
- I-94 Record (electronic)
Immigration Document: Passport

- Must be valid for at least six months into the future
- Contact your embassy to extend or replace
- U.S. arrival stamp must say “F1” and “D/S”
You MUST have a valid visa to enter the U.S.
Renew at a U.S. consulate outside the U.S.

You do NOT need a valid visa to remain in the U.S.

Travel document used to request entry to the U.S.

- Visa Class
- Entries [Allowed]
  M = Multiple
- Expiration Date
I-20 (page 1)

- Who can study?
  - You!

- Where can you study?
  - Iowa State University

- What can you study?
  - Level of education
  - Major

- When can you study?
  - Estimated end date for current degree program
Immigration Document: I-20

I-20 - page 2

- CPT authorizations
- OPT recommendations
- Reduced course load approvals
- Travel endorsements
Immigration Document: I-94

- You MUST receive an I-94 record when entering the U.S.
- U.S. CBP entered your information in a database
- The I-94 record documents your legal status in the U.S.
- Obtain a copy of your I-94 record at: www.cbp.gov/I94
Immigration Document: I-94

- I-94 Number
- Expiration Date
  D/S = Duration of Status
- Class of Admission
  Immigration Status

www.cbp.gov/I94
Visa vs. Immigration Status

- Your **VISA** is the stamp in your passport you receive at a U. S. consulate.
- Your **visa** is used only to request admission to the U. S.
- Your **visa** can expire while you are in the U. S., without any penalty.
- A **visa** can be renewed only at a consulate outside the U. S.

- Your **IMMIGRATION STATUS** is indicated on your I–94 when you enter the U. S.
- Your **immigration status** allows you to stay in the U. S. for your F program.
- Your **immigration status** must remain current and valid while in the U. S.
- Your **immigration status** can be extended within the U. S.
Immigration Documents

- **Copies**
  - Make two copies of all your and your dependents’ immigration documents (passport, I-94, I-20)
  - Carry one set of copies with you in Iowa
  - Store one set of copies in a safe place
  - Carry original documents when outside Iowa

- **Keep all I-20 forms!**
  - Keep all I-20 forms that are issued to you and dependents
    - These demonstrate the history of your time in the U.S.
Maintaining Status

- Obtain immigration advice from:
  - ISSO advisors
  - U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (USICE)
  - U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)
  - U.S. Customs and Border Protection (USCBP)

- Not from:
  - Friends
  - Faculty or academic advisors
Maintaining Status

- **You** are responsible for your F-1 status
  - Review your immigration documents
    - Before and after travel
    - Beginning of each semester
  - Thoroughly read all emails from ISSO!!!
    - These will always go to your @iastate.edu
  - Meet deadlines required by F-1 regulations
Maintaining Status

Full-time Enrollment

- Requirement for fall and spring semesters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Level:</th>
<th>What’s Full-Time?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>12 credits per semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Level</td>
<td>9 credits per semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate with Assistantship</td>
<td>Defined by your academic department</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Requirement for summer session
  - No enrollment requirement **unless** your first or final semester
Distance and On-Line Courses

- **ONLY one course or 3-credits per term** (towards the "full course of study" requirement)

  **Example of acceptable enrollment:**
  Full-time for bachelor’s degree is 12 credits
  Enroll in 9 credits where courses are taught on campus
  Enroll in 3 (or more) credits for course(s) taught on-line/distance education

  **Example of enrollment that would not be acceptable:**
  Full-time for bachelor’s degree is 12 credits
  Enroll in 6 credits where courses are taught on campus
  Enroll in 6 credits for courses taught on-line/distance education

- **Cannot be only class during last semester**
Maintaining Status

- Reduced Course Load (RCL)
  - Difficulties with English language
  - Difficulties with reading requirements
  - Unfamiliar with American teaching methods
  - Inappropriate course level placement
  - Documented medical condition
  - Graduate student pursuing full time research
  - To complete a course of study in current term

Option to use ONE of these once per degree level

Submit RCL request to ISSO for approval
Concurrent Enrollments

- Can be enrolled in two different schools at the same time, as long as full time, and both are SEVIS-certified

- Discuss with an ISSO advisor before choosing concurrent enrollment
Report Change of Address

- Report your change of address:
  - through AccessPlus
  - within 10 days of moving
Benefits of F-1 Status

- **On Campus Employment**
  - Paycheck from Iowa State University
  - 20 hours per week (or less) during fall and spring semesters
    - Not an average
  - Full time during breaks IF you will be continuing as a student after the break
    - Breaks include: Summer, Winter, Thanksgiving, Spring

- Complete I-9 with ISSO before starting work
Benefits of F-1 Status

- **Off Campus Employment**
  - Eligible **ONLY** after having enrolled full-time for one full academic year
  - **Must obtain written approval** from ISSO
    - Attend CPT/OPT workshop for more information
  - See an ISSO advisor if **unforeseen** circumstances arise which cause you a severe economic hardship

- Requires Special Authorization
Benefits of F-1 Status

- Other benefits of F-1 status
  - Transfer to new school (immigration process)
  - Change of academic level
  - Extension of I-20 for current degree
  - Off campus employment

- On campus employment (do not need approval)
Violation of F-1 Status

- Violating your F-1 status
  - Expired I-20 or passport
  - Not enrolled full time (and no RCL)
  - Address change not reported within 10 days of moving
  - Working off-campus without proper authorization
Violation of F-1 Status

- Consequences of being “out of status”:
  - You will need to “get back in status” (Reinstatement)
    - Costly
    - Sometimes difficult
  - Loss of work benefits on campus and off campus
  - In extreme cases;
    - Could lead to deportation
    - Could require a new visa to reenter the U.S.
    - Could be barred from re-entering U.S. (3 or 10 years)
    - Could be reason for denial of future benefits or request for change to another status
F-2 Dependents

- Can take classes that are
  - **Part-time** only

- Not allowed to work either on or off-campus

- F-2 status depends on the F-1 status
What questions do you still have?

Welcome to ISU!!