

Maintaining Legal Status in the U.S. Immigration Reminders for F and J Visa Students and Scholars

- **Full-time enrollment** – You must maintain full-time enrollment each fall and spring semester unless you have received approval from your international student advisor.
- **Valid Passport** – keep it valid at all times. To renew your passport while in the U.S., you need to contact your local embassy or consulate.
- **I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record)** – This document (normally a white card stapled inside your passport) shows your date of arrival, visa status and how long you can remain in the U.S. (D/S = “Duration of Status”). You should keep this with your passport and you must turn it in to airline or immigration official each time you depart the U.S. Upon re-entry to the U.S. after a trip abroad, you will receive a new I-94.
- **I-20 (for F-1 student status)** – Shows your program of study and program start/end dates. You need a new one if your major changes, if your program end date changes or if you get employment authorization. You should always keep your old I-20s in a safe place.
- **DS-2019 (For J-1 exchange visitor status)** – Shows your exchange program and program start/end dates.
- **Copies of documents** - You must provide your international student advisor with a copy of the following: passport ID page; passport visa page (if you have an F or J visa); I-20; I-94. You should also make your own copy of these items and keep them in a safe place.
- **U.S. Address** – You must report any change of address to your international student advisor within 10 days of making that change (undergraduates living on campus do not need to report changes made within the school’s residence halls). This includes address changes for students who normally live on campus and who remain in the U.S. during summer living off-campus.
- **Travel outside the U.S.** – You must have your I-20 or DS-2019 with a valid travel signature from your international student advisor in order to return to the U.S. after a trip abroad. In most cases, travel signatures are valid for 1 year (though, if you travel regularly, **you should get a new travel signature each semester**). A travel signature can be used multiple times. **DO NOT** wait until the week of travel to get signature – PLEASE!
- **Graduation or program completion** – F-1 status students are permitted to remain in the U.S. for a 60-day grace period after program completion or graduation unless they have transferred to another school (see below) or have applied for post-completion Optional Practical Training. J-1 visitors are permitted to remain in the U.S. for a 30-day grace period after program completion unless they have transferred to another J program or have been approved for Academic Training. Note that there is no grace period for individuals who violate their immigration status.
- **Transfer to another school** – If you wish to transfer to another school (prior to or after graduation from one of The Claremont Colleges) you must see your international student advisor in order to have your SEVIS record transferred to the new school. SEVIS transfer must be completed before the end of the 60-day (for F-1 visa students) or 30-day (for J-1 exchange visitors) grace period.
- **Employment on campus**– F-1 visa students do not need special immigration authorization for on-campus employment. J-1 exchange visitors must have written authorization from their program’s Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer before starting any on-campus employment. On-campus employment for F-1 or J-1 status holders is limited to a maximum 20 hours per week during fall and spring semesters; employment during breaks (winter, spring, summer breaks, for example) can be for more than 20 hours per week.

- **Employment off campus** – Off-campus employment is strictly prohibited for F-1 or J-1 status holders unless employment authorization has been granted (see Optional Practical Training, Curricular Practical Training or Academic Training).
- **Optional Practical Training (F-1 status)** – OPT is authorization for off-campus employment in your field of study and is generally used upon completion of your academic program. OPT may be granted for a period of 12 months (up to 29 months may be possible for students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics programs). I-Place offers workshops throughout the semester or you can see your international student advisor for specific information and procedures.
- **Curricular Practical Training (F-1 Status)** – CPT is authorization for off-campus employment in your field of study and is generally used for paid internships during your academic program. I-Place offers workshops throughout the semester or you can see your international student advisor for specific information and procedures.
- **Academic Training (J-1 status)** – AT is authorization for off-campus employment in your field of study and is used upon completion of your exchange program. AT may be granted for a period of 18 months (up to 36 months may be possible for post-doctoral exchange visitors).
- **Other Off-Campus Employment Possibilities** – Under certain circumstances, student experiencing severe and unforeseen economic difficulties you may be authorized for off-campus paid employment. Contact I-Place or see your international student advisor for specific information and procedures.
- **Violation of Status** – Failure to maintain proper immigration status is a serious matter and may lead to deportation ineligibility to return to the U.S. You will be in violation of status if you:
 - Fail to maintain full time enrollment during fall and spring semesters unless you have specific permission from your international student advisor to fall below full time
 - Fail to keep your passport, I-94 and I-20 (F-1) or DS-2019 (J-1) valid at all times
 - Fail to report your change of address to your international student advisor within 10 days of moving (not necessary for undergraduate students living in residence halls)
 - Stay in the U.S. longer than you are eligible (60-day grace period for F-1 and 30-day grace period for J-1. No grace period for students who violate status.
 - Fail to notify your international student advisor of your intention to transfer to another school in the U.S.
 - Engage in unauthorized off-campus employment or work on campus more than 20 hours per week during fall and spring semesters
 - Fail to follow employment requirements during your period of OPT (you will learn more about these requirements during an I-Place Employment Workshop and when you apply for OPT).
- **International Student Advisor** – Generally, this would be the person who signed your I-20 or DS-2019. See the I-Place website for a complete list and contact information for your international student advisor.