Immigration Orientation: Maintaining Your J-1 Status

International Services
International Affairs
University of South Florida
J-1 Immigration Documents

• Passport
  ▫ Your passport must be valid at least 6 months into the future.
  ▫ Most governments allow renewal with their embassy in the US.

• I-94 OR I-797 Approval Notice
  ▫ This document shows how and when you got j-1 status either by entry into the US OR change of status to J-1.
J-1 Immigration Documents

• Visa Stamp
  ▫ This is a travel document.
  ▫ It allows travel into the US as an J-1 if you also have a valid, signed DS-2019.

• DS-2019
  ▫ This is your proof of J-1 status.
  ▫ It lists your current school, level, and major.
  ▫ Do not lose this document!!
Care of Documents

- Be sure to keep all your immigration documents in a safe place.
- Report any theft immediately.
- Report any changes to International Services.
- If you travel and get new documents, bring to IS for copying.
Change of Program

• You are not permitted to change your major while you are in the same level of study.
  ▫ Changes in school or colleges (ex. Medicine to Engineering) require permission from IS.
• Exchange students cannot change from non-degree to degree seeking without exiting the US and applying for a new J-1 visa.
DS-2019 End Date

- The end date on your DS-2019 shows the date you are expected to complete your academic program at USF.
- If you will not finish your program before the end date on your DS-2019, you will need to apply for an “extension” or new end date.
Extension of Stay

• May be possible to request an extension of your program if you need additional time to complete your program requirements.
  ▫ Must be done at least two weeks prior to the end date on the DS-2019
  ▫ Use the J-1 Program Extension Request Form
  ▫ Form must be signed by Graduate Coordinator, Academic Advisor or Exchange Coordinator.
Travel Outside the US

• If you travel outside of the US (including Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and a cruise), you must have the following:
  ▫ Valid J-1 visa stamp in your passport.
  ▫ Be in good academic standing at USF.
    • You cannot be dismissed or on final probation.
  ▫ DS-2019 signed for travel
    • Signatures are valid for one semester
Full-time Enrollment

• J-1 F-1 students are required to be enrolled for “full-time” every Fall & Spring semesters.
• “Full-time” is:
  ▫ 12 credit hours for undergraduates
  ▫ 9 credit hours for graduates
• You must be enrolled full-time for the entire semester.
What if I drop a course and am below full-time?

- If you drop below full-time during Fall or Spring semester without approval from IS, you will be out of status and your DS-2019 will be terminated.
- This would make you illegally present in the US.
- Speak with an IS Advisor to discuss your options if you need to drop a course.
How can I get approval to drop below full-time?

• Meet with IS Advisor to determine if you have a valid reason:
  • Final semester and you are graduating
  • Bona Fide Academic Reason
  • You have a medical excuse from a US doctor.

• You may NOT drop courses because you are getting a bad grade, failing the course, or because you do not like the course.
Change of Address

• International students must report any change of address within 10 days.

• If you have a USF DS-2019, you report your change of address by updating the mailing address field in OASIS.
  ▫ This update passes to our office electronically and we notify immigration of your change of address.

• If you are a Fulbright, LASPAU or student who does not have a USF issued DS-2019, please report to your Responsible Officer any changes.
Employment On Campus

- You are allowed to work on-campus up to 20 hours per week during Fall and Spring semesters.
- J-1 students must have permission from International Services BEFORE beginning employment or changing employment.
- You may ask for permission from IS to work up to 40 hours per week during summer.
What is an on-campus job?

• On-campus jobs are any job that pay with a USF paycheck.
• Also considered on-campus are businesses that provide essential services to students, such as Aramark (Food Service) or Barnes & Nobles (Bookstore).
• Moffitt Cancer Center is not USF.
Do I need permission to accept on-campus employment?

- YES. You must get permission from IS or your LASPAU/Fulbright advisor in the form of a letter.
- If you do not have a Social Security Number (SSN), you will need to apply for one before you can work.
Procedures for On Campus Employment

For First Time Employment

• Submit your letter of offer from your employer and a Letter Request for a Social Security Letter.
• If approved, an International Advisor will update SEVIS and write a letter showing the authorization.
• You will also receive a letter to take to Social Security
• Apply for a social security number

To Renew Employment

• Each semester, you must report renewal of employment by completing the SEVIS Record Update form and submitting to International Services (IS).
• IS will provide you with a letter showing your approval.
Can I get an SSN without a job?

• No. You must have a job offer at USF to qualify for an SSN.
• Although the SSN is used for credit checks, it is not required to rent an apartment, open a bank account, or get a driver’s license.
Academic Training

• Students who wish to engage in employment after completion of program may request Academic Training
• Time limit = time spent in program
• Must have job offer
• Must be related to your major and be a training component of your major
• Meet with International Services for more information
Health Insurance

- You and your J-2 dependants are required by U.S. Immigration Law to have health insurance that is in effect for the duration of your stay as an Exchange Visitor.
- A failure to purchase and maintain health insurance is considered a violation of your Exchange Visitor status and will result in termination of your status.
Adding Dependents

• If you want to bring your Spouse or children as J-2 dependants, you should complete the SEVIS Record Update form & submit:
  ▫ Passport copies for each dependant.
  ▫ Finances: Showing an additional $5000 per dependant per year.
NSEERS

- The NSEERS program is special registration for some internationals.
- If you are subject to NSEERS, you received a “FIN number” when you entered the US.
- NSEERS students must follow special exit procedures explained in the NSEERS packet.
- If you have questions, come see an advisor.
Exit Grace Periods

• J-1 students are given 30 days to exit the U.S. after completing a program of study.

• You may not re-enter the U.S. in J-1 status if you exit during the grace period.

• You may travel around the US during your grace period.
Transfer

• If you are accepted to another school and decide to leave USF, you will need your SEVIS record “transferred” to the new school.
• To request a SEVIS transfer, you will need to complete a Transfer Out form and include a copy of acceptance letter.
• Transfers occur at the end of a term.
Advisor-on-Duty Hours at IS

• No appointment needed 15 minute meetings.
  ▫ Tuesdays 9:00 – 11:00am
  ▫ Thursdays 2:00 – 4:00pm
  ▫ Fridays 2:00 – 4:00pm

• What to ask?
  ▫ General questions
  ▫ Travel signature requests
  ▫ Letters—enrollment, expense, invitation,
Other Services

• Ask questions by e-mail.
• Make an appointment 813-974-5102
• Drop off requests for letters, travel signatures, DS-2019 updates, extensions, or transfers to be processed in 5 days.
• Check our website for the latest information www.global.usf.edu
Notices about Events!

• Join the International Services Fan Page on Facebook.

• All students are put on the email listserv. We send emails about upcoming events, workshops, and immigration updates.
Your Next Steps at USF

• Visit the Marshall Student Center to get your USF ID card.
  ▫ For more information go to:
    http://it.usf.edu/services/usfcard

• Activate your Net ID online at
  http://it.usf.edu/services/netid.
  ▫ If you do not have an SSN, you need a special code. You must go in person to IT located on the 6th floor of the Library.
More Next Steps

- All international students must have health insurance. Students must submit a compliance form to Student Health Insurance.
  - For the forms and more information: [http://www.shs.usf.edu/insurance/insurance-forms.aspx](http://www.shs.usf.edu/insurance/insurance-forms.aspx)
  - SHS is located next to the USF Bookstore. For location on map: [http://www.shs.usf.edu/userfiles/files/Visitor_Map_2008-09.pdf](http://www.shs.usf.edu/userfiles/files/Visitor_Map_2008-09.pdf)
More Next Steps

• Register for Courses before the end of the first week of school!
• Take the Bull Runner Shuttle Bus and/or the public bus. It’s free with USF ID.
  ▫ [http://usfweb2.usf.edu/parking_services/bullrunner.asp](http://usfweb2.usf.edu/parking_services/bullrunner.asp)
  ▫ [http://usfweb2.usf.edu/parking_services/transportchoices.asp](http://usfweb2.usf.edu/parking_services/transportchoices.asp)
Check-in Completion

- To complete your check-in process please go to [http://global.usf.edu/isss/CheckinJ1.php](http://global.usf.edu/isss/CheckinJ1.php) and follow the online instructions.