



Capstone International Center  
International Student & Scholar Services



# International Orientation

Understanding your  
Student Immigration  
Status



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# Can you answer these questions?

- Do you know where your important documents are, and do you know how to understand them?
- Do you know what is required to stay in status?
- Do you know what options you have for work?
- Do you know what to do when you travel?
- Do you know what you can do at the end of your degree program?



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# Understanding Your Documents



Department of Homeland Security  
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement  
SEVIS ID: N0004705512

I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status  
OMB NO. 1653-0058

SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME Doe, John	GIVEN NAME John	CLASS <b>F-1</b> ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE
PREFERRED NAME John Doe-John	PASSPORT NAME JOHN	
COUNTRY OF BIRTH UNITED KINGDOM	COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP UNITED KINGDOM	
DATE OF BIRTH 01 JANUARY 1990	ADMISSION NUMBER 1234567890123456	
FORM ISSUE REASON INITIAL REENTRY	LEGACY NAME John Doe-09115	

**SCHOOL INFORMATION**

SCHOOL NAME SEVY School for Advanced SEVIS Studies	SCHOOL ADDRESS 3002 Nancy Lane, Ft. Washington, MD 20744
SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL Jalene Robertson	SCHOOL CODE AND APPROVAL DATE BAL21074444000 03 APRIL 2015

**PROGRAM OF STUDY**

EDUCATION LEVEL POSTGRADUATE	MAJOR 1 Economics, General 45.0601	MAJOR 2 None 00.0000
NORMAL PROGRAM LENGTH Four years	PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY Beginner	ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTES Student is proficient
PROGRAM START DATE 01 SEPTEMBER 2015	PROGRAM END DATE 31 MAY 2020	

**FINANCIALS**

ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FOR 9 MONTHS	STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR 9 MONTHS
Tuition and Fees \$ 23,000	On-Sigma Sponsor \$ 3,000
Living Expenses \$ 4,000	Scholarship and Teaching Assistantship \$ 29,000
Expenses of Dependents (1) \$ 2,000	Wanda Fries Another Source \$
Other \$	Overseas Employment \$
TOTAL \$ 29,000	TOTAL \$ 30,000

**REMARKS**  
Orientation begins 8/25/2015. Please report to SEVIS upon arrival.

**SCHOOL ATTESTATION**  
I certify under penalty of perjury that all information provided above was entered before I signed this form and is true and correct. I executed this form in the United States after review and evaluation in the United States by me or other officials of the school of the student's application, transcripts, or other records of courses taken and proof of financial responsibility, which was received at the school prior to the execution of this form. The school has determined that the above named student's qualifications meet all standards for admission to the school and the student will be required to pursue a full program of study as defined by 8 CFR 214.2(f)(5). I am a designated school official of the above named school and am authorized to issue this form.

**STUDENT ATTESTATION**  
I have read and agreed to comply with the terms and conditions of my admission and those of any extension of stay. I certify that all information provided on this form refers specifically to me and is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I certify that I seek to enter or remain in the United States temporarily, and solely for the purpose of pursuing a full program of study at the school named above. I also authorize the named school to release any information from my records needed by DHS pursuant to 8 CFR 214.5(g) to determine my nonimmigrant status. Parent or guardian, and student, must sign if student is under 18.

**SIGNATURE OF:** Jalene Robertson, 2050  
DATE ISSUED: 21 April, 2015  
PLACE ISSUED: Ft. Washington, MD

**SIGNATURE OF:** John Doe (Smith)  
DATE

**SIGNATURE OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN:** SIGNATURE ADDRESS (city/state or postoffice/country) DATE

ICE Form I-20 A-B (12/2016)

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U.S. Customs and Border Protection  
Securing America's Borders

Get I-94 Number I-94 FAQ

**Admission (I-94) Number Retrieval**

**Admission (I-94) Record Number:** 69000888062

**Admit Until Date (MM/DD/YYYY):** 10/10/2012

**Details provided on Admission(I-94) form:**

Family Name: LI  
First (Given) Name: LYDIA  
Birth Date (MM/DD/YYYY): 01/01/1990  
Passport Number: P123123213  
Passport Country of Issuance: Mexico  
Date of Entry (MM/DD/YYYY): 04/11/2012  
Class of Admission: B1

Individuals can visit [www.cbp.gov/I94](http://www.cbp.gov/I94) to retrieve a copy of their electronic Form I-94.

<http://international.ua.edu/iss/currentstudents/maintaining-student-visa-status/#documents>



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# Passport



Your passport is your most important document.

It must remain valid at all times while in the U.S.

If your passport expires or is lost, you will not be able to leave the U.S., renew your license, or extend work authorizations.

If you are within 6 months of your passport expiration, you may not be able to re-enter the U.S. after a trip abroad.



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Some exceptions if returning from travel to Canada, Mexico, and the Adjacent Islands (automatic visa revalidation).



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# Form I-94



U.S. Customs and Border Protection  
Securing America's Borders

OMB No. 1651-0111  
Expiration Date: 05/31/2015

Get I-94 Information I-94 FAQ

**Most Recent I-94**

Admission (I-94) Record Number: 0123456789

Most Recent Date of Entry: August 15, 2018

Class of Admission: F1

Admit Until Date: D/S

Details provided on the I-94 Information form:

Last/Surname:	ELEPHANT
First (Given) Name:	BIG AL
Birth Date:	12/25/1981
Passport Number:	1234567890
Country of Issuance:	BANGLADESH

► Effective April 26, 2013, DHS began automating the admission process. An alien lawfully admitted or paroled into the U.S. is no longer required to be in possession of a preprinted Form I-94. A record of admission printed from the CBP website constitutes a lawful record of admission. See 8 CFR § 1.4(d).

► If an employer, local, state or federal agency requests admission information, present your admission (I-94) number along with any additional required documents requested by that employer or agency.

► Note: For security reasons, we recommend that you close your browser after you have finished retrieving your I-94 number.

[For inquiries or questions regarding your I-94, please click here.](#)

[Accessibility](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

The I-94 is your Arrival and Departure Record, which confirms your “official” visa status while in the U.S.

Access online at <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/>

Your class of admission must always be correct - F1 for student visa and J1 for exchange visitor.

Your “Admit Until Date” should be D/S, which stands for Duration-of-Status.

If your I-94 says something different or if you cannot access your I-94 record, you should schedule an appointment with ISSS right away.



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# Form I-20 (F-1 Students)

The I-20 is a 3 page document, and it is divided into sections.

The links below explain each section in detail:

- [SEVIS ID](#)
- [PERSONAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION](#)
- [SCHOOL INFORMATION](#)
- [PROGRAM OF STUDY & START/END-DATE](#)
- [FINANCIALS](#)
- [SCHOOL AND STUDENT ATTESTATIONS](#)
- [EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATIONS](#)
- [TRAVEL SIGNATURES](#)

SEVIS #



Program of Study = Major and Degree Level



Department of Homeland Security U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement		I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status OMB NO. 1653-0038	
<b>SEVIS ID: N0004705512</b>			
<b>SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME</b> Doe Smith <b>PREFERRED NAME</b> John Doe-Smith <b>COUNTRY OF BIRTH</b> UNITED KINGDOM <b>DATE OF BIRTH</b> 01 JANUARY 1986 <b>FORM ISSUE REASON</b> INITIAL AVERDANCE		<b>GIVEN NAME</b> John <b>PASSPORT NAME</b>  <b>COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP</b> UNITED KINGDOM <b>ADMISSION NUMBER</b>  <b>LEGACY NAME</b> John Doe-Smith	<b>CLASS</b>  <b>F-1</b>  <b>ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE</b>
<b>SCHOOL INFORMATION</b> <b>SCHOOL NAME</b> SEVP School for Advanced SEVIS Studies <b>SCHOOL ADDRESS</b> 9002 Nancy Lane, Ft. Washington, MD 20744 <b>SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL</b> Helene Robertson PDSO		<b>SCHOOL CODE AND APPROVAL DATE</b> BAL214744444000 03 APRIL 2015	
<b>PROGRAM OF STUDY</b> <b>EDUCATION LEVEL</b> DOCTORATE <b>NORMAL PROGRAM LENGTH</b> 72 Months <b>PROGRAM START DATE</b> 01 SEPTEMBER 2015		<b>MAJOR 1</b> Economics, General 45.0601 <b>MAJOR 2</b> None 00.0000 <b>PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY</b> Required <b>PROGRAM END DATE</b> 31 MAY 2021	
<b>FINANCIALS</b> <b>ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FOR 9 MONTHS</b> Tuition and Fees \$ 23,000 Living Expenses \$ 4,000 Expenses of Dependents (1) \$ 3,000 Other \$ <b>TOTAL</b> \$ 30,000		<b>STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR 9 MONTHS</b> Personal Funds \$ 3,000 Scholarship and Teaching Assistantship \$ 29,000 Funds from Another Source \$ On-Campus Employment \$ <b>TOTAL</b> \$ 32,000	
<b>REMARKS</b> Orientation begins 8/25/2015. Please report to ISSS upon arrival.			
<b>SCHOOL ATTESTATION</b> I certify under penalty of perjury that all information provided above was entered before I signed this form and is true and correct. I executed this form in the United States after review and evaluation in the United States by me or other officials of the school of the student's application, transcripts, or other records of courses taken and proof of financial responsibility, which were received at the school prior to the execution of this form. The school has determined that the above named student's qualifications meet all standards for admission to the school and the student will be required to pursue a full program of study as defined by 8 CFR 214.2(f)(6). I am a designated school official of the above named school and am authorized to issue this form. <b>X</b> <b>SIGNATURE OF:</b> Helene Robertson, PDSO <b>DATE ISSUED</b> 21 April 2015 <b>PLACE ISSUED</b> Ft. Washington, MD			
<b>STUDENT ATTESTATION</b> I have read and agreed to comply with the terms and conditions of my admission and those of any extension of stay. I certify that all information provided on this form refers specifically to me and is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I certify that I seek to enter or remain in the United States temporarily, and solely for the purpose of pursuing a full program of study at the school named above. I also authorize the named school to release any information from my records needed by DHS pursuant to 8 CFR 214.2(g) to determine my nonimmigrant status. Parent or guardian, and student, must sign if student is under 18. <b>X</b> <b>SIGNATURE OF:</b> John Doe Smith <b>DATE</b> <b>NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN</b> <b>X</b> <b>SIGNATURE</b> <b>ADDRESS (city/state or province/country)</b> <b>DATE</b>			

ICE Form I-20 A-B (12/2016)

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## I-20 End Date

This is your F-1 expiration date. The I-20 must be extended before this date if you need more time to graduate.

Travel Signatures and Work Authorizations are on page 2



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If you require more time for your degree, the DS-2019 must be extended before this date.

SEVIS #

# Travel Signature

The links below explain each section in detail:

- SEVIS ID
- PERSONAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION
- PROGRAM SPONSOR INFORMATION
- PROGRAM START/END DATE INFORMATION
- EXCHANGE VISITOR CATEGORY AND STUDY FIELD CODE
- FINANCIALS
- SCHOOL ATTESTATIONS
- TRAVEL VALIDATION SIGNATURES
- EV CERTIFICATION





# Understanding Your Student Status

As a student visa holder, you have a few key responsibilities:

1. Study full-time.
2. Make continuous progress towards your degree.
3. Never work without authorization from ISSS.
4. Keep all of your immigration documents up-to-date and 100% accurate.
5. Consult ISSS before making changes to your academic program or immigration status.



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# Who is involved in my status?

- DOS – Department of State
  - Bureau of Consular Affairs
  - U.S. Embassies, Consulates, and Missions
- DHS – Department of Homeland Security
  - SEVP - Student Exchange Visitor Program
    - SEVIS - Student Exchange Visitor Information System
  - USCIS – US Citizenship and Immigration Services
  - CBP – US Customs and Border Protection
  - ICE – US Immigration and Customs Enforcement
- The University of Alabama
  - ISSS – Serve as the F-1 Designated School Officials and J-1 Responsible Officers
- You



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# General Enrollment Requirements

## Graduate Students

- 9 credit hours minimum
- 6 credit hours with a .5 FTE Assistantship

## Undergraduate Students

- 12 credit hours minimum



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# Online Class Limitations

## F-1 Online Limits

- Only one 3-credit hour course can be counted towards enrollment minimums.
- You may take more than one online class, but additional courses will not be counted toward the minimum enrollment for immigration purposes.

## J-1 Online Limits

- J-1 students may not count any online courses toward the minimum enrollment requirement.
- After a J-1 student has enrolled in a full-time load of in-person courses, they may then enroll in online courses above the minimum full-time requirement.





# Enrollment Exceptions

- **Last Semester** – Students may take only what the program requires to graduate in their final semester, but at least one class must be in-person.
- **Reduced Course Load** – Used for medical emergencies and initial academic difficulties.
- **Thesis/Dissertation Hours** – Once a graduate student reaches candidacy, they may take the minimum research hours (599 Thesis/699 Dissertation) mandated by the Graduate School.
- **Summer** – Normally, this is a break for continuing students who are returning for fall. NOTE: New students beginning in summer must enroll full-time.





# Summer as First Semester

- While summer is normally a vacation period for students, if summer is your first semester on a **new initial I-20 or DS-2019**, you must enroll full-time in summer.
- For undergraduate students, the minimum enrollment requirement for summer as your first semester is 12 credits for full summer (6 credit hours if starting in Summer 2 session).
- For graduate students who begin their study in summer as their first semester, the minimum enrollment requirement is 9 credit hours for full summer, or 4.5 hours if starting in Summer 2 session.
- Graduate students on a full assistantship (.5 FTE) may be considered full-time with 6 credit hours of registration for full summer.



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# Remember!

You must have advance permission from ISSS to:

- Enroll less than full-time
- Apply for off-campus employment
- Take a leave of absence
- Withdraw from the university
- Transfer your immigration record to a new university



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# Violations of Status

- Violating immigration regulations forces ISSS to terminate your status.
- If your status is terminated due to a violation of status:
  - you will have no Grace Period and must depart the U.S. immediately;
  - you will lose all employment eligibility immediately;
  - you will not be able to enroll at UA for future terms until issue is resolved.
- Regaining status is never guaranteed!
  - You may have to travel to regain valid visa status; or
  - file for reinstatement with Homeland Security.
  - There will always be fees to pay!
- Get your immigration advice from ISSS. Friends are not a good source of immigration information.
- If you think you have an issue, meet with an ISSS advisor right away.





# What Causes Violation of Status?

The most common violations of status result from the following:

- Failing to attend class
- Not enrolling full-time or dropping below a full-time course load without permission
- Failing to pay tuition or fees and having schedule dropped for nonpayment
- Academic suspension
- Working without authorization
- Failing to update address within 10 days of a change
- Failing to extend your program before it ends



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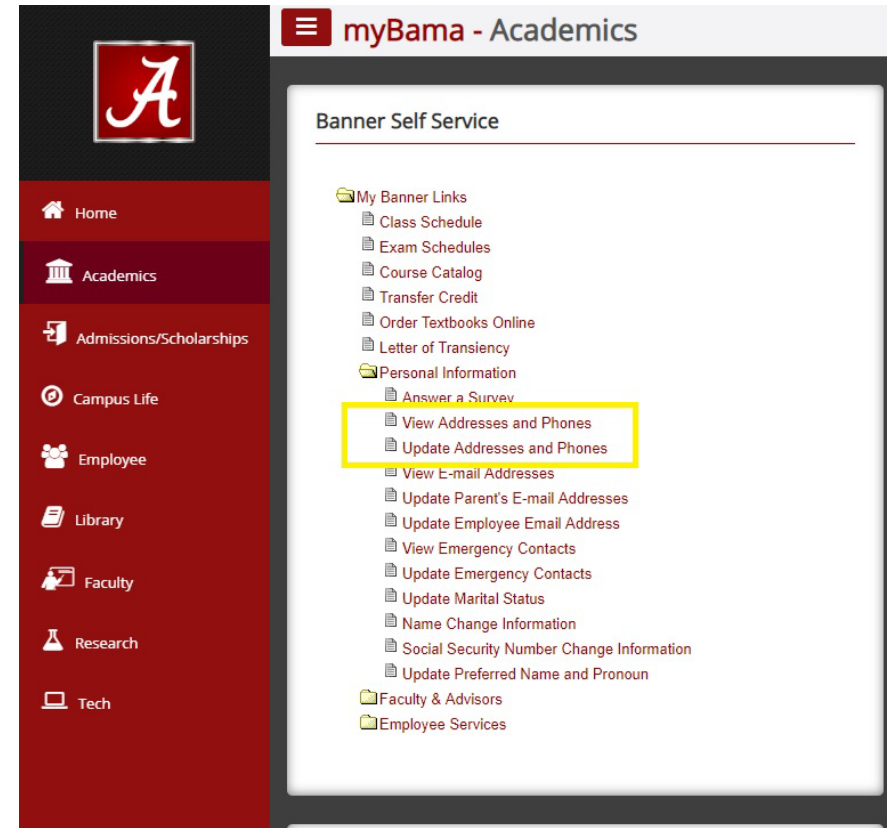
# Updating Address

You must keep your address updated. All non-U.S. citizens residing in the U.S. are required update their address within 10 days of any change of address.

When you move, you should update your address in [myBama](#), and ISSS will report the change to the Department of Homeland Security in SEVIS.

ISSS must have the following information to report to immigration:

- Local Address – This is where you physically live in Tuscaloosa.
- Permanent Address – This is your address in your home country.



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# Updating Your I-20 or DS-2019

Contact ISSS for a new I-20 or DS-2019 if:

- Your major changes or you add a second major.
- Your level of study changes (Bachelors, Masters, Doctorate).
- Your funding changes (scholarships or assistantships).
- Your graduation date changes – either you graduate earlier than your I-20/DS-2019 end-date or you need additional time to complete your degree.

You can submit an [I-20/DS-2019 Update Form](#) to ISSS for these changes.



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# F-2 and J-2 Dependents



## Dependent Status:

- Their legal status is linked to the F-1 or J-1 primary.
- Their status is valid as long as the F-1 or J-1 maintains status.



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# F-2 and J-2 Dependents

## Dependent Studies:

- F-2 – can study part-time at University (children can enroll in K-12 full-time).
- J-2 – can study part-time or full-time at University (children can enroll in K-12 full-time).

## Dependent Employment:

- F-2 – cannot work.
- J-2 – can work, but must apply for work authorization with USCIS.

## Dependent Insurance:

- F-2 & J-2 Dependents require medical insurance.
- Dependents can be added to the UA Insurance Policy.





# STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

EMPLOYMENT



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# On-Campus Employment

F-1 and J-1 Students may work on-campus under the following conditions:

1. Must maintain valid status.
2. May not exceed 20 hours of work per week total during fall and spring semesters.
3. May work more than 20 hours per week during the summer and official university breaks.

## How to Find On-Campus Employment

- Student employment opportunities at <https://uastudentjobs.ua.edu/>
- Bama Dining employment at <https://ua.campusdish.com/en/Careers>



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# Off-Campus Employment

Off-campus employment is only allowed with specific permission from ISSS using the following types of training and work authorizations:

- F-1 Curricular Practical Training (CPT)
- F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT)
- J-1 Academic Training
- Economic Hardship Authorization from USCIS





# F-1 CPT Eligibility

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is typically used for internships and practicum experience during degree program.

CPT work authorization comes from ISSS and is for specific period, employer, and location.

Student must:

- Be in valid F-1-status
- Have completed one full academic year (2 semesters) of full-time study
- Have not completed program of study
- Have a job offer directly related to major field of study (not minor)
- Enroll in an approved Co-op or academic course tied to CPT



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# F-1 OPT Eligibility

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is typically used for internships and work after completion of the degree program.

Recommendation for OPT comes from ISSS and work authorization approval is handled by USCIS and is for specific period.

Student must:

- Be in valid F-1-status
- Have completed one full academic year (2 semesters) of full time study
- Work directly related to major field of study (not minor)
- Have not utilized 1 year or more of full-time CPT
- Have not utilized 12 months of OPT at the current or higher degree level
- Not be in an ELI or non-degree program



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# J-1 Academic Training Eligibility

J-1 Academic Training (AT) is typically used for internships and work either during or after completion of the degree program.

Academic Training work authorization comes from ISSS and is for specific period, employer, and location.

Academic Training Eligibility:

- Student must be in valid J-1 Student status
- Work must be directly related to major field of study
- Training must be an integral part of study program
- Training approved by the academic advisor



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# Economic Hardship

Generally, recommendation for F-1 Economic Hardship comes from ISSS and work authorization approval is handled by USCIS and is for a specific period of time.

## Economic Hardship Criteria

- Based on severe and unforeseen economic circumstances
- Student must have completed at least one academic year of study
- Student must be in good academic standing
- The employment must not interfere with studies
- Economic hardship is recommended and approved on a case-by-case basis





# Note on work authorization

- Working, **paid or unpaid**, without proper authorization is a serious violation
- Even unpaid internships require authorization - unpaid work is not “volunteering”
- Most off-campus work authorizations must be approved by USCIS, which may take months.
- Always contact ISSS office before engaging in any work or if you have questions [international@ua.edu](mailto:international@ua.edu)



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# Travel



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# Travel Inside the U.S.

When traveling outside Tuscaloosa, carry the following:

- Passport
- Original Form I-20 or Form DS-2019
- Form I-94

Remember, keep photocopies/scans of your main passport page, visa page, I-94 record, I-20/DS-2019 and any other visa documentation with you at all times even when not traveling.



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# Travel Outside of the U.S.

To depart the U.S., you only need a valid passport.

To re-enter the U.S. after a short trip abroad (less than 5 months), you need the following:

- Travel Signature on I-20 or DS-2019 (within the last 12 months)
- Valid Passport (valid at least 6 months beyond date of return)
- Valid Visa (unexpired on the date of return)

We recommend you carry a copy of your unofficial transcripts or enrollment verification letter from the Registrar (available on myBama in the student tab).



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# Travel Signatures

- You can get travel signatures at ISSS.
- Generally, travel signatures are valid for multiple uses for one-year from the date of the signature.

I-20 Page 2: Travel Signature

This page when properly endorsed, may be used for reentry of the student to attend the same school after a temporary absence from the United States. Signature is valid for one year.

Name of School Official	Signature of Designated School Official	Title	Date Issued	Place Issued (city and state)
		Director	09/17/2012	Tuscaloosa, AL

Form I-20 A-B (Rev. 04-27-88)N

DS-2019 Page 1: Travel Signature

TRAVEL VALIDATION BY RESPONSIBLE OFFICER  
(Maximum validation period is 1 year\*)

\*EXCEPT: Maximum validation period is up to 6 months for Short-term Scholars and 4 months for Camp Counselors and Summer Work Travel.

(1) Exchange Visitor is in good standing at the present time

11/19/2013  
Date (mm-dd-yyyy)

Signature of Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer

(2) Exchange Visitor is in good standing at the present time

Title

Date (mm-dd-yyyy)

IN REGARDING 212(d)(5) AND ALL ALIEN REQUIREMENTS

Signature of Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer

page 2 of this document.



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# Grace Period and Life after UA



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# Grace Period

Upon completion of studies, your F-1 I-20 or J-1 DS-2019 will end.

Students have an automatic Grace Period that begins after they complete their program:

- F-1 Students – 60 Days
- J-1 Students – 30 Days





# Options During Grace Period

Students have the following options during their Grace Period:

1. Prepare to depart the U.S.
2. Apply for F-1 Optional Practical Training or J-1 Academic Training.
3. Request a new I-20 or DS-2019 to continue at UA in a new degree program.
4. Transfer your SEVIS record and I-20/DS-2019 to a new school to begin a new program.
5. Apply with USCIS to change status to another visa category.



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# Capstone International Center

## International Student & Scholar Services



Hours of Operation:

Mon-Fri: 8 am - 4:45 pm

Walk-in/Virtual Advising:

Mon-Thur: 11 am - 3 pm

Location:

105 BB Comer Hall

Website:

<http://international.ua.edu/iss/>

Email:

[international@ua.edu](mailto:international@ua.edu)

Phone:

205 348-5402





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