



F-1 Student Guide



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Welcome to
Otis College of Art and Design!

The Center for International Education (CIE) designed to assist international students as they adjust to life in Los Angeles on an F-1 visa. We offer workshops and one-on-one meetings to help students understand federal immigration regulations and the benefits and restrictions of living in the United States on an F-1 visa.

welcome

Around Town

Otis College's **Goldsmith Campus** is located in Westchester in the former IBM building, which was designed to look like a punch card. Due to Otis' close proximity to the Pacific Ocean, the school is surrounded by interesting neighborhoods like Manhattan Beach and El Segundo to the east, and Marina Del Rey, Playa Del Rey and Venice to the west.

The **Graduate Fine Art** studios are located in Culver City.

For more information on Culver City visit: <http://www.culvercity.org>

The **Graduate Public Practice** studios are located in Santa Monica.

For more information on Santa Monica visit: <http://www.smgov.net>

For information on Manhattan Beach visit: <http://www.ci.manhattan-beach.ca.us>

For information on El Segundo visit: <http://www.elsegundo.org>

For information on Marina Del Rey visit: <http://www.visitmarinadelrey.com>

For information on Playa Del Rey visit: <http://www.playadelrey.com>

For information on Venice visit: <http://venicebeach.com>

- Griffith Park Observatory (Los Feliz)
- Walt Disney Concert Hall (Downtown)
- Historic Olvera Street (Downtown)
- Barnsdall Art Park (East Hollywood)
- Echo Park Lake (Echo Park)
- Little Tokyo (Downtown)
- The Art District (Downtown)



Local Things To Do:

Here are a few suggestions to enhance the cultural immersion to LA

Go to the Local Farmers Market!

Westchester Farmers' Market –

Wednesdays from 8:30am to 1pm in the park at Lincoln and Manchester Blvds

Playa Vista Farmers Market

Saturdays 9am – 2pm

Wednesdays 4-8pm (Summer Only)

Check out the local beach! Have a bonfire with friends!

Dockweiler State Beach

12501 Vista Del Mar, Playa del Rey, CA 90293

Bonfire (ok!)

Venice Beach

Santa Monica Beach

Want to go to the public library?

Westchester Loyola Village Library

7114 W Manchester Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90045

310.348.1096

Open Monday through Friday 10:00am – 8:00pm

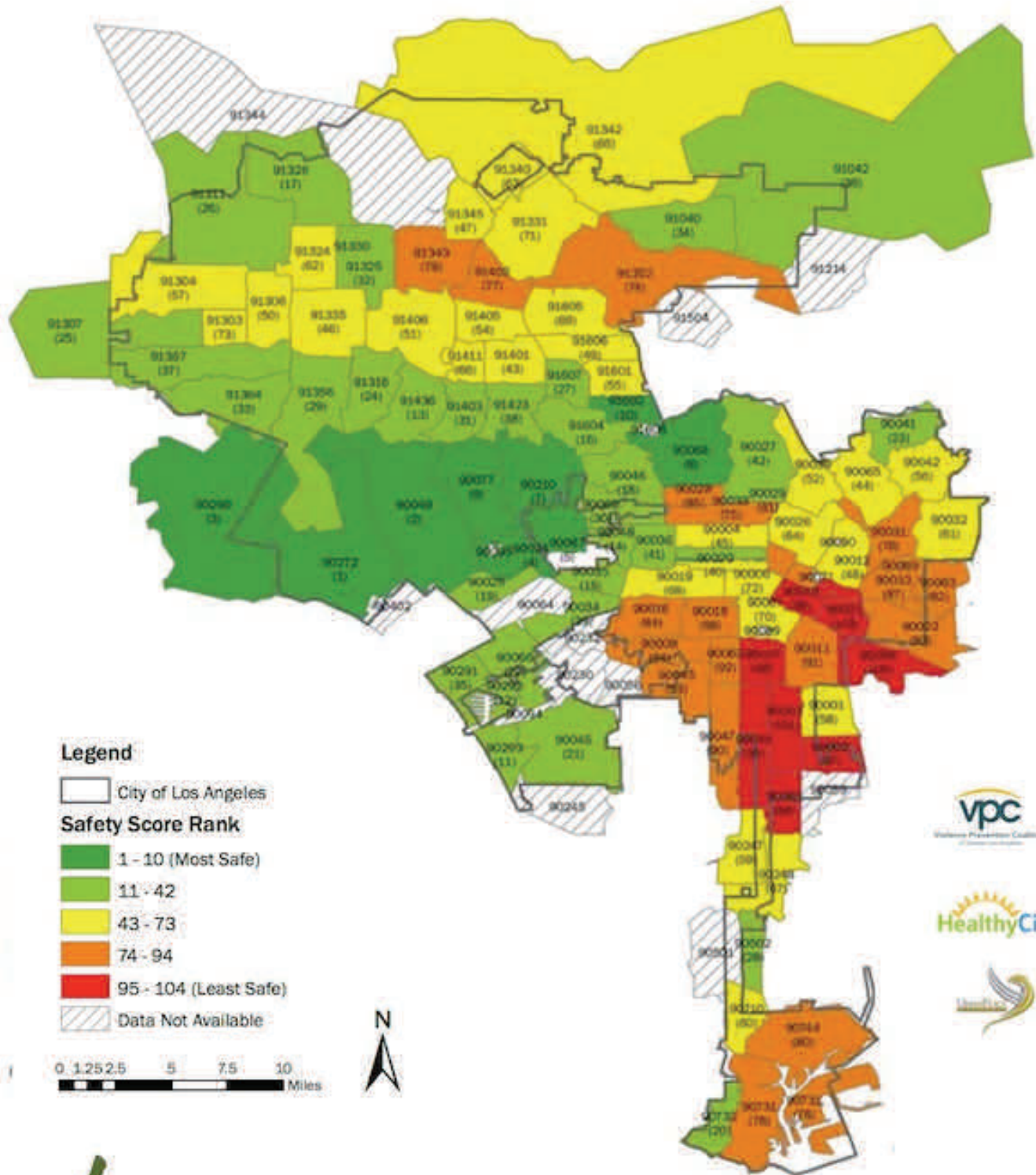
Venice Art Walk – theveniceartwalk.org

Downtown LA Art Walk – www.downtownartwalk.org

For more activities, check out Otis's Campus Activities Board, Clubs and Organizations, too!



Safety Score by ZIP code, City of Los Angeles



Banking in the United States

Some Banking Tips

- **Make a budget and stick to it!** Be realistic when determining a budget.
- **Keep track of your income and expenses.**
- **Use credit responsibly.** If you don't have the money the bank, you can't afford it!
- **Don't carry around large amounts of cash**
- **Never give away your credit card or banking information to ANYONE.**

Local Banks:

- **Bank of America**
- **Citi Bank**
- **Chase Bank**
- **Wells Fargo Bank**

Overview

There are two basic kinds of accounts: checking accounts, for payment of regular bills and shopping needs; and savings accounts where money you do not need to use immediately can earn interest. Banks also offer a variety of other types of accounts and financial services.

Most will be similar, but there can be important differences. To open a bank account is fairly easy; deposit your funds and complete any required bank forms. (Be aware that if you are making a deposit with an overseas check or bank draft, you may have to wait three days to three weeks before your money will be available to you.) Some banks will want you to have a Social Security Number when you open the account. Others will not.

Checking Accounts

When opening a checking account, be sure to ask about different types of checking accounts. All banks have several kinds of accounts and most have checking accounts, which accrue interest if a minimum balance is maintained. Be sure to look at the account fees and when they may be charged. After opening an account you will be given a book of temporary checks, but you should order checks with your name and local address printed on them. Most businesses will only accept a check that has the printed information.

Writing a Check

Checks should be filled out at the time you are making a payment. Fill in all blank spaces on your check. The amount should be written numerically and written out in longhand. Draw a line through any unused blank spaces. Be sure that you never sign a check until you are ready to use it, since it can be cashed as soon as your signature is on it. Most merchants will require you to show one or two pieces of photo identification before they will accept your check. You may use your drivers license, passport, identity cards, or any other government issued forms of identification.

Savings Accounts

Savings accounts, which earn interest on the balance, are available at all banks. If you have larger sums of money that you do not need for

routine living expenses, a savings account is a safe place to keep it. Certificates of Deposit (CDs) earn higher rates of interest than regular savings accounts, but your funds must remain on deposit for a designated period of time. An early withdrawal from a CD will result in a penalty fee. Check with your bank to work out the details of your savings account, as interest rates tend to vary

Deposits

Deposits to your accounts can be made with a bank teller or at an ATM. It is best to use a deposit slip when making a deposit, which can be either pre-printed or filled in by hand. Always use a deposit slip when you are depositing cash. To deposit a check made out to you, you must first endorse the check by signing it on the back. You should also print "for deposit only" and write your account number after your signature. After you endorse a check it is as good as cash and can be used by anyone unless you have followed the previously mentioned safeguards

ATM (Automated Teller Machine) Cards and Debit Cards

An ATM card is used for two purposes: as a banking tool to access your bank accounts and as a debit card. Most cards can be used at any ATM anywhere, and can be used for purchases. Many businesses now accept debit cards for payment. A debit card works very much like a check because it takes money directly out of your bank account to make a payment. Note that some banks have fees for debit cards if you use an ATM at another bank.

When you open an account at a bank, you will be issued an ATM card (the card will come in the mail). The card is directly linked to your bank accounts. At the bank, you must think of a Personal Identification Number (PIN) to be linked to your ATM card. Use a PIN that is easy to remember. Never write your PIN down, and never give or tell your PIN to anyone -ever-, not even to a bank employee. When using an ATM, be sure that no one sees your PIN. If your ATM card is ever lost or stolen, notify your bank immediately.

Writing a Check

For information on credit card eligibility speak to your bank. If you have questions regarding your foreign credit cards, you must check with your home bank.

CELL PHONES

American Cell Phone Carriers:

AT&T Wireless

Sprint

Verizon

T-Mobile

Metro PCS

Virgin Mobile

American Mobile Phones

When a provider speaks of minutes available when you purchase a plan or a pre-paid card, they mean incoming and outgoing calls combined. Therefore you will need to consider how much time you spend on the phone overall when you are determining a cost efficient plan that works for you.

Service Options

There are essentially three options you have when choosing a mobile phone provider:

1. Monthly or No-Contract (T-Mobile, METRO PCS, AT&T)
2. 2 Year Contract (AT&T, Verizon)
3. Pre-Paid (Virgin Mobile)

Monthly Services (No Contract)

Month-to-month plans are an excellent option for all students who plan on staying in the US for a semester or longer. No contracts are required and you pay your bill on a monthly basis. They require the purchase of a phone at regular price, or you can use a phone from overseas if it is GSM, tri or quad-band, and unlocked (only with T-Mobile or AT&T). A major credit card is usually required for these plans.

Contract Plans

This option is recommended for students who plan to stay in the United States for two or more years. There are benefits and drawbacks to this option. The **benefits** of a contract is that the phone often comes at a discounted price, there are low upfront costs, there tends to be good service (more towers), better phones (smart phones, i-phones, etc) as well as internet access.

One of the drawbacks of a contract plan is that you must sign a two-year contract, which means that even if you wish to discontinue service, you will still have to make monthly payments or pay an expensive penalty to get out of the contract. The monthly payments for these plans tend to be more expensive than no-contract plans.

Pre-Paid Cell Phones

This option is not recommended because the rates per minute are extremely high. If you want to use your GSM phone from home while away in the US, remember that you can just as easily go with month-to-month or contract plans from AT&T or T-Mobile. The benefit of a pre-paid phone is that there is no contract, therefore if you wish to discontinue service you do not have to pay any extra fees. A drawback is that these plans tend to have more expensive 'minutes.'

How to Choose

In order to determine which type of service to select, you will have to consider the duration of your stay as well as your financial circumstances when you arrive in America. As many contract plans require a credit check, your options may be limited. Make sure to do your research because some cell phone providers may cater better to your needs than others. You should check to see if your cell phone is locked to a US carrier, or if it may be used internationally, as many pre-paid phones may not be used outside of The United States.

HOUSING

Vocabulary:

Landlord: the person who owns and/or rents you the property.

Tenant: you, the person who stays and uses the property.

Rent: what you pay to live in a property.

Lease: your agreement with the landlord. If you rent from the renter, it's called a sublease.

Deposit: upfront payment that you get back when you move out unless you damage the property.

Penalty fees: what you pay if you do not follow the rules on the lease.

Credit history: when you own credit cards and borrow money in the U.S, you have a credit history.

Social Security Number: a number ID given to U.S. citizen, residents and temporary workers.

Normal wear & tear: what things look like after being used, but not damaged. You will pay a fee and/or lose your deposit if any rented property/item is damaged beyond normal wear & tear. So take pictures of everything before you move in!

Student Housing options

On-Campus Housing

<http://www.otis.edu/housing-residence-life/housing-details>

Off-Campus Housing

There are four types of off-campus housing you can get:

Studios

A studio consists of a living/sleeping area, a bathroom and a cooking area. Junior 1 bedroom apartments are larger with a semi-private bedroom or a den. Bachelor studios/units are small studios with a kitchenette: a mini fridge, a microwave, no oven. Average price for a studio is \$700-1200. Back units are converted studios/apartments located in the back of the house's property.

Apartments

An apartment has bedrooms, bathrooms, a living room and a kitchen. Apartment homes/luxury apartments have extra storage space and washer/dryer hookup or in-unit. Average price for a 1br apartment is \$1100 - \$2300, and \$2000 - \$3000 for a 2 br apartment.

Houses

A house has bedrooms, bathrooms, a living room, a kitchen, a dining room and a garage. The landlord may rent out the whole house or only bedrooms. Average price for a house is \$2300-4000.

Homestay

This option offers the international student the opportunity to live with an American family. The student can learn firsthand what family life in the United States is like.

Homestay is a great way to make friends and improve English skills. Some homestays are within walking distance of the campus; others are within an easy public bus ride of Otis. Every homestay is different - some families have children and others do not, some families provide the student with a room and home-cooked meals, and others provide the room only.

Homestay Providers

Global Students Services

www.global-student-service.com/homestayforstudents.html

Resources

www.craigslist.org – a general classifieds website that has housing listings and where you can also buy used furniture

<http://www.otis.edu/classified-ads> - Otis classifieds with listing from other students

www.uloop.com – a classifieds website specifically for students

www.chineseinla.com – a website for Chinese people in Los Angeles that has a housing section

www.radiokorea.com - a website for Korean people in Los Angeles that has a housing section

Bulletin boards around campus

Local newspapers at newsstands, bookstores, local & international markets

Here are some apartments in the area around Otis:

<http://www.otis.edu/housing-residence-life/living-campus>

HOUSING:

Looking at apartments

Landlord Problems to Avoid:

- Ask you for money before meeting you.
- Currently away from home and cannot meet you face to face.
- Want you to pay over the phone, send it by mail, email, or wire.
- Get upset because you ask for an ID or a signed receipt.
- Do not call you back.
- Let you wait and do not apologize.
- Change the price at the last minute.

When this happens, walk away!

Note: Ask your landlord to waive (not charge) the application fee because you don't have a social security number or a credit history!

When looking at apartments:

- Don't give out your bank account number or important information over email or phone.
- Meet your landlord/roommate and see the place in person. Take a friend with you.
- Call 20 minutes ahead to confirm your visit/appointment.
- Ask questions:
- What is included in the rent?
- Are guests allowed?
- Who else lives there or has a key?
- Check everything: sink, toilet, hot water, lights, air conditioner/heater, etc.
- Take pictures of the room AND any damages.
- Type/write down everything AND sign. Make a lease. Always.

- You cannot change your mind after you sign.
- Don't give anyone your money without a signed lease, a key and a receipt.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help.
- What you will need to rent:
- Original passport AND copy of passport.
- Original I-20 AND copy of I-20.
- Copy of your financial statement.
- Local banking account.
- Reference letter from a friend, relative, teacher, etc..
- A co-signer in the U.S.
- Another form of picture ID to open a bank account.
- About \$2500 to cover the first month of rent and a deposit.

How to read and write a U.S. address:

Line 1: house number + street name

Line 2: apartment/suite/office number

Line 3: City, State Zip code

Example:

9045 Lincoln Blvd

Center for International Education, 150D

Los Angeles, CA 90045

SEVIS Transfer Students

- If you are changing schools within the U.S. and transferring your SEVIS record to Otis, there are visa and travel policies unique to your situation.
- You can travel with your current F-1 visa and Otis I-20, even if the visa has your previous school's name on it, as long as the visa is not expired and you are not outside the U.S. more than five months between academic programs.
- To receive your updated I-20 from Otis and to transfer your SEVIS record, your previous school's DSO must complete section C2 of the International Verification Form
- You can use your Otis "transfer pending" I-20 to enter the U.S. once without a travel signature before the start date, even earlier than 30 days before the I-20 start date. The 30-day rule is only for travel with "initial" I-20s, not "transfer pending" I-20s. However, if you wish to travel outside the U.S. after your initial entry on your Otis "transfer pending" I-20, you will need a travel signature from a DSO.

Health Insurance

All Otis students are required to have Health Insurance.

Review Post-Arrival Checklist

Review the **Post Arrival Checklist** to be prepared for your arrival in Los Angeles

POST-ARRIVAL CHECK-LIST

Check-in With Otis College

Upon your arrival into Los Angeles, F-1 regulations require that you report to campus. To meet this requirement, follow the instructions below.

 **310.665.6800**

New Arrivals from Outside the U.S.

Step 1: Check-in with the Registrar

Step 2: Submit a photocopy of your signed I-20

Step 3: Submit your personal data form

New Arrivals from Inside the U.S.

Step 1: Obtain your new Otis I-20 from the Registration Office

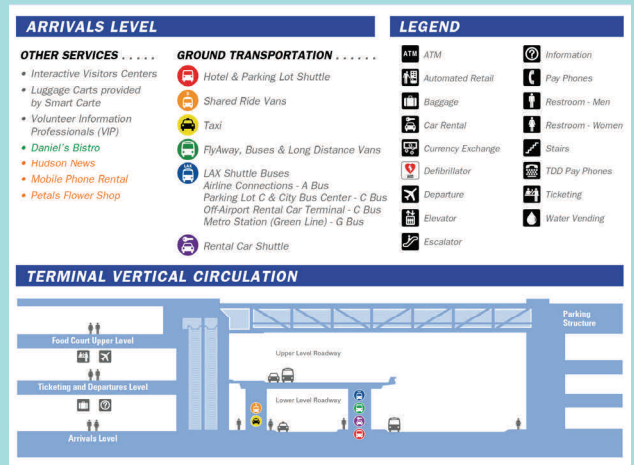
Step 2: Sign your name on page 1, line 11 on your new I-20

Step 3: Submit a photocopy of you signed I-20 to the Registration Office

Step 4: Report your U.S. Address to the Registration Office by completing form AR11. This action must be completed within 10 days of your arrival.

Airport Ground Transportation

When you arrive to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), you can take a shared ride van. These include but are not limited to, Super Shuttle, Prime Time Shuttle, etc. directly to Otis College or any location in Los Angeles. Reservations are not required to use a shared ride van. Shared ride vans are located at the designated ground transportation areas just outside baggage claim areas. Each van will have a sign on it indicating its destination. Make sure your van is going to Los Angeles. You can ask where and when to board a shuttle van by using the courtesy phones available in the baggage claim areas. The cost is approximately \$15 - \$35 for transportation from LAX to Los Angeles with an optional tip recommended for the driver. The shared ride van will take you to the destination you specify. You may also take a taxi, which will cost significantly.



Transportation

No Car? No Problem!

Los Angeles is a huge city, which is why going anywhere outside of your neighborhood might seem a bit daunting. Don't fret – there are several ways to get around this giant city if you don't have a car, or if you simply don't feel comfortable driving in certain parts of LA. Here are some options for the car-less commuters at Otis College of Art and Design:

Take the bus or subway

Despite what you might've heard, Los Angeles has an extremely efficient public transportation system. Always remember to plan your route and check operating hours ahead of time.

Carpool with a friend

Many students attending Otis College of Art and Design have cars. Don't be shy to ask for a lift from one of your peers.

Rideshare (Uber, Lyft, Sidecar)

Rideshare apps tend to be cheaper than conventional taxis and are a convenient and safe option for iPhone users as cash is not required – the app store charges each ride to your credit card.

Take a taxi

Taxis in Los Angeles tend to be more expensive than other options, though are sometimes necessary in the event that you cannot access other modes of transportation or in cases of emergency.

Ride a bike

Bicycle riding in Los Angeles is a popular mode of transportation and requires extreme caution due to the amount of traffic.

Walk

If you aren't going far, just walk!

It is important for our international students to remember that it is never safe to accept a ride from a stranger in Los Angeles. We ask that you call a certified cab or rideshare company if you plan to hire a cab.

RULES & REGULATIONS



This section contains comprehensive regulatory information and a description of the electronic student and exchange visitor information system, SEVIS. In addition, you will find an FAQ on the topic of obtaining a green card and information on finding an immigration lawyer, which are areas outside the normal scope of Otis College.

IMMIGRATION INFORMATION FOR F-1 STUDENTS

What is F-1 Status

In the United States, the F visas are a type of non-immigrant student visa that allows foreigners to pursue education (academic studies and/or language training programs) in the United States. F-1 visas are only issued in U.S. embassies and consulates outside the United States. Prospective F-1 students must apply to school and receive a form I-20 in order to apply for an F-1 visa. F-1 students must show that they are able to support themselves during their stay in the U.S., as their opportunities for legal employment are quite limited. F-2 visas are given to dependents of an F-1 student. F-2 visa-holders are prohibited from any form of compensated employment.

Period of Authorized Stay

Your admission to the U.S. is for "duration of status," that is, for the length of your F-1 status. F-1 status covers the period when you are a full-time registered student making normal progress toward your degree (or exchange program), plus an optional period of practical training following completion of studies, plus a 60-days "grace period" to prepare to depart the U.S. or change to another status. Your length of authorized stay is not related to your F-1 visa expiration date. The F-1 visa is specifically for entry into the U.S. The F-1 visa might expire before your status expires, and your status might end before your visa expires.

Documents

Federal Law requires that you carry registration documents at all times. It is recommended that you keep copies of all your documents separate from your originals.

Passport

- Your passport must be valid at least 6 months into the future
- Passport renewal procedures vary, depending on country – typically, you may renew your passport 6 months prior to the expiration date

- Contact your country's embassy in the US to determine the procedure for obtaining a new passport

Visa

- After you received your Form I-20, you apply for an F-1 visa at a US consulate.
- Your F-1 visa has an expiration date. If the VISA expires while you are in the US, it is not a problem
- Travel outside the US requires a valid visa to reenter the US.

I-94

If you arrived to the U.S. prior to April 26, 2013 you were issued an 11 digit ID number on a white card that was completed for you by US Customs official at port of entry. Your I-94 card is marked D/S (Duration of Status). Do not lose this card.

If you entered the U.S. after April 26, 2013 your I-94 information is available to you through www.cbp.gov/I94.

I-20

Your form I-20 was generated by SEVIS and issued by Otis College. It contains biographical data, indicates your program of study, describes the funding amount, and it contains your SEVIS ID number. The I-20 allows you to apply for an F-1 visa if you are outside the U.S. apply for F-1 status within the U.S., enter and reenter the U.S. in F-1 status, and prove your eligibility for various F-1 benefits.

- You must ensure that your I-20 is valid, the program dates are current, and the program information is correct.
- We can extend your I-20 BEFORE it expires.
- We cannot extend your I-20 AFTER it expires.
- You may receive an email alert from Otis before your I-20 expires.
- If your I-20 ends, your F-1 student status will terminate.

IMMIGRATION INFORMATION FOR F-1 STUDENTS

Events That Require an Update to Your I-20

Program Extension

If you are unable to complete your course of study before the completion date noted in item 5 on your I-20, you must request an extended I-20 before your current I-20 expires. For more information and instructions, see Program Extension.

Changing Schools

You must register full-time at Otis College, since Otis issued your I-20 and oversees your SEVIS record. If you decide to transfer to another school, contact the Registrar's Office prior to completing your final semester at Otis. For information about transferring your SEVIS record to the new school, visit School Transfer.

Change of Level

If you will complete your current program of study and plan to continue at Otis College in another program (for example, change from a Bachelor's degree program to a MFA), your I-20 must be updated.

Change of Funding

If there is a substantial change in the source or amount of your funding, report this change to the Registrar and a new I-20 will be issued to you. For example, if you receive an Otis Scholarship through your department, but your I-20 indicates that you use personal funds to pay for expenses, you should request a new I-20.

Name Change

The name on your I-20 should match the name on your passport. If you change any part of your legal name—first/given name, middle name, or last/family name—on your passport, this change should be reflected on your I-20. Conversely, if you want a different name on your I-20, the Registrar will wait for you to change your passport first, before updating the I-20.

Maintaining your Status

F-1 degree-seeking students must enroll and complete full-time credit in the fall and spring semesters to maintain lawful immigration status.

ENROLL IN and COMPLETE the required number of units: Undergraduate Students 12 units; Graduate Students 10 units.

There are limited reasons for under-enrollment. You must have permission from a DSO prior to under-enrollment.

Exceptions to Full-Time Enrollment

- Reduced Course Load (RCL) for Specific Academic Reasons
- Reduced Course Load (RCL) for a Documented Medical Condition
- Travel outside the US requires a valid visa to reenter the US.
- Final Semester
- Thesis Credits (for Graduate Students Only)
- Concurrent Enrollment

About Full –Time Enrollment

Online Courses

US immigration regulations limit international students to only ONE online course per semester toward the minimum full-time enrollment requirement.

You can take more than one online course, but only one will meet your full-time enrollment requirements

Independent Study Courses

Do not generally count toward the full-time enrollment requirement. They are not required to be completed within a given semester, nor do they require in-class time.

An Independent Study course must be a degree requirement to count toward full-time enrollment.

The Registration office must have documentation in your file from your academic advisor regarding the necessity of the independent study course.

IMMIGRATION INFORMATION FOR F-1 STUDENTS

Other Enrollment Issues

- “I”—incomplete—or “N” – no credit assigned - grades do NOT count toward the full-time requirement.
- Auditing a course does NOT count toward the full-time requirement.
- Withdrawal from a course at ANY point in the semester does NOT count toward the full-time requirement.
- Courses that BEGIN in the middle of the semester do NOT count toward the full-time enrollment

Employment in the U.S.

On Campus Employment

USCIS allows F-1 students to work up to 20 hours per week on campus during the fall and spring semester without special permission. Employment must be on the Otis campus. F-1 students may work more than 20 hours per week on campus during school vacations (summer break, spring break and fall break)

Off Campus Employment

You may work off-campus ONLY with permission from USCIS or a DSO. Most students cannot apply for off-campus work authorization until they have been in full-time student status for one academic year. Otis provides employment authorization workshops each semester – schedule will be posted on the Otis website on or after the third week of the semester.

F-2 Dependents

Your spouse and unmarried children under 21 may be eligible for F-2 dependent status. Immigration regulations do not permit F-2 dependents to be employed in the U.S. The regulations also restrict full-time study for F-2 dependents, with two exceptions:

- F-2 dependents CANNOT study in a degree program at Otis College, but may enroll in courses that are recreational in nature.

- An F-2 child may engage in full-time study if the study is in an elementary or secondary school.

F-2 dependents must be approved for a change of status to F-1 by the USCIS prior to commencing study at Otis College. Applications take 6-8 months to be approved by USCIS. Plan Ahead.

Change of Address Procedure

International students must update their address with-in ten days of moving. Please contact the Registration Office to update your address.

Travel

- Travel within the US does not require a travel signature from an Otis DSO.
- Travel outside the US requires that your I-20/ be signed for travel by an Otis DSO.
- Visa expired? You must apply for and receive a new visa before re-entering the US.
- We recommend you carry clear copies of your immigration documents if you travel to US border areas or large metropolitan areas. For more information, see Travel.

IMMIGRATION INFORMATION FOR F-1 STUDENTS

Termination & Reinstatement

- A violation of status will result in a termination of your F-1 status
- Students whose F-1 status is terminated may qualify for a Reinstatement of Status
- You must apply directly to USCIS requesting reinstatement back into F-1 status
- This option is not available for all violations, notably employment violations


For more information, see **Reinstatement**.

Graduation or Program Completion

The end of your academic program affects your F-1 status. After you graduate or complete your program you have a 60-day grace period. Within this 60-day period you have the following options:

- Depart the U.S. Once you leave the U.S. (including trips to Canada and Mexico) after completing your studies you are not eligible to re-enter with your current I-20. The grace period is meant for travel within the states and preparation to depart the U.S.
- Request a new I-20 if you will continue at the Otis College in a new degree program.
- If you are moving from a B.A. to a M.A. program, request a Change of Level I-20 from ISS.
- Transfer your SEVIS record to a new school.
- Apply to change status to another visa category. Otis DSO advisers cannot assist with change of status applications. If you need additional assistance, we recommend you contact an immigration attorney.





SEVIS: STUDENT & EXCHANGE VISITOR INFORMATION SYSTEM

Overview

SEVIS reports the following information to USCIS (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services) and ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement):

- **Personal Address Information**
- **Financial Information**—education funding
- **Academic Program Information**—full time/part time enrollment, major changes, disciplinary actions, extension of program
- **Employment information:** optional/curricular practical training, off campus employment authorization

- **Termination or completion** of study
- **Dependent information**

The SEVIS program is funded in part by your SEVIS fee (\$200 for F-1 students, \$180 for J-1 students) to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

It is important to understand the F-1 immigration regulations in order to maintain status while you are in the U.S. For more information, please contact the Registration Office.

GREEN CARD INFORMATION

How do I apply for a Green Card (Permanent residency)? *You can....*

Hire an immigration attorney to discuss your options. Check out the www.uscis.gov website and go to the www.uscis.gov/greencard

Does this affect my student status? Well...Yes and no....It is up to you!

- YES – It will affect your student status if you request for us to terminate your F-1 student record. To do this, you must submit:
 - A copy of your I-485 or I-130 receipt
 - A letter requesting that we terminate your student record, and that you understand the consequences of your student status being terminated.
- NO – It will not affect your student status IF you do not tell us, or you do not want us to stop being an F-1 student.

What happens if I decide to have you discontinue my F-1 student record?

There are several things that you will need to know – and understand.

- A DSO will no longer be able to provide travel signatures (you will have to get information about travel from USCIS); any types of status letters (DMV, bank, government, etc.); work permits (on-campus or off-campus). Any work permits that you need will now have to come directly from USCIS.
- A DSO will no longer be able to advise you on your status. If you have applied for Permanent Residency, then any advice you need

must come from USCIS or an immigration attorney.

- You will not be required to study full-time.
- You will not be required to purchase medical insurance (but you should have SOME type of medical insurance, in case you get sick or injured!).
- You will not have to pay \$25 SEVIS fee to the campus each semester.

What happens if I decide to keep my student status until my Permanent Residency application has been approved? *Well, then...*

- You will have to be a full-time student.
- You will have to purchase medical insurance.
- You will be able to receive on/off-campus work permits if you are eligible.
- You will be able to receive status letters from our office to verify your status.

How do I get my fees removed if I request an F-1 termination? *You will need to...*

- Request that your fees be removed in the Request to Terminate F-1 Student Status Form.
- Request refunds for fees by completing appropriate Otis forms. (See your DSO.)



TRAVEL & VISAS

Re-entry Into the U.S.

Be prepared to present the following materials at the port of entry into the U.S.

- I-20 and Travel Signature (pg. 3) from a DSO (F-1 students)
- Passport—valid at least six months into the future
- Valid F-1 visa stamp in passport
- Evidence of financial support (bank statement, scholarship/assistantship letter)
- Proof of enrollment (transcript and computer printout of current enrollment, and next semester's enrollment, if available)

I-20 Travel Signature

Page 3 of your I-20 **must** be signed by a Designated School Official in the Registration Office before you leave the U.S. This signature will be **valid for one year** (12 months) and can be used for multiple entries. If you are on OPT, you must obtain a travel signature every 6 months.

To obtain a travel signature, **submit your I-20 to the Registration Office front desk**. Your I-20 will be available for pick-up the next business day. We require 1 business day to process the travel signature so please plan ahead before you travel.

Valid Passport

Your passport must be valid for at least six months when seeking admission or readmission to the United States, unless your country has an agreement with the United States. For a list of countries under this agreement, see the list on the Immigration Customs Enforcement website. Your passport should remain valid throughout your stay in the U.S.

Valid Visa

You must present a valid, unexpired visa in the category for which admission is being sought each time you enter the U.S. (Canadian citizens

are exempt from the visa requirement; however, landed immigrants of Canada are generally required to obtain a visa.) If your visa expires while you are in the U.S., the next time you travel abroad you must obtain a new visa in the proper category in order to be readmitted to the United States. Apply for the visa in your home country, unless circumstances or travel plans make this impossible. If you apply for a visa at a U.S. consulate in another country, your application may be reviewed more critically than if you applied at home. In-person interviews are required for most visa applicants. You are encouraged to contact the U.S. consulate as early as possible to schedule the visa interview appointment. Anticipate delays in visa issuance due to enhanced security reviews.

Automatic Visa Revalidation

An exception to the rule requiring a valid, unexpired visa exists for students in F-1 and J-1 status who travel for less than 30 days solely to Canada or Mexico or islands in the Caribbean except Cuba. Your visa will be considered to be "extended" (and "converted" to the proper visa category if you had changed status while in the U.S.) to the date of re-entry, eliminating the need to obtain a new visa at a U.S. consulate before that particular re-entry.

Note that if you apply for a new visa while in Canada, Mexico and islands in the Caribbean, you will not be able to return to the U.S. unless the visa is granted. Also, citizens of Iraq, Iran, Syria, Libya, Cuba, Sudan, and North Korea are not eligible for automatic visa revalidation.

Travel With-in the U.S.

If you are traveling within the U.S. it is recommended that you carry the following items:

- Passport
- Valid I-20
- I-94 number

TRAVEL & VISAS

Entry Into Another Country

Before you leave the United States, contact the consulate of the country to be visited to inquire about visa and travel procedures. If you plan to visit Canada, contact the Canadian Consulate in Los Angeles to determine if you need a visa to enter Canada.

Travel after completion of studies

F-1 students:

If you travel outside the U.S. after completion of studies you may return to the U.S. in F-1 status provided you are in possession of:

- A new I-20 indicating a new program of study, passport, visa and evidence of financial support.

or

- An Employment Authorization Document (EAD), I-20 endorsed for OPT and signed for travel within the last six months, proof of employment, passport and visa.

Travel and OPT

If your pre-completion OPT application is pending or approved, you may travel and reenter the U.S.

If your post-completion OPT application is pending, you may travel and re-enter the U.S.

After graduation, if your post-completion OPT has been approved and your EAD issued, you may not re-enter the U.S. unless you have evidence of employment. You should carry the following documents with you:

I-20 signed for travel by an international student adviser within the last **6 months**

EAD card

Valid passport

Unexpired F-1 visa (unless returning from a short trip to Canada, Mexico, or the Caribbean)

Evidence of employment in your field of study (letter of employment, written job offer)

What Is a Visa?

The F-1 visa stamp in your passport is permission to apply to enter the United States in that visa category. Although your passport and I-20 must remain valid while you are in the U.S., your visa need not remain valid once you have used it to enter the U.S. If your visa expires while you are in the U.S. and/or its number of entries has been used, or if you have changed your nonimmigrant status while in the U.S., the next time you travel abroad you must obtain a new visa in the proper category in order to be readmitted to the U.S. Visas can only be obtained outside of the U.S. at a U.S. consulate. (Canadian citizens are not required to have a visa stamp to enter the U.S.)

TRAVEL & VISAS

How, Where and When to Apply for a Visa

Apply for the visa at a U.S. consulate in your home country, unless circumstances or travel plans make this impossible. It may be possible to apply for a visa at a U.S. consulate in a country other than your home country. This is called a "third country national (TCN)" application. Not all U.S. consulates accept TCN applications, and some allow TCN applications for limited situations; check with individual consulates, including those in Canada and Mexico, for TCN application policies. It can be risky to apply in a country other than your home country. For instance, if you apply for a new visa in Canada and encounter delays, you must remain in Canada for the length of the processing. You will not be able to reenter the U.S. until the new visa is approved.

U.S. consulates require in-person interviews for most visa applicants. You are encouraged to schedule the visa interview appointment as early as possible. The U.S. Department of State maintains an excellent website on the visa application process, and you should study it carefully. You can also find information about how long it will take to get your visa. Students applying for initial -entry F-1 and F-2 visas may be issued the visas up to 120 days before the academic program start date as noted on the I-20.

Visa processing delays may occur due to enhanced security reviews that take into account your field of study, country of origin, and likelihood of returning home after completion of studies.

- **Visa application.** Complete the form provided by the U.S. consulate in the country where the application will be submitted. You will be charged a fee for the visa application.
- **Receipt** confirming payment of the SEVIS fee, if applicable.
- **Valid passport.** Your passport must be valid for at least six months when seeking admission or readmission to the United States, unless your country has an agreement with the United States. For a list of countries under this agreement, see the list on the Immigration Customs Enforcement website. Your passport should remain valid throughout your stay in the U.S.
- Passport-size photos.
- **I-20.** If you are applying for a visa to continue studies at Otis College, be sure that a DSO

has signed the travel validation section of the form within the past year. (Newly admitted students do not need a travel signature for the initial visa interview.)

- **Financial evidence** detailing source and amount of funding. Consular and immigration officers exercise considerable discretion in determining whether financial support exists and is sufficient to cover your entire period of stay. Prepare documentation that is thorough, consistent, credible and varied.
- **Official academic transcript and confirmation of enrollment.** You can request these documents from the Registration Office. **(If you are a newly admitted student, you should provide proof of admission to Otis College.)**
- **Proof of English language proficiency** may also be requested.
- **Evidence of continuing ties** (such as family, career, or property) to your home country. Visa applicants are presumed to be "intending immigrants." Your visa will be denied unless you satisfy the consular officer that you will return home. Unfortunately, there is no single explanation, document, or letter that can guarantee visa issuance.
- Consular officers conduct quick interviews! Their initial impression of you is critical to your success. Keep your answers concise. Be honest in everything you write on your visa application and say during the interview. Anticipate that the interview will be conducted in English. Don't bring other people to speak on your behalf.
- Be able to explain the reasons you want to study in the U.S. and remember that your main reason for coming to the United States is to study, not to work!
- If your spouse and children are remaining behind in your home country, be prepared to explain how they will support themselves in your absence. If they are accompanying you to the U.S., be prepared to show proof of adequate funding.
- If you are denied the visa, ask the officer for a list of documents he or she would suggest you bring the next time you apply, and try to get the reason you were denied in writing. Maintain a positive attitude!

EMPLOYMENT

This section contains information about F-1 student employment options, including how to obtain a Social Security number.

- On-Campus Employment
- CPT
- OPT
- Severe Economic Hardship
- Social Security Number



ON-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT

Overview

Your F-1 student status permits you to work on the campus of the school that issued your current I-20. You must successfully complete one semester with 12 units before you are eligible to work on campus. While working on campus you are required to maintain your status (except for approved exceptions) and be in good academic standing. Employment must be on the Otis campus or Offsite Location

Time Period

- F-1 Students are allowed to work up to 20 hours per week on campus during the fall and spring semester.
- F-1 Students may work more than 20 hours per week on campus during school vacations (summer break, spring break and fall break).

Expiration of On-Campus Employment Eligibility

Your on-campus employment eligibility ends:

- When you graduate.
- If you transfer to another College; your work authorization expires on the day of your SEVIS record release date.
- If you violate your F-1 status.

Obtaining Employment

Contact the Center for Creative Careers for available job opportunities on campus.

1. Complete the **Student Employment Work Agreement (SEWA)** and obtain a **Letter of Employment** from your hiring supervisor
2. Submit the **SEWA** form and **Letter** to the Center for Creative Professions (CCP). Employment start date cannot be more than 30 days in the future. The Employment Letter must be dated within the last 30 days.
3. Obtain the **Social Security Letter** from the Center for Creative Professions Office. Only the Designated School Official at OTIS can write this letter after receipt of the SEWA form and Letter. It certifies that the student is enrolled full time and holds a valid F-1 status
4. Bring the following documents to the Social Security Office:
 - Original I-20
 - Passport with printed I-94 and Visa
 - Employment Letter from Employer (F-1)
 - Original Social Security Letter from CCP
 - Form SS-5 (Social Security Number Application)
5. Once a social security number has been issued, **On-Campus Employees** should bring the following documents to the Center for Creative Professions to complete payroll signup forms.
 - SEWA form
 - Completed I-9
 - SSN Card
 - Original passport with U.S. visa

CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING

CPT Overview

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is an off-campus employment option available to F-1 students when the training (i.e. internship or employment) is considered an integral part of the established curriculum and directly related to the student's major. "Training" refers to paid or unpaid work/study experience, internships, or cooperative education.

Time

CPT can only be used during a student's program of study.

CPT approved for part-time (20 hours or less per week) or full-time (20+ hours per week). Full-time CPT granted for summer semester only.

- Students who use 12 full months of full-time CPT become ineligible for OPT under US immigration law
- Use of part-time CPT does not affect OPT
- Consider applying for pre-completion OPT if your degree program is not eligible for CPT

Eligibility

You are eligible for CPT if:

- Lawfully enrolled as full-time student for one academic year (fall + spring semester)
- You will earn your degree from Otis College

Other requirements:

- Must have an employment/training offer related to your major area of study
- Students authorized for part time CPT (20 hours or less per week) must be enrolled in a minimum of 10 credits for graduates and 12 credits for undergraduates each semester they engage in CPT. Students authorized for full time CPT (more

than 20 hours per week) must be enrolled in at least one credit hour each semester they engage in CPT.

- Students who have completed their program requirements and are merely delaying graduation to make use of CPT are NOT eligible.

CPT Employment Duration & Limitations

- Approval granted each semester.
- You must reapply prior to each semester if interning multiple semesters.
- Not permitted to work until you receive an I-20 authorizing specific CPT dates
- Approved for a specific employer and a specific time period

Application Procedure

- Attend CPT workshop
- Meet with your Department Chair and/or Instructor; request that he/she complete the CPT Authorization Request Form
- Obtain detailed internship offer letter (see template)
- Submit application to the Center for Creative Professions
- Pick up CPT I-20 after you have been notified via email by CCP
- DO NOT START THE INTERNSHIP BEFORE YOU ARE AUTHORIZED FOR CPT!

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

OPT Overview

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is work authorization available to international students who have been in valid F-1 status for at least two consecutive semesters and who plan to seek employment in the U.S. in their field of study. Temporary employment authorization is granted by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS).

OPT can be taken during annual summer vacation, part-time during regular school session, after completion of course requirements or after completion of course of study.

About Pre-OPT

- Pre-Completion OPT is temporary employment available to F-1 students prior to completion of the course of study (i.e. prior to the program end date on the I-20).
- The employment must be directly related to the student's field of study and commensurate with the student's education level.
- A student may be eligible for up to 12 months of OPT per degree level.
- A student will become eligible for another 12 months of OPT when he/she completes a higher educational level.
- A student must receive an EAD card from the USCIS Service Center and the start date on the EAD card must arrive before they may begin their OPT employment.

About Post-Opt

Post-Completion OPT is temporary employment available to F-1 students following completion of the course of study (i.e. after the program end date on the I-20).

The employment must be directly related to the student's field of study and commensurate with their education level.

- A student may be eligible for up to 12 months of OPT per degree level.

- A student will become eligible for another 12 months of OPT when he/she completes a higher educational level.
- A student must receive an EAD card from the USCIS Service Center and the start date on the EAD card must arrive before they may begin their OPT employment.

How Does Pre-Completion OPT differ from Post-Completion OPT

- Pre-Completion OPT occurs before the I-20 program end date. ISS will not shorten the I-20 program end date.
- Days of unemployment do not accrue during Pre-Completion OPT.
- A student may not be able to work full-time (see the section above).
- If a student does not graduate by the program end date on their I-20, the student may request an F-1 Extension of Stay.
- Students are not eligible to apply for the STEM OPT Extension.
- Students are not eligible for the H-1B CAP GAP fix.

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

Time Period

During the period of OPT, a student continues in F-1 status, since OPT is considered to be part of the program of study.

Pre-OPT:

- A student who still has coursework remaining to complete his/her educational objective or degree program is limited to 20 hours per week of Pre-Completion OPT during the Fall and Spring semesters.
- All students may apply for full-time Pre-Completion during annual vacation (summer) and other official school breaks.

Post-OPT:

- A student may work full-time while on Post-OPT
- For OPT purposes, your completion date is the day you complete your final degree requirements: Your completion date is considered to be the last day of final exams of the semester your degree requirements are fulfilled.
- You are allowed a 60-day grace period following your OPT expiration date to leave the U.S., change your status, or transfer your F-1 to a new school or program. Please keep your address information updated during this period as well (you are not allowed to work during the grace period).

Eligibility

You are eligible for Pre-OPT if:

- An F-1 student who has completed full-time enrollment for at least one Fall and Spring semester or who is within 90 days of doing so.
- Students who work full-time for 12 months or more on Curricular Practical Training (CPT) are not eligible for OPT.

You are eligible for Post-OPT if:

One year of OPT is available after completing each higher level degree program.

Employment

- A job offer is not required to apply for OPT. However, once you find a qualifying job, you must notify the CCP Office.
- Unemployment is allowed for no more than 90 days.
- For Post-OPT the employment may occur anywhere in the U.S.
- No special permission is required to change employers or terminate your employment. However, you must notify the CCP Office of your unemployment and/or new employer's information using the OPT Reporting Form
- Once you complete your degree, you cannot work on-campus or off-campus until you have the EAD in your possession and your chosen start date has arrived.

Employment may include:

You should be employed at least 20 hours per week. Regardless of your job title or how the position is classified, such as an "intern," "temp," "freelance contractor," "post-doc," etc., the following employment options are allowed:

- **Multiple employers:** you may work in your field of study for more than one employer.

Short-term multiple employers (performing artists): musicians and other performing artists

- artists may work for multiple short-term employers (gigs). Keep a list of all positions, dates, and duration.
- **Work for hire:** contract employment in your field of study
- **Self-employment:** you may start a business and be self-employed in your field of study. You must have a business license and document your active engagement in business related to your degree.
- **Employment in your field of study through an agency or consulting firm.**

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

Travel & OPT

Pre-OPT:

If your pre-completion OPT application is pending or approved, you may travel and reenter the U.S. (However, please note that the USCIS sometimes sends a request for more information, or for you to correct a problem with your documentation. These requests are sent by postal mail, so it might be difficult for you to respond if you are not inside the U.S. It is your application, so Otis College does not have the authority to respond for you.)

Post-OPT:

If your post-completion OPT application is pending, you may travel and re-enter the U.S.

After graduation, if your post-completion OPT has been approved and your EAD issued, you may not re-enter the U.S. unless you have evidence of employment. You should carry the following documents with you:

- I-20 signed for travel by an international student adviser within the last 6 months
- EAD card*
- Valid passport
- Unexpired F-1 visa (unless you are Canadian or are returning from a short trip to Canada, Mexico, or the Caribbean)
- Evidence of employment in your field of study (letter of employment, written job offer)

* On the EAD card, there is a statement "Not Valid For Reentry" which means that the EAD card alone is not a proof of your legal status to seek entry into the U.S. You must have all of the documents mentioned above to be able to reenter the country.

Once the approved period of OPT has begun, time spent outside the U.S. will count as unemployment against the 90/120-day limits. However, travel while employed either during a vacation authorized by an employer or as part of your employment will not count as unemployment.

Please keep the CCP informed of any travel plans while on OPT that may affect your status.

If you have dependents in F-2 status who will travel without you, be sure they carry a photocopy of your EAD card and proof of your employment along with their updated F-2 I-20 that is properly signed for travel.

Study While on OPT

While approved for OPT you may take recreational courses, but if you begin a new degree program, your OPT is automatically terminated.

After your Post-OPT Ends

Students who do not exceed 90/120 days of unemployment and report employment to the ISS as required are automatically granted a 60-day grace period after the end date listed on the EAD (Employment Authorization Document). Within this 60-day grace period, you have the following options:

- Depart the U.S. Once you leave the U.S. (including trips to Canada and Mexico) after completing your studies and OPT period, you are not eligible to reenter with your current I-20. The grace period is meant for travel within the states and preparation to depart the U.S.
- Request a new I-20 if you will continue at Otis College in a new degree program. If you are an undergraduate and will begin graduate studies, your new I-20 will be issued by the Graduate School you choose.



OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

Application Deadlines

- It can take the USCIS three to five months to issue the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) that allows you to begin working on OPT. There is no way to expedite an application.
- Once the OPT application is submitted to the USCIS, it is very difficult to change or cancel the application.

Pre-OPT:

- Students may apply up to 120 days prior to their requested Pre-Completion OPT start date as long as they are within 90 days of attaining a complete academic year of full-time enrollment or they have already attained it.

Post-OPT:

The earliest you can apply for OPT is 90 days before your "completion date." The latest date the USCIS will accept your application is 60 days after your completion date. In addition, OPT applications must be submitted to USCIS within 30 days of receiving an OPT I-20 from the Center for Creative Professions Office.

Application Procedure

- Attend an OPT workshop
- Complete and submit an OPT Request Form to the Center for Creative Professions
- Complete Form I-765
- Check or money order payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security" for \$380.00
- Photocopies of Form I-94 front and back. "If you are filing FORM I-765 under the © category, Form I-94 is not required.
- Photocopies of all prior I-20 forms
- Picture ID: 1) Photocopy of your last EAD (front and back) or, 2) Federal Government-issued identity document, such as a **passport**; **visa** issued by a foreign consulate; **birth certificate** with photo id; **national id** document with photo and/or fingerprint.

- 2 color photos on white background (The photos should be approximately 2" x 2". Write your name and I-94 number on the back of each photo in case they get separated from your application)
- Obtain a new I-20 from the Center for Creative Professions
- It is **YOUR** responsibility to mail application and supporting documents to appropriate USCIS:

USCIS Phoenix Lockbox (USPS) deliveries:

USCIS
PO Box 21281
Phoenix, AZ 85036

Express mail and courier service deliveries:

USCIS
Attn: AOS
1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S
Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85034

*It is possible to receive e-notification of application/petition acceptance, using **Form G-1145**.*





SEVERE ECONOMIC HARDSHIP

Overview

If you are suffering a severe economic hardship due to unforeseen changes in your financial circumstances, you may apply to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for authorization to work off-campus. You must have been in F-1 status for one academic year, be in good academic standing, and document that on-campus employment opportunities are unavailable or insufficient to meet your financial needs. Examples of unforeseen circumstances include loss of financial support or on-campus employment, substantial fluctuations in the value of currency or exchange rate, inordinate increases in tuition and/or living costs, unexpected changes in the financial condition of your source of support, medical bills, or other substantial and unexpected expenses.

Contact a DSO in the Registration Office to discuss your situation before you complete the required documentation. Your adviser will determine your eligibility and assist you in completing the application and submitting it to USCIS. Required documentation includes:

- Photocopy of Form I-20, with your ISS adviser's recommendation for economic hardship employment
- Two passport style photos
- Photocopy of I-94 card (front and back)
- A letter describing your financial difficulties and why on-campus employment opportunities are unavailable or insufficient; include supporting evidence
- Photocopy of passport identification page
- Photocopy of visa page
- Photocopies of any previously-issued EAD cards

Application Procedure

- Form I-765 (write (c)(3)(iii) in item 16)
- \$380 fee (make your check or money order payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security)

Application processing times vary between two to four months. If approved, USCIS will issue an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) for a maximum of one year. Do not begin working until you receive the EAD. If approved, you may work for any employer up to 20 hours per week while enrolled in a full course of study and full-time during quarter breaks and your annual vacation quarter. This employment does not affect your eligibility for Optional Practical Training (OPT). Employment authorization is automatically terminated if you fail to maintain status or transfer to another school.

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

Overview

A Social Security Number is issued to track earnings over a worker's lifetime. Students holding F-1 status and are employed in the U.S. must apply for a Social Security Number.

- Only students who have an official employment offer can apply for a Social Security Number.
- All OTIS student employees must apply for a Social Security Number (SSN) BEFORE reporting to the OTIS Career Center/Hiring Personnel for Payroll processing.

Application Procedure

F-1 Students with On-campus Work:

1. Complete the Student Employment Work Agreement (SEWA) and obtain a Letter of Employment from your hiring supervisor.
2. Submit the **SEWA** form and **Letter** to the Center for Creative Professions (CCP). Employment start date cannot be more than 30 days in the future. The Employment Letter must be dated within the last 30 days.
3. Obtain the **Social Security Letter** from the Center for Creative Professions Office. Only the Designated School Official at OTIS can write this letter after receipt of the SEWA form and Letter. It certifies that the student is enrolled full time and holds a valid F-1 status
4. Bring the following documents to the Social Security Office:
 - Original I-20
 - Passport with printed I-94 and Visa
 - Employment Letter from Employer (F-1)
 - Original Social Security Letter from CCP
 - Form SS-5 (Social Security Number Application)

Once a social security number has been issued, **On-Campus Employees** should

bring the following documents to the Center for Creative Professions to complete payroll signup forms.

- SEWA form
- Completed I-9
- SSN Card
- Original passport with U.S. visa

F-1 Students Authorized for CPT

1. Form I-20 updated and endorsed for CPT
2. Passport
3. I-94 printout
4. Form SS-5

F-1 Students Authorized for OPT

1. Form I-20 endorsed for practical training
2. Passport
3. I-94 printout
4. EAD card
5. Form SS-5

Location

Office Address:

11500 W Olympic Blvd
Suite 300
Los Angeles, CA 90064

Phone (Nat'l): 1-800-772-1213
TTY: 1-800-325-0778

Directions:

Located in the City National Bank Building on Olympic and Colby Ave west of the 405 Freeway between Sawtelle and Barrington on the third floor.

Phone (Nat'l): 1-800-772-1213
TTY: 1-800-325-0778

ABOUT US

Contact A DSO...When I Need...

Contact the Office of Admissions for the following reasons

1. You are a new student seeking to attend Otis College of Art and Design
2. Change of Status Advisement
3. You are a new student seeking to Transfer-in to Otis College of Art and Design

Available DSOs

1. Rebekah Kim - Assistant Director
2. Jennie Mynhier - Admissions Counselor

Contact the Registration Office for the following reasons

1. Academic & Immigration Advising
2. Academic Issues (Probation & DQ)
3. Approval of Benefits
4. Approval to Attend Part-time
5. Concurrent Enrollment
6. Change of Address forms/ reporting
7. Driver's License Information
8. Extension of Program
9. New Student Check-in
10. Passport or Visa Questions
11. Severe Economic Hardship
12. Transfer-out Requests
13. Travel Signatures

Available DSOs

1. Alia Saeed – Assistant Registrar

Contact the Career Services Professions for the following reasons

1. Curricular Practical Training
2. On-Campus Employment
3. Optional Practical Training
4. Social Security Guidelines

Available DSOs

1. Angelina Lee — Assistant Director

Contact the Center for International Education for the following reasons

1. Cultural Adjustment Advising
2. J-Visa Scholars
3. Reinstatement Advising
4. Travel Study or Mobility/ Exchange
5. Travel Signatures

Available PDSO

1. Darren Grosch – Director of International Education

Hours of Operation & Location

Admissions: 9am-5pm
Ahmanson Hall, 2nd Floor

Registration: 9am-5pm
Ahmanson Hall, 2nd Floor

Career Services: 9am-5pm
Ahmanson Hall 2nd floor

Center for International Education: 9am-5pm
Ahmanson Hall, 2nd Floor

Student Resources: 9am-5pm
Ahmanson Hall, 1st Floor

Telephone Inquiries

Main Line: (310) 665-6800

Main Voice Mail: (310) 665-6808

Main Fax: (310) 665-6801

Emergency Information Line: (888) 751-7523

Weekly Events Line: (310) 846-2593

If you have questions regarding:
New student orientation contact
Mike Luna, Director of Student Activities at
(310) 665-2595 or by email at mluna@otis.edu

Campus Safety, contact Rick Gonzales at
424-707-3727 or email at rgonzales@otis.edu

Questions concerning housing, contact Morgan Brown, Director at mbrown@otis.edu, or 310-846-2648

Mailing Addresses

Goldsmith Campus:
9045 Lincoln Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90045

Graduate Public Practice:
1657 18th St.
Santa Monica 90404

Graduate Fine Arts:
10455 Jefferson Blvd
Culver City, CA 90232

APPENDIX

IMPORTANT TERMS

PDSO: Primary Designated School Official – Policy

DSO: Designated School Official – International Student Advisor

SEVIS: Student Exchange Visitor Information System

USCIS: US Citizenship and Immigration Services

CPT: curricular practical training

OPT: optional practical training

EAD: employment authorization document (card)

DHS: Department of Homeland Security

ICE: Immigration & Customs Enforcement

DOS: Department of State

CBP: Customs and Border Protection

SEVP: Student & Exchange Visitor Program

IMPORTANT WEBLINKS

Otis College:
www.otis.edu

Center for International Education:
www.otis.edu/center-international-education

Residing in Los Angeles:
www.apartments.com
losangeles.apartments.com/

State Department and Government Links

US State Department:
www.travel.state.gov

Visa Bulletin:
travel.state.gov/visa/bulletin/bulletin_1360.html

Home Page US Department of State:
www.state.gov

Social Security Online:
www.ssa.gov/

Social Security for Noncitizens:
ssa.gov/pubs/10096.html

US Citizenship and Immigration Services:
www.uscis.gov

Embassies and Consulates

www.evaluationworld.com/

Foreign Consulates in the US

www.embassy.org/

Credential Evaluation Services

World Education Services
www.wes.org

Educational Credential Evaluators, INC
www.ece.org

Currency Conversion and Time Zones
Oanda:
www.oanda.com/currency/converter/

Internal Revenue Service and Taxes

US IRS:
www.irs.gov/

Forms and Publications:

www.irs.gov/formspubs/

Lawyers

American Immigration Lawyers Association:
www.aila.org

Lawyer Directory:
www.ilw.com/directory/findlawyer.asp

Resources

Cultural Adjustment and Transitioning:
www.internationalstudentguidetotheusa.com

The National Association of Foreign Student Advisers (NAFSA):
www.nafsa.org

International Items: Flags/ Clothing:
www.visionwear.com/

