INTERNATIONAL STUDENT & SCHOLAR OFFICE

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The International Student and Scholar Office (ISSO) provides services and programs for several hundred international students, scholars and faculty from about 80 nations. Approximately 75 percent of international students are here for two to five years, working on an undergraduate or graduate degree. The ISSO provides the following programs and services:

- Issuance of documents and guidance on legal matters, which make possible the enrollment of non-immigrant students.
- Advising services necessary for international students to maintain legal status while in the United States, ensuring they understand applicable federal government regulations and university policies.
- Design and presentation of programs to assist international students in their transition to life in the United States and the American academic environment.
- Advising international students regarding personal, academic, legal, career, intercultural communication, and cross-cultural adjustment issues.
- Serving as liaison to government agencies and TU offices.
- Coordination of programs and ongoing services to enhance international students' social lives, encourage their interaction with American peers, and promote ways for them to become involved and appreciated for their unique cultural perspectives.

Summary of Special Immigration Regulations for Students in F-1 Visa Status

Please note that the ISSO can provide the necessary immigration-related information and assistance to students, but it is the student, not TU, who is ultimately responsible for maintaining legal F-1 student status. F-1 students should contact an ISSO adviser if they have difficulty meeting any of these requirements before they have a problem. The ISSO is here to assist students in reviewing options and making wise decisions. The ISSO staff does not work for the Department of Homeland Security or the federal government but are employees of TU who want international students to be successful. Students must:

- Report any change of local or foreign address to the U.S. government's SEVIS (electronic information system) by reporting it to TU through Online Services within 10 days of any move.
- Enroll at the school that issued the active SEVIS record Form I-20.
- Attend a full course of study (generally 12 units for undergraduate students, 9 units for graduate students, and 6 units for doctoral students) each fall and spring term. See the section "Full-Time and Part-Time Status" in the Procedures and Policies section of this catalog for complete information about exceptions to the normal course load. Please also note that:
- Students must both register for *and* attend a class for the entire term.
- A "W" (withdrawal) for a class means that the class cannot count toward the full course of study.
- Receiving a grade of "FX" means that the student never attended the class or stopped attending during the term without officially withdrawing, so an "FX" grade cannot count toward the full course of study.
- Units taken on an "Audit" basis do not count toward the full course of study.
- Under extremely limited circumstances, an international student may obtain an exception to the full course of study requirement. Any possible exceptions must be discussed and approved in advance by a Designated School Official (DSO), per federal Immigration regulations. TU's DSOs are the international student advisers in the ISSO.
- Make satisfactory academic progress.
- Complete the degree or program by the date indicated on the Form I-20; if a student is not able to complete the program by that date due to valid academic or medical reasons, he or she must apply at the ISSO for an F-1 program extension *before* the Form I-20 expires.
- Follow special immigration status transfer regulations when transferring to another academic institution.
- Have an unexpired passport at all times, with a validity date of at least six months into the future.
- Limit employment to a total (all jobs) of 20 hours per week while school is in session; F-1 students are allowed to work full-time in authorized employment at times when school is not in session, i.e., during the summer, minimester, and spring break.
- Receive written authorization for any and all off-campus employment via the ISSO.
- Complete special U.S. tax forms and submit them to the U.S. Internal Revenue Service even if no U.S. income was received.
- When nearing the end of the degree or program, or within 60 days of completing all degree requirements either:
  a. obtain a new Form I-20 for a new institution or program and attend the new school or program's next available term within 5 months of the current program completion date
  b. apply to change to another immigration status or
  c. apply for optional practical training work permission, if eligible.

If the degree or academic program is not completed and the student withdraws or takes a leave of absence, the student must depart the U.S. within 15 days.

The ISSO staff is available Monday–Friday from 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Any student who has an emergency outside of normal business hours may contact the TU Police at 410-704-2134. The police may assist the student or may contact an ISSO staff member at home.