

## Immigration Terms

**F-1 Student:** Most international students at IU South Bend are in F-1 status. Students in F-1 status are, generally speaking, full-time, degree-seeking students who must abide by all regulations and procedures required to maintain this status.

**J-1 Student:** Few students at IU South Bend study in J-1 status. Typically, J-1 students participate in exchange or in short-term programs for a few weeks of a semester or two.

**SEVIS:** This is the acronym for the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System, an electronic recordkeeping and reporting system which is maintained by SEVP (see below). IU South Bend must report information concerning F-1 and J-1 students to the government through this system within established time frames each semester. This information includes student directory information, as well as national citizenship, program of study, start and end dates, and other notes about work and academics.

**SEVP:** This is the acronym for the Student and Exchange Visitor Program. It is designed to help the Department of Homeland Security and Department of State better monitor school and exchange programs in the F and J categories. SEVP administers the F program, while the Department of State manages the J exchange visitor program.

**USCIS:** The United States Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) and its sister agencies (ICE & CBP) fully replaced the INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) in 2003. The USCIS is responsible for most applications, petitions and adjudications. Whereas the INS was part of the Department of Justice, the USCIS is housed in the Department of Homeland Security.

**Visa:** The visa is an endorsement (sometimes an ink stamp, but now usually a machine-readable page in the passport) which the Embassy or Consulate of a country issues to those seeking to enter from outside that country.

**Immigration Status:** Students who are issued a form I-20 will be in F-1 status and students who are issued a Form DS-2019 will be in J-1 status. Both may seek an entrance visa based on this status.

## Our Mission

The Office of International Student Services offers admissions processing, immigration advisement, support services, counsel, and programming for all international students from applicant through alumni status. Trained staff helps international students settle well into the community and locate the resources required to succeed academically. We seek to create--in collaboration with campus and community members--an environment which fosters dialogue and exchange, and enables students to thrive emotionally, physically, intellectually, and socially.



# Immigration Terms and International Student Issues

A Faculty and Staff Resource

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INDIANA UNIVERSITY  
SOUTH BEND



## **International Student Issues: Helping Students Maintain their “Lawful Status”**

### **F-1 and J-1 Academic Guidelines**

#### **Fulltime Enrollment**

Unless otherwise specified, F-1 and J-1 students are required to be enrolled full-time each fall and spring semester: 8 credits for Graduates; 12 credits for Undergraduates. The USCIS recognizes that academic program requirements, language difficulties, and illness may occasion an exception to this expectation, but the University is required to report through SEVIS any unauthorized courseload reduction, and this will result in termination of lawful student status. Therefore students and their academic advisors are urged to work with the OISS to obtain authorization for a reduction of courseload prior to the semester in which the reduction will take effect. Reduced Course Load Authorization Forms are available in the OISS. Authorization can be granted for the following reasons: documented medical condition; difficulty with the English language or with English language reading assignments; difficulties with American pedagogical methods; improper placement in a course; or less than 8/12 credits required to complete a degree program in the final semester.

#### **Notify the OISS of Early Withdrawal, Termination, or Separation from IU South Bend**

The OISS must determine whether a student will be able to maintain status in certain academic circumstances, and the University must report through SEVIS certain academic events. Faculty and staff should notify the OISS within 3-4 days of the following:

- Student suspension, dismissal, or program termination
- Early termination of program for withdrawal, leave of absence, etc.
- Research or study abroad
- Research at another location within the United States
- Intention to complete a degree from outside the United States

### **F-1 and J-1 Employment Guidelines**

#### **Definition of Employment**

For immigration status purposes, employment is considered to be any service rendered for compensation, whether as wages, salary, reimbursement, or “in kind” exchange (such as books, meals, travel, etc.). For students in F-1 and J-1 status, employment is a “benefit” of the status, rather than a “right,” and it is regulated according to the particular status of the international visa holder. The SEVP considers working more hours than allowed by immigration status or without proper authorization a serious violation, and the result of such violations may, unfortunately, lead to an untimely departure from the country.

#### **20 Hours during Academic Year**

F-1 and J-1 students may work on-campus during the academic year for up to, but NO MORE than, 20 hours per week. Students may work full-time during the breaks and summer vacation only.

#### **On-Campus Employment**

By law, F-1 students may begin work on campus without prior authorization from the OISS; J-1 students must obtain written authorization before on-campus employment begins.

On-campus employment may be through an employer issuing an IU South Bend paycheck or through an employer that offers direct student service. The IU Bookstore is considered an on-campus employer, whereas companies contracted for construction work are not.

#### **Off-Campus Authorization Required for All J-1 and F-1 Students**

There are various options available for off-campus employment; however, all F-1 and J-1 students must seek authorization with assistance from the OISS before beginning any off-campus employment.

#### **Consequences of Unauthorized Employment**

The University is required to report any instances of unauthorized employment through SEVIS. Work-related violations result in termination and require that a student depart the country immediately. Students may seek to re-enter the U.S. in order to complete a program of study, but should seek assistance from the OISS.

### **Other International Student Issues and Concerns**

#### **F-2 and J-2 Dependents**

Spouses and dependent children who accompany an F-1 and J-1 student have their own immigration documents, status, and regulatory guidelines to maintain and follow. For example, F-2 spouses do not have permission to take employment under any circumstances, although J-2 spouses may seek work authorization. Likewise, F-2 spouses are not permitted to study full-time towards a degree, although they may take “avocational” classes; J-2 spouses have greater flexibility in determining a course of study.

The OISS considers the spouses and children of international student to require guidance and support in order to live well here while a student spouse/parent completes a program of study.

OISS reaches out to international spouses and families through programming and an open-door invitation to visit the OISS for information and counsel.

#### **International Student Health Insurance**

IU South Bend requires all F-1 and J-1 international students and their dependents to maintain an adequate health insurance policy.

#### **English Language Proficiency**

IU South Bend requires all international students to demonstrate a standard level of English language proficiency as a condition of admission. Moreover, unless the student has documentation of English as a native language, the student must sit for English placement exams for written and oral fluency following admission. Based on results of these exams, students begin a sequence of English development courses during their first semester and continue to satisfactory completion of the entire sequence.

**For more information, please see the OISS webpage: [www.iusb.edu/~oiss](http://www.iusb.edu/~oiss)**