

BASICS OF MAINTAINING INTERNATIONAL STUDENT (F-1) STATUS WHILE AT SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

Students with an F-1 visa need to be aware that violating the requirements of non-immigrant student status can result in serious consequences up to, and including, arrest and deportation.

The Department of Homeland Security uses a national electronic database called SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) to register and track international students with F, M, and J visas (Southeastern hosts only F-1 students). A Designated School Official or DSO at each educational institution must maintain a SEVIS file on students, including registering each student each semester, maintaining academic and personal information, and entering applications for various adjustments to students' status. The current Primary DSO (PDSO) at Southeastern University is Jan Hurndon.

As required by the Department of Homeland Security, students must:

- **Maintain a valid passport from the country of citizenship** – always have at least 6 months' validity!
- **Report to the International Student Office (ISO) at the beginning of every semester**; submit a current semester course schedule, passport with visa, and Form I-94 Departure and Arrival Record.
- **Report to the ISO at the end of every semester and receive DSO endorsement as required on Form I-20** – this should be done every six (6) months if you travel in/out of the U.S.
- **Maintain fulltime academic enrollment** every spring and fall semester by completing at least 12 hours for undergraduates with sufficiently good grades to maintain satisfactory academic progress; at least 9 hours for graduate students. For undergrads, at least 9 hours must be face-to-face courses – not online!
- **Advise the PDSO** of any change of:
 - Address
 - Academic major or minor
 - Marital status
 - Extension or shortening of your program termination date
 - Plans to travel to a third country while at SEU (as on a missions trip)
- **Accept on-campus employment only** (unless specifically authorized by SEVIS through the university's ISO). **NOTE: unauthorized employment, including internships, is considered a serious violation and can result in loss of status without opportunity for appeal.**
 - **Work a maximum of 20 hours per week** – on campus only!
- **Get advance approval for any required internship** (CPT-Curricular Practical Training) or post-graduation training (OPT-Optional Practical Training). Contact the ISO for requirements.
- **Get advance approval for any extension** of an academic program beyond the date on the Form I-20.

A DSO is the only person authorized to endorse the Form I-20, each semester or as needed. While the DSO assists in every way possible, the student is responsible to get the form signed and to otherwise know and follow immigration regulations and maintain status. For assistance or additional information, please contact Jan Hurndon, x-5215, Pansler 236 (Tuesdays and Thursday), jphurndon@seu.edu.