F-1 Immigration Presentation

International Center
Pfeiffer University
Misenheimer, NC
(704) 463-3368
Check-In

• Notify the International Center when you arrive on campus so that we can register you in SEVIS.

• Bring your passport, I-94, and I-20 to our office so that we can photocopy them as required by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).
Important Documents

Passport
Visa
I-20
I-94
SEVIS Fee Receipt
Source: State Department.
PASSPORT

• **Passport**: Your government’s permit for you to leave and re-enter your country. Most passports contain an expiration date.

• **Renewing Your Passport**: Consult your own consulate or embassy in the U.S to renew your passport. You must keep it valid to maintain status. Also, must be valid for at least 6 additional months when re-entering the U.S.
Source: State Department.
VISA

- The visa page put in your passport by the U.S consulate or embassy abroad was needed to enter the United States. The visa shows the latest date on which you can enter the country. **It does not show how long you can stay in the U.S.**

- When you arrive at the “port of entry” (the U.S. airport), the Immigration Inspector will examine your passport, visa, and I-20, and determine whether you are admissible to the U.S. and how long you can stay.
Visa Renewal

• It is necessary to renew your visa only if:

  • You plan to leave and re-enter the U.S. after your visa has expired; or

  • You are traveling to another country other than Canada, Mexico, or any of the Islands in the Caribbean Sea (except Cuba). **NOTE:** When visiting Canada, Mexico, or the Caribbean Islands, you will need your I-94 to enter. **DO NOT** try to renew your visa while there, because if your visa application is denied, you will **NOT** be allowed to re-enter the U.S.
I-94: Arrival Departure Card
I-94

The I-94 shows that you have been lawfully admitted to the U.S. This small, white card is usually stapled onto the U.S. visa page of your passport. It contains an eleven-digit identifying number (called your admission number) that USCIS uses to keep track of your arrival in and departure from the United States.
Expiration of Stay

- If there is a date written in the upper right corner of your I-94, you must leave the U.S. by that date, or you must apply to extend your stay in the U.S. If your I-94 has a date, bring it to the International Center immediately.

- Most international students have I-94’s that indicate “D/S” (duration of status).
Duration of Status (D/S)

- F-1 students have permission to remain in the United States for what is known as “duration of status,” which is noted on the I-20 and the I-94 as “D/S.”

- Duration of status is defined as “the period during which the student is pursuing a full course of study.. and any period of authorized practical training, plus sixty days within which to depart from the United States.”

- F-1 students must make academic progress toward a degree to keep valid status.
Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant F-1 Student

Name of Principal: [Redacted]
Name of Student: [Redacted]
Date of Birth: [Redacted]
Country of Citizenship: [Redacted]
Length of Stay: [Redacted]
Date of Completion: [Redacted]
Program of Study: [Redacted]
Degree Level: [Redacted]
I.D. Number: [Redacted]
Certificate Number: [Redacted]
Date of Issue: [Redacted]
Date of Expiration: [Redacted]
Status: [Redacted]
Form: I-20

The student is eligible to remain in the United States temporarily for the purpose of studying. The student must maintain a full-time course of study. The course of study may be pursued at a public or private school.

The student is required to carry this certificate at all times while in the United States.

This certificate is not transferable.

The student is required to report any change of address to the appropriate immigration agency.

Signature: [Redacted]
Date: [Redacted]

U.S. Department of Justice
Immigration and Naturalization Service

Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant F-1 Student

State: [Redacted]
Certificate No.: [Redacted]
Date of Issue: [Redacted]
Date of Expiration: [Redacted]
Status: [Redacted]
Form: I-20

The student is required to carry this certificate at all times while in the United States.

The student is required to report any change of address to the appropriate immigration agency.

Signature: [Redacted]
Date: [Redacted]
In 2020

Authority for collecting the information on this and related student forms is contained in U.S.C. 172 and 104. The information solicited will be used by the Department of State and the Immigration and Naturalization Service to determine eligibility for the benefits requested.

INSTRUCTIONS TO DESIGNATED SCHOOL OFFICIALS
1. The law provides severe penalties for knowingly and willfully falsifying or concealing a material fact or using any false document in the submission of this form. Designated school officials shall consult regulations pertaining to the issuance of Form I-20-A, B, and. CFP 214.3 (I) before completing the form. Failure to comply with these regulations may result in the withdrawal of the school approval for attendance by foreign students from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (8 CFP 214.4).

2. ISSUANCE OF FORM I-20-A, B: Designated school officials may issue a Form I-20-A, B: to a student who is one of the following categories, if the student has been accepted for full-time attendance at the institution as a prospective F-1 or nonimmigrant other than a resident of the United States or as an F-1 transfer student; 3) a resident student advancing to a higher educational level at the same institution; 4) a non-student seeking immigration status. The form may be issued to the applicant, parent, or child of an F-1 student for entrance into the United States.

When issuing a Form 20-A, B, designated school officials should complete the student’s admission number where possible to ensure proper data entry and record keeping.

3. ENFORCEMENT OF PAGE 1 FOR REENTRY: Designated school officials may endorse page 1 of the Form I-20-A, B for reentry if the student and/or the F-2 dependent(s) is to leave the United States temporarily. This should be done only when the student or the Form 1-20A becomes uninstalled if there are substantial changes in status (e.g., 7, or 8, or a new Form I-20-A, B should be issued.

4. REPORTING REQUIREMENT: Designated school officials should always forward the top page of the Form I-20-A, B to the INS data receiving center at P.O. Box 140, London, Kentucky 40741 for data entry except when the student is to leave as an F-1 student for initial entry or reentry into the United States, or for reenrollment in student status. (Reporting requirements should be sent to the Immigration and Naturalization Service district office having jurisdiction over the student’s temporary residence in this country.)

The INS data processing center will return this top page to the issuing school for disposal after data entry and microfilming.

5. CERTIFICATION: Designated school officials should certify on the bottom part of page 1 of this form that the Form I-20-A, B is a true and complete statement and issued in accordance with the pertinent regulations. The designated school official should review the information when the completed and signed Form I-20-A, B is returned to the student.

6. ADMISSION RECORDS: States in which the Immigration and Naturalization Service will require information concerning the student’s immigration status for various reasons, designated school officials shall maintain all evidence as to how the student entered and is authorized to attend. This information will be sent to the Immigration and Naturalization Service district office having jurisdiction over the student’s temporary residence in this country.

INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENTS
1. Biometric Certification: You should read everything on this page carefully and be sure that you understand the terms and conditions concerning your admission and stay in the United States as a nonimmigrant student. Before you sign the certification on the bottom part of page 1 of this form, you should consult a qualified immigration lawyer. You should check and understand all of the facts, including whether your visa is valid. You may be denied entry into the United States if you do not meet the requirements of your visa.

2. Admission: A nonimmigrant student may be admitted for the duration of status. This means that you are authorized to stay in the United States for the entire length of time during which you are enrolled as a full-time student in an educational program and any period of authorized practical training plus sixty days. While in the United States, you must remain in your field of study and must continue to take foreign passport unless you are against foreign passport requirements.

3. School: For initial admission, you must attend the school specified on your visa. If you have a Form 20-A, B from more than one school, it is important to know the name of the school you intend to attend specified on your visa by presenting a Form I-20-A, B from the school you intend to attend. Failure to attend the specified school will result in the loss of your student status and subject you to deportation.

4. Reentry: A nonimmigrant student may reenter after a temporary absence of five months or less from the United States. This student is otherwise admissible. You may be admitted by presenting a valid passport, a valid visa, and either a new Form 20-A, B or a page 3 of the Form I-20-A, B. (Your I-20-A, B Copy) at the border. If you were temporarily out of the United States for more than fifteen days, you may apply for extension of stay. An application for extension of stay, as Form I-539 should be filed with the Immigration and Naturalization Service district office having jurisdiction over your school at least 30 days before but no more than 60 days before expiration of your student status.

5. Employment: As an F-1 student, you are not permitted to work off campus or to engage in business without specific employment authorization. After your first year in F-1 student status, you may apply for employment authorization on Form I-539 based on financial need for a job, job offer, or the need to obtain practical training.

6. Notice of Address: If you move, you must submit a notice within 10 days of the change of address to the Immigration and Naturalization Service. This information is available at the INS office.

7. Arrival/Departure: When you leave the United States, you must cancel your Form 1-94 departure card. This is a two-sided card which is issued by the INS at the border. You must return this card within 60 days for all purposes.

8. Financial Support: You must demonstrate that you have been able to support yourself for the entire period of stay in the United States while pursuing a full course of study. You are required to attach documentary evidence of sources of support.

9. Authorization to Release Information by School: To comply with requests from the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service, you are required to give authorization to the school to release such information from your records. The school will provide the service even if it is not required by law, regulation, or court order and must have evidence of a legal need to release the records. The school shall have the service to provide records in a timely manner for public records. The school shall comply with any request from the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service.

10. Penalty: To maintain your nonimmigrant student status, you must be enrolled as a full-time student at the school you are authorized to attend. You may not engage in employment only if you have received permission to work. Failure to comply with these regulations may result in the loss of your student status and subject you to deportation.

11. Authority for Collecting Information: The authority for collecting the information on this and related student forms is contained in U.S.C. 179 and 104. The information will be used by the Department of State and the Immigration and Naturalization Service to determine eligibility for the benefits requested. The form provides severe penalties for knowingly and willfully falsifying or concealing a material fact or using any false document in the submission of this form.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: If you are reporting to the Immigration and Naturalization Service, you must file Form I-539, Application for Extension of Stay, with the Service office having jurisdiction over your school at least 30 days before but no more than 60 days before expiration of your student status.

Form 20-A, B 1975 (14-27-R8N)
IF YOU NEED MORE INFORMATION CONCERNING YOUR F-1 NONIMMIGRANT STUDENT STATUS AND THE RELATING IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES, PLEASE CONTACT EITHER YOUR FOREIGN STUDENT ADVISOR ON CAMPUS OR A NEARBY IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE OFFICE.

FAMILY NAME: ____________________________ FIRST NAME: ____________________________

Student Employment Authorization:

Employment Status: ______________________

Duration of Employment: From (Date): ___________ To (Date): ___________

Employee Name: ____________________________

Employee Location: _________________________

Comments: _____________________________________________________________

Event History:

Event Name: ______________________________

Event Date: ______________________________

Current Authorizations:

Start Date: ___________ End Date: ___________

This page may be used for reentry of the student to attend the same school after a temporary absence from the United States. Each certification signature is valid for one year.

Name of School: __________________________

Assistant Director of International Programs: __________________________

Date Issued: ___________ Place Issued (city and state): ____________________

Name of School Official: __________________________

Signature of Designated School Official: __________________________

Title: ___________ Date Issued: ___________ Place Issued (city and state): ____________________

Form I-20 A/B (Rev. 04-37-RRN)
I-20 Completion Date

Item #5 on your I-20 shows the date by which you are expected to complete the program of study for which your I-20 was issued. This date is based on an estimate of the length of time it takes a student to complete that particular program of study.

PLEASE NOTE: If you will complete your program of study \textit{before or after} the date on your I-20, notify the International Center so that we can update SEVIS.
Program Extension

- If you cannot complete your degree by the date shown on your I-20, you **MUST** request a program extension from the International Center **BEFORE** the expiration date.

- To request a program extension, ask your advisor to provide the International Center a letter explaining why you need more time to complete your degree.

- The International Center will issue a new I-20 extending the end date and notify BCIS of your new completion date.
**Status vs. Visa**

**Visa:** A stamped page inside the passport issued overseas by a U.S. embassy or consulate. You only need a valid, unexpired visa to enter the U.S. after traveling outside the country. It is **NOT** a problem if your visa expires while you are in the U.S. The only time it **MUST** be valid is when you are trying to re-enter the U.S. Visas can only be issued or renewed **OUTSIDE** the U.S.

**Status:** This is your legal state inside the U.S. It is given to you by BCIS at the port of entry and recorded on your I-94 card.

**NOTE:** Your status is whatever visa you show the immigration officer at the U.S. airport. For example, if you show the officer your B1/B2 (visitor) visa, you have entered the country as a visitor and not as a student!
Full-Time Enrollment

- All F-1 students MUST be enrolled full time during the entire Fall and Spring semesters to maintain status.

- Students must **ENROLL IN** and **COMPLETE** the required number of hours to be full-time.

- There are limited reasons for under-enrollment. **You must have permission from the International Center BEFORE enrolling part-time.**
On-Line Courses

Only **ONE** (1) online course per semester will count toward the full time enrollment requirement.

You can take more than one on-line course, but **only one** will meet the **immigration full-time** enrollment requirement.
Other Enrollment Issues

- 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.

You must **ENROLL FULL-TIME** and **COMPLETE** the required number of hours for full-time enrollment per semester to maintain immigration status.
What **MUST** I do if I move?

- Download and complete Form AR-11 (Change of Address)
- Within **10 days** of moving, notify the International Center of your new address. Notifying other offices at Pfeiffer is important...but you **MUST** notify our office too.
Staying in Status

- Maintain unexpired passport
- Maintain unexpired I-20
- Attend school listed on I-20
- Remain enrolled full-time during fall & spring semesters
- Enroll in only one on-line course to count toward full time status
Staying in Status (2)

- Notify the International Center immediately if you move to a new physical address
- Notify International Center immediately if you change majors
- Do not work off-campus without permission
- File timely I-20 extensions, school transfers, or change of status requests
Staying in Status (3)

- Obey state and federal laws (see the online orientation on US Laws).
- Comply with Special Registration, if applicable
- Depart from the U.S. in a timely manner (within 60 days if completing a program & 15 days if not)
Update International Center of:

- Change in area of study
- Change in physical living address
- Change in financial support
- Need to drop below 12 credit hours
- Need to extend or change program
- Fall out of status/change status
- Work off campus
Can an Out-of-Status Student Regain Legal Status?

- Under the new regulations, a student may apply to USCIS for reinstatement of status only if the violation resulted from circumstances beyond the student’s control.

- A student will have much more difficulty receiving reinstatement if out of status for more than 5 months.
Unlawful Presence

• If you are out of status and caught by immigration authorities, the following penalties apply if you continue to remain inside the U.S:

1. Less than 180 days: no penalty
2. From 180-365 days: 3 year bar from re-entering U.S.
3. More than 1 year: 10 year bar from re-entering U.S.
Out-of-Status
What are the Options?

- Apply to USCIS (with the help of the International Center) requesting reinstatement back into status (not available for all violations); or

- Leave the country with a new I-20 form and reenter if permitted.
Immigration Attorneys

- Immigration lawyers can be extremely helpful, especially since they should know the latest law and have skills in handling immigration paperwork.

- To find a good immigration lawyer, check with the local bar association or any consumer-oriented social service or voluntary agency.

- If you need a lawyer to start the immigration process from outside the United States, the American consulate or embassy will be able to help you.

- In all cases, shop around, and be careful about paying too high a fee "up front".
When Traveling....

Since 9/11, the focus on people entering and living in the U.S. has become more intense. You should **always** carry the following:

- An unexpired passport
  - Must be valid 6 months after the re-entry date.

- An unexpired F-1 visa when re-entering the U.S.
  - **Exception:** short visits to Canada, Mexico or Caribbean Islands (will need I-94). **DO NOT** apply for a new visa/renewal while visiting these countries.
What to Carry When Traveling (continued)

- An unexpired I-20
  - Must have a DSO signature on page 3 of I-20 within the last 6 months

- Proof of financial support

- Up-to-date transcript

- Class schedule for next semester

- Keep copies of all documents in a separate bag in case you lose the originals
TAXES

- F-1 students are required to file U.S. income tax forms even if they have no income.
- Tax returns are due each year by April 15th.
- Instructions and forms will be available in the International Center in Misenheimer and outside the Admissions Office in Charlotte.
- To file a tax return, students must have a Social Security Number or a taxpayer identification number (ITIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).
Social Security Numbers

• Section 326 of the Patriot Act does not allow Social Security Numbers (SSN) to be issued for identification purposes.

• International students **MUST** have a job offer before being allowed to obtain an SSN.

• The International Center can provide a letter for you to give utility companies, landlords, etc. that explains why you do not have and cannot obtain an SSN.
What if I have a question?

Call the International Center at:

(704) 463-3368

Rebecca Treece (Primary DSO)
Rebecca.Treece@pfeiffer.edu
(704) 463-3368

Jim Gulledge (DSO)
Jim.Gulledge@pfeiffer.edu
(704) 463-3366

Office hours are 8-5pm, Monday-Friday
Immigration Terms Defined

- **DSO**: Designated School Officials (DSO’s) are individuals who have been specifically authorized by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) to conduct certain immigration transactions for Pfeiffer University. These individuals include: Jim Gulledge and Becky Treece. Anyone needing to contact one of these DSO's should call (704) 463-3368.

- **USCIS**: This is an abbreviation for the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service. This government agency is a part of the Department of Homeland Security and is responsible for enforcing United States immigration laws.

- **SEVIS**: The Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) is a government, computerized system that maintains and manages data about foreign students and exchange visitors during their stay in the United States.
• **SEVIS Fee**: $100 fee paid to the Department of Homeland Security BEFORE students apply for an F-1 visa.

• **Passport**: The passport is a document issued by your government giving you permission to travel outside your country. It is renewed through your embassy or the nearest consul. It is your obligation to keep your passport valid. This is one of the conditions for maintaining legal student status. For a passport renewal, your embassy may need a letter verifying that you are a full-time student. You may request this letter from the Registrar's Office.
Immigration Terms (continued)

- **Visa**: The visa is permission granted by the United States government to enter the United States. It is a multi-colored stamp that goes inside your passport. The visa is issued by an American Embassy or Consulate abroad. Unless you transferred to Pfeiffer from another school inside the United States, the annotation section of your visa should indicate Pfeiffer University. If you plan to travel outside the United States and your visa has expired or you have changed your status, you will need to obtain a new visa from an American Embassy or Consulate abroad. **IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO RENEW YOUR VISA WHILE YOU ARE INSIDE THE UNITED STATES.**

- **1-94**: This is a record of your arrivals and departures. The 1-94 form is a small white card that is stapled inside the passport by the BCIS agent at the port of entry and is your permission to remain in the United States. It should not be confused with the United States visa stamped in your passport by an American consulate abroad. Please keep this safe, because you will need it to leave the country and also to apply for various benefits.
Immigration Terms (continued)

- **1-20**: This is a certificate of eligibility to study at a particular university within the United States.

- **F-1 Status**: This permits an individual to enter the United States for full-time study at an authorized school in the United States. To obtain an F-1 visa, it is necessary to present a Form 1-20 (certificate of eligibility) to an embassy or consular’s office abroad.

- **Out-of-status**: This means that a student has violated one of the responsibilities of maintaining legal F-1 student status, such as enrolling for less than full time, not maintaining a valid passport, or working off campus without authorization, etc.

- **D/S**: Duration of Status. This is the period of time you are authorized to study in the United States. If you have not finished your program by the ending date on your 1-20, you MUST apply for a program extension BEFORE the ending date.
It is up to you to know your legal responsibilities as an international student studying in the U.S.

See an advisor in the International Center if you have questions. **DO NOT** rely on the advice of friends or relatives.

Keep copies of all your immigration paperwork and passports (even those that are expired, out-of-date, or have been reissued). **DO NOT** throw away!