Welcome, International Students!

Fall 2020

Transfer Student Immigration Information
Immigration Documents Overview for Transfer Students
Immigration Documents

- Passport
- Visa
- I-94 record
- I-20
Transfer Considerations

- **Visa** can continue to be used as long as it is valid, even if your school has changed from the one on the visa.

- **I-94** should continue to be checked each time you entered the US - if you left for a vacation before returning to start at UMBC, please check your I-94 online!
  - Check that the “class of admission” is F-1
  - Check that the “Admit Until” date is D/S
Transfer I-20

- MUST be a UMBC I-20!! SEVIS ID will stay the same.
- “Transfer Pending” I-20
  - Issued before you start your first semester at UMBC
  - Shows that you are in between programs
  - Does NOT work for MVA (licensing), SSN application
- “Continued Attendance” I-20
  - Available after IES has verified your full-time enrollment and that you are on campus
  - Needed for MVA, SSN
  - Usually available 2-4 weeks after semester begins
Documents to Carry

● Carry the following with you AT ALL TIMES:
  ○ COPIES of passport, visa, I-94, and I-20

● Carry if you have them:
  ○ Maryland Driver’s License
  ○ Maryland State ID
  ○ International Driver’s License and translation
Interactive Question Time!

1. Which document assigns your immigration status when you arrive in the US?  
   - I-20 or I-94?

2. What document must not expire while you are in the US?  
   - I-20 or passport or visa?

3. What document cannot be renewed in the US?  
   - visa or I-20 or passport?
Please Remember:

Your immigration status is **your** responsibility!

We are here to assist you in maintaining it so that your experience in the US is enjoyable and fruitful.
Questions?

IES Office, Administration Building, 2nd Floor

ies@umbc.edu, 410-455-2624, ies.umbc.edu

F-1 International Student Advisers:

Dave Anguish, Adwoa Hanson-Hall, Michelle Massey
“Visa” versus “Status”
F-1 Status vs. F-1 Visa

● It is very important to clarify these two legal terms in order to understand how to maintain your immigration status in the U.S.

● The terms "visa" and “status” can be easily confused, but they are different things!
Visa

- Functions as a key, or pass, to enter the U.S.
- Defines why you are coming (F-1 = student)
- Stamp/sticker in your passport

The visa is only for entering the US, and in F-1 status, does not have a role beyond that purpose.
Status

- Ability to remain legally in the US
- At the Port of Entry (when you enter the US and go through Customs) you are granted a specific kind of immigration status, like F-1 status
- Recorded on I-94
- Your status determines the rules you have to follow, and the options you have, while in the US
Visa vs. Status

- Example Time – Let’s Go To The Movies!
- Movie ticket = visa
- Your movie = status (can only stay for the duration of the reason you entered)
“Maintaining Status” - following F-1 rules for enrollment, work and more
Maintaining Status and Loss of Status

- “Loss of status” or “out of status” means you no longer have a legal immigration status in the US
- Results from breaking F-1 rules
- No F-1 benefits (employment)
- Reinstatement
- Bars to returning to the US
How can you lose your Status?

- If you do not register for a full-time course load
- If you let your I-20 end date expire
- If you work off-campus without authorization
- If you break the law and are arrested for more than a minor offense
Maintaining your F-1 Status:
Course Registration

- You have to be registered at UMBC!
- Optional to register during Summer and Winter breaks - not required
- Must be registered “full time” during Fall and Spring semesters – we check!
- May take a class at another campus also (must speak with academic advisor first)
Maintaining your F-1 Status: Online coursework

- Online coursework is limited by F-1 immigration regulations
- Only one online course per semester
- If only one course remains in the last semester, it cannot be online
- Hybrid courses and courses that are NOT online but can be done remotely (some research, independent study) are not restricted in the same way
Definition of “Full-Time Enrollment” at UMBC

● Undergraduate students:
  ○ 12 credit hours minimum Fall and Spring semester

● Graduate Students:
  ○ 9 credits per semester in fall and spring semester.
  ○ Full-Time graduate assistants should register for at least 4 academic credits
  ○ Part-Time graduate assistants should register for at least 6 academic credits
“Reduced Course Load”

● Few exceptions to the full-time enrollment requirement:
  ○ Medical (physical or mental health challenges)
  ○ Academic (can only be approved once):
    ■ First Semester Academic Difficulty (English language, reading requirements, adjustment challenges)
    ■ “Improper Course Placement”
● MUST be approved by IES before dropping below full-time
Notes on CPT and OPT

- CPT is widely available at UMBC, and usually involves the Career Center.
- CPT and OPT require at least 2 full-time semesters completed in the US - we can count time done at a previous school towards this requirement, as long as there has not been a break in F-1 status since last attending school.
Other IES Services - Income Tax Filing

Tax returns are filed every year to summarize how much tax money you have paid on your income, and if you owe more or are due a refund back.

- Annual Tax Returns are due each year around April 15 – we provide free software (Sprintax - don’t use non-NRA products!)
- **ALL students are required to file income tax forms** whether you earn any income or not.
Other IES Services - Driver’s License/State ID

- Foreign license valid only for THREE MONTHS before you are required to obtain a U.S. license.
- IES office has Drivers Handbook copies; more information is on our website
- MVA (Motor Vehicle Administration) also offers State ID Cards
In Summary:

- Maintain your status!
- Register full-time
- Keep I-20 current
- Follow employment guidelines closely
- Don’t break US laws
- Keep in touch with the IES office!
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Walk-In Hours: Monday to Thursday, 1pm – 4pm

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