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## Maintaining Student Status

While studying in the United States, it is important that you maintain an active student status. Maintaining an active SEVIS status means that you follow the rules and regulations of your student visa. This brochure outlines the main student visa requirements, but you should always consult your International School Advisor and/or Designated School Official (DSO) for additional information.

SEVIS stands for the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System. This system is used by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to maintain information on United States schools and international students who study in the United States.

An International School Advisor or Designated School Official is in charge of students' SEVIS and Form I-20 information.

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## Arriving in the United States

When arriving in the United States, you must:

- Enter the United States no sooner than 30 days before your program starts.
- Contact your DSO as soon as you arrive in the United States.
- After arriving at school, contact your DSO again, no later than the program start date listed on your I-20.

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## Helpful Student Links

### U.S. Embassy Website

[www.kw.usembassy.gov](http://www.kw.usembassy.gov)

### U.S. Department of State

[www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)

### Study in the United States

[www.studyinthestates.dhs.gov](http://www.studyinthestates.dhs.gov)

### U.S. Customs and Border Protection

[www.cbp.gov](http://www.cbp.gov)

### Know Before You Go

[www.cpb.gov/travel/international-visitors/know-before-you-go](http://www.cpb.gov/travel/international-visitors/know-before-you-go)

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## Contact EducationUSA

EducationUSA hosts two-hour pre-departure orientations that cover various topics to prepare for departure, walk you through Port of Entry procedures, and give tips on what to expect on campus and how to adjust to life in the U.S.

Pre-departure orientations take place at the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait and are open to students and parents.

Follow the EducationUSA Adviser on Instagram @**EducationUSA.Kuwait** to find out about the next orientation and information sessions. Registration closes two days prior to each session. To attend, you must register by emailing [educationUSAkuwait@state.gov](mailto:educationUSAkuwait@state.gov)



## Student Visa Regulations

Maintaining “Active” Status in the United States



United States Embassy  
in Kuwait

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## Studying in the United States

While studying in the United States, you must:

- Attend and pass all your classes. If classes are too difficult, speak with your International School Advisor and/or Designated School Official (DSO) immediately.
- If you will be unable to complete your program by the end date, speak with your DSO about requesting a possible program extension.
- Take a full course of study each semester.
- If you cannot study full-time, contact your DSO immediately.

***Do not drop a class without first speaking with your DSO.***

You should speak with your DSO if you plan to do any of the following:

- Change your major, program, or degree level
- Change your education level
- Transfer to a new school
- Take a break from school
- Travel outside the United States
- Move to a new address
- Request a program extension

You may contact the Student Exchange Visitors Program by email at [sevp@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:sevp@ice.dhs.gov) if your DSO is unable to assist, or if you would prefer to ask someone else.

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## Work and Practical Training

You may only work ***when authorized*** by a DSO in some cases, and by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) in other cases.

### **Curricular Practical Training (CPT)**

You may be eligible for CPT at either the undergraduate or the graduate level during your program of study. CPT employment must be an integral part of an established curriculum and the position must directly relate to your major area of study. Consult your DSO for information on your school's CPT policy.

### **Optional Practical Training (OPT)**

You may also be eligible for optional practical training during or following your program of study. OPT is a form of temporary employment that directly relates to your program of study. For more information about employment and training options, talk to your DSO.

***If you choose to work without authorization, you will be forced to leave the United States immediately, and you may not be able to re-enter the United States at a later date.***

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## Departing the United States

After completing studies and/or work and practical training, F-1 students must depart the United States within 60 days. Students studying on an M-1 or J-1 visa must leave within 30 days of their program's completion.

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## General Student Tips

### **Keep Copies of Important Documents**

You should keep copies of your valid I-20, visa, and passport in a safe place. Remember to keep your passport valid for at least six months into the future.

### **Use University Resources**

If you are struggling academically, you should take advantage of your university's resources, such as writing labs, tutors, study groups, and advising through the international student office.

Professors and teaching assistants schedule office hours outside of class if you need extra help or discussion. You can also get help from counselors, peers, and professionals if you feel overwhelmed or homesick.

### **Follow United States Laws**

Pay attention to driving laws. If you receive a speeding or parking ticket, pay it right away. Not paying the fine immediately may cause the amount owed to increase substantially over time.

You should stay away from illegal drugs. The use of marijuana and other illegal drugs can have serious consequences and can impact student visa status in the United States now and in the future.

If you break the law, you may face fines, jail time, expulsion from school, removal from the United States, or difficulties with travel in the future. If you have trouble with the law, keep all documentation of the case from the relevant courts. This is known as the legal disposition of the case and you will need it for future visa applications.