

International Students Information Guide

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New Students

Preparing for Arrival

Obtain Your Initial I-20

Before an Undergraduate or Graduate I-20 can be issued, the student must submit an Application for Admission to the Office of Admissions, be granted admission by the Office of Admissions, produce the required financial documentation, and pay the admission deposit.

After a student has been admitted and paid the admissions deposit, the Office of Admissions will have a DSO initiate an I-20 request. Once the Office of Admissions has initiated the I-20 request, the student will receive an email requesting their personal information, a copy of their passport, confirm biographical information, and financial documents.

I-20s for newly admitted Webber students will be mailed out by the Office of Admissions via UPS. Please contact the Office of Admissions to inquire about receiving your initial I-20.

Office of Admissions: admissions@webber.edu

FINANCIAL DOCUMENT REQUIREMENTS

STUDENTS MUST SHOW THEY HAVE LIQUID FUNDS WHICH WILL SUPPORT THEM FOR AT LEAST THE FIRST ACADEMIC YEAR. BANK ACCOUNTS NOT IN THE STUDENTS' NAME MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A SPONSOR LETTER. STUDENTS WHO SUBMIT THEIR SPONSOR'S FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS WITHOUT A SPONSOR LETTER WILL HAVE THE I-20 REQUEST DENIED AND THE I-20 PROCESS WILL BE DELAYED.

You should contact the Office of Admissions directly to inquire about what materials have been received and what materials are missing to complete your file. The required documents are shown below:

- Financial documents must be less than 6 months old at the time the I-20 is issued. Statements and Letters issued more than 6 months from the date of issuance will be denied.
- Written in English or accompanied by official notarized translation.
- Required elements of bank letters or bank statements (shown on chart below).
- Type of acceptable bank accounts: All funds must be liquid (shown on chart below).

- Sponsor Letter: when funds from someone other than the individual are included.
- When submitting multiple accounts a cover letter should be included. An example of the cover letter can be obtained from the Office of Admissions.

Chart of Required Elements of Bank Letters or Bank Statements.

A) Bank Letters	B) Bank Statements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of bank account holder • Date of issuance • Type of account(s), list below • Total available balance(s) held by the account holder • Official bank stationary (letterhead) and include the bank's name, address logo, or a heading • Bank official's signature or stamp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We only require statement summaries, we DO NOT need to see transaction histories • Name of bank account holder • Date of issuance • Type of account(s), list below • Total available balance(s) held by the account holder • On-line account print outs may be accepted pending advisor review • Official bank name and address by means of a logo or a heading

Chart of Acceptable Accounts

ACCEPTABLE Accounts	NOT ACCEPTABLE Accounts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking • Current • Savings • Money market • Provident Accounts – MUST <i>clearly state the amount that can be withdrawn before the start of classes.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retirement funds • Real estate • Trust fund accounts • Demat accounts • Salary statements • Credit card statements • Stock market funds

<p><i>Just showing a total available balance is not sufficient.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixed Deposit/Fixed Term/Time Deposits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – MUST <i>mature by the start of the semester. Documents will be denied if the accounts are not liquid before the start of the semester.</i> • Scholarship Award Letters – MUST <i>clearly state what the scholarship includes, such as tuition, fees, and books. If a stipend is included, it must state the dollar amount per month.</i> • Education Loans – MUST <i>show student is approved of pre-approved for the loan.</i> • Funds do not need to be frozen. “Liquid” funds means the money can be readily converted into cash if needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounts with maturity dates too far in the future will be denied.
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SEVIS and the SEVIS Fee

The Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) is a federal U.S. government database that maintains and manages data about international students and exchange visitors during their stay in the U.S. SEVIS is the system in which Webber International University issues the I-20 immigration document and updates and makes changes to international student information.

For more information about SEVIS, please see the [U.S. Immigrant and Customs Enforcement website: https://www.ice.gov/sevis](https://www.ice.gov/sevis)

What is the SEVIS I-901 fee?

From the time that it was created, the maintenance of SEVIS was required to be financed by a fee paid by all international visitors to the U.S. Therefore, all international students must pay the SEVIS I-901 fee before applying for a visa or entering the U.S. if no U.S. visa is required. For information on the fee and updated amounts, please see ICE’s website: <https://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901>

When must the fee be paid?

If an F-1 visa is required: The fee must be paid and processed at least three business days before going to the consulate to get a visa.

If a visa is NOT required because the individual is a national of Canada or Bermuda:
The fee must be paid before entering the U.S.

How is the fee paid?

For information on how to pay the fee, please see ICE's website:
<https://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901>

I am currently in the U.S. Am I required to pay the fee?

If you maintain your F status and stay within the U.S., you are not required to pay the fee. F visa holders would be required to pay the SEVIS fee in the following situations:

- After leaving the U.S. for more than 5 months (F-1).
- If applying for reinstatement after being out-of-status for more than 5 months (F-1).
- If entering the U.S. with a new I-20 (with a new SEVIS number) because of a break in status.

What if I change to F-1 status in the U.S.?

You must pay the fee before submitting the I-539 application. You should include the receipt with the change of status application.

What advice can be offered for those who must pay the SEVIS fee?

- The Webber International University campus school code is MIA214F00236000 : you will need this number to pay the fee.
- Pay the fee on-line if possible, and print out the receipt. You will be required to present this receipt at your visa appointment in order to receive your visa.
- Take a paper receipt of the fee to the consulate and port-of-entry.
- Pay the fee as soon as possible.

SEVIS Help Desk

If you have a problem paying the SEVIS fee, you are able to e-mail the Student and Exchange Visitor Program to resolve the issue at fmjfee.SEVIS@dhs.gov.

DO NOT apply for an F-1 visa if you are subject to the SEVIS fee and you have not paid the fee.

Apply for Visa

The U.S. State Department's website has detailed information explaining the requirements for applying for an F-1 visa. You are eligible to apply for a visa up to 120 days before the Program Start Date listed on your I-20. Please note, wait times for visa appointments differ, so please plan accordingly based on the embassy or consulate

where you will apply. You can find average visa wait times at the State Department's website.

Note: You should not make your appointment with the U.S. embassy or consulate until after you have received your I-20 from Webber International University.

Preparing for Your Appointment

You will be required to complete the following steps before your visa appointment:

1. Pay the I-901 "SEVIS Fee." The easiest way to do this is through www.fmjfee.com, but you can do so by mail as well. To pay the I-901 fee, you will need your SEVIS Identification number (N000_ _ _ _ _ _ _) found at the top, right corner of your I-20. Make sure to bring your payment receipt to your visa application appointment.
2. Complete the online Visa application (DS-160).
3. Pay the Visa Application Processing Fee. Students from certain countries will also have to pay a Visa Reciprocity Fee.

During Your Appointment

You will be required to bring the following items to the Embassy or Consulate for your appointment:

- I-20 from Webber International University
- Passport (valid at least 6 months beyond your Program Start Date)
- I-901 Fee payment receipt
- Visa Application Fee
- DS-160 confirmation receipt
- Admission letter from Webber International University
- Verification of financial resources (this should be the same documentation that you sent to Webber International University)
- Proof of English proficiency (TOEFL, TOEIC, IELTS score, for example)

During the appointment, you should be prepared to discuss your purpose of being in the U.S. Simply handing a Consular Officer your documents will not suffice; you should be able to explain your goals and objectives of your time in the U.S.

After Your Appointment

Once your visa is issued, check to make sure that all of the information is correct. If the spelling of your name, your date of birth, or country of citizenship differs from your passport, you could experience delays entering the United States. Contact the embassy or consulate if you notice any errors on your visa.

Students may use the U.S. Department of State website to check their U.S. visa application status using an 'Immigrant Visa Case Number.'

Administrative Processing

Administrative processing may be required of an applicant for a variety of reasons: a "hit" during a name check; being a national of certain countries; studying/researching a field on the Technology Alert List (TAL); or based on the "intuition" of the interviewing consular.

Webber International University and the Office of Admissions are not able to assist with any process expeditions. Administrative processing can take anywhere from 2 weeks to several months.

Name check: every applicant for a visa must undergo a name check through the Consolidated Consular Database (CCD). If the applicant's name matches a name in the database noted as a "problem," administrative processing may be required.

Nationality: being a national of particular countries may also require administrative processing. National may mean the applicant has dual citizenship, was once a citizen of certain countries, or was born in one of those countries. The only way to avoid this is if proof of renunciation of a particular citizenship is in writing.

Technology Alert List (TAL): many of the fields of study listed on the TAL are broadly stated, which results in a number of administrative processing cases. Detailed and concise explanations of the specific research that the applicant will engage in may decrease the need for administrative processing, if the research is clearly not of strategic importance.

Institution: consular officers are asked to use their own impressions to request administrative processing if they are at all unsure of whether it is necessary or not.

Travel to the U.S.

You may not enter the U.S. earlier than 30 days before the program start date on the I-20 form. You should make your travel arrangements with this date in mind.

Canadian citizens do not need a visa, but simply present the I-20, SEVIS fee receipt, financial documentation, and proof of admission to Webber to the immigration officer at the U.S. port of entry. A passport may be required depending on your method of travel. For more information, visit the [U.S. Department of State's travel pages](https://www.state.gov/travelers/): <https://www.state.gov/travelers/>

Your I-20 does not require a travel signature for your initial entry into the U.S. However, you need a travel signature for subsequent trips. A DSO cannot sign your document for travel and reentry to the U.S. until you have registered full-time for your first semester. Do not plan to travel outside the U.S. after your first entry unless you will be able to register first and obtain a travel signature.

SEVIS Transfer Students

If you are changing schools within the U.S. and transferring your SEVIS record to Webber, there are visa and travel policies unique to your situation.

- You can travel with your current F-1 visa and Webber 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.
- It is recommended that transfer students wait to receive a Webber "transfer complete" I-20 before traveling outside the U.S. as the "transfer complete" I-20 is issued with a travel signature from a DSO.

Late Arrival for New Students

A DSO, nor any other school official, cannot give students "permission" to arrive late or write a letter (or update the SEVIS record) indicating a later program start date or late arrival date. Although the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Inspector at the US airport might permit you to enter if you arrive a week past your Program Start Date, we strongly recommend that you do everything to arrive on time. If your visa is not approved on time or you will arrive to Webber after the Program Start Date, you must defer your admission to a future semester.

If you think you will be arriving late, on or after the first day of classes, please know this may jeopardize your F-1 status. Please contact International Student Services ISS@webber.edu for guidance.

Students who arrive late are required to maintain full-time enrollment throughout the semester. Please note, no reduced course loads will be approved for students who are not able to enroll in the right classes or for academic difficulties. New students should be prepared to attend classes while settling in since they missed the required orientation for students.

Post Arrival Information

Immigration Documentation Verification

All new students are required to submit immigration documentation in order to verify that the student is eligible to start their academic program at Webber. You must show passport within 15 days of arrival to the U.S. to a DSO for verification.

U.S. Contact Information

The U.S. Government requires by law all internationals on F-1 visas to keep the following contact information on file with the government and report changes within 10 days.

U.S. Address

Update your local address, phone number, and alternate email address by contacting a DSO through the Webber International Student Services email address:

ISS@webber.edu

If you live in one of the residence halls, please confirm your room assignment with a DSO via email. You must do this for any room changes that you make, even if you remain in the same residence hall.

U.S. Phone Number

If you have a U.S. phone number, please provide your number to a DSO. If you do not have a U.S. phone number, you must provide your foreign phone number.

International Student Meeting and Orientation

All international students are required to attend the international student meeting at the beginning of each semester. This meeting is to help you navigate visa and immigration issues and help you maintain good F-1 visa status. The international student meeting dates and times will be emailed to the student email address issued by Webber.

The Office of Student Life's orientation schedule for the whole student body is separate from the international student meeting. You must attend the orientation and the international student meeting. The Office of Student Life will provide you with advice on housing, transportation to campus, campus life, student activities, and campus resources. Plan to attend both!

Important Information

Registration and Tuition, Fees, & Other Charges

Students are hereby officially notified that the registration and enrollment process is not complete until all tuition, fees and other charges are paid in full. Failure to pay could result in a loss of registration and jeopardize your F-1 visa status for failure to enroll.

Tuition and fees are payable in full to the Business Office before the start of each semester. Payments will only be accepted in US dollars. Payments of tuition and fees may be made by cash, wires, money order, or credit card including Master Card, Visa, American Express and Discover.

Wire instructions can be obtained from the Business Office businessoffice@webber.edu. The wire confirmation is required to be presented for proof of funds in order for the student to be cleared and the registration and enrollment process to be completed.

Payment plans are NOT available to international students. All tuition and fees are payable prior to the beginning of each semester.

If a student is travelling to the United States and will arrive outside of our business operating hours, they MUST get clearance PRIOR to arrival in order to be permitted to move into the dormitory. No dormitory keys will be issued to any student who has not paid in full. Alternate arrangements will need to be sorted out by the student until their account is paid in full.

Attendance Requirements

As an F-1 visa student, you are required to attend your classes and make good progress towards your academic program of study.

Travel

The I-20 is your "initial entry" document; this means that you can enter the U.S. no earlier than 30 days before the start date printed on the I-20. You must arrive to school on or before the program start date. The program start date will change from semester to semester. You may not arrive to campus at your leisure. Make your travel plans accordingly.

Returning to Webber

If you are a student returning to Webber International University after an absence to complete the degree program in which you were last enrolled, you must follow certain procedures. When considering a return to Webber, please allow enough time to receive a new I-20 and apply for a new visa, if required.

Travel

The new I-20 will be an "initial entry" document; this means that you can enter the U.S. no earlier than 30 days before the start date printed on the I-20. Make your travel plans accordingly.

Eligibility for Benefits

You will regain eligibility for benefits such as Optional Practical Training (OPT) and Curricular Practical Training (CPT) only after completing two full-time semesters after your return with the new SEVIS record.

Full-Time Registration

You must be registered full-time in your first semester back. For undergraduates, "full-time" is defined as 12 credit hours. For graduates, "full-time" is defined as 6 credit hours.

Request for I-20

A new I-20 request will only be made after you have been granted readmission into your academic program, submitted the required financial documents, and paid the admission deposit. At that time, a DSO will initiate the new initial I-20 request.

You must pay the I-901 SEVIS fee after you receive your new I-20. This is required when a new SEVIS record is created. Carry the receipt to your visa interview, if applicable, and when you travel to the U.S.

I-20s for readmitted Webber students will be mailed out by the Office of Admissions via UPS. Please contact the **Office of Admissions** to inquire about receiving your initial I-20.

Visas

You may need to apply for a new F-1 visa depending on the length of time you have been out of the U.S. Your F-1 visa is considered invalid if you have been out of the U.S. for more than five months even if it has not expired. Please visit the U.S. Department of State for information on obtaining a new F-1 visa.

Please print fill in the Initial I-20 Request Form below

Rules & Regulations

It is your responsibility to understand and comply with the terms of your immigration status during your stay in the United States. A violation of the immigration regulations could jeopardize your F-1 status and legal stay in the U.S. The Designated School Officials (DSO) are here to help assist you in the navigation of the F-1 visa immigration regulations and understanding how they intersect with university policies. Below are links to the government websites with the most current F-1 visa immigration regulations.

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/maintaining-your-status>

United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)

<https://www.ice.gov/sevis/schools/reg>

United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)

<https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/students-and-employment>

United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP)

<https://www.cbp.gov/>

Social Security Administration (SSA)

<https://www.ssa.gov/>

Immigration Information

F-1 Status

F-1 status is your nonresident category officially granted by an immigration official. To be in F-1 status means that you are legally in the U.S. and have benefits and restrictions specified in the immigration regulations for the F-1 visa category.

Prospective and current F students can use information on the United States Department of Homeland Security's Study in the States webpage to learn about the process and rules for studying in the United States as an international student.

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students>

Duration of Status

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 towards your degree. There is also an optional period of practical training following completion of studies, plus a 60-day "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.

Document Requirements

Federal law required that you carry "registration" documents at all times, including your I-20 and passport with F-1 admission stamp. Below is an overview of the documents related to your F-1 status. For day-to-day purposes, we suggest that these documents be kept in a secure location and you carry photocopies. However, if you are traveling outside the local area you should carry the original documents with you. If you are traveling by air, train, bus, or ship, you may be required to produce these documents before boarding. Keep photocopies of all your documents in a separate location in the event your documents are lost or stolen.

Passport

Your passport must be valid at all times. Report a lost or stolen passport to the police because your government may require a police report before issuing a new passport. To renew or replace your passport, please contact your country's consulate in the U.S.

<http://www.state.gov/s/cpr/rls/fco/>

Visa

The visa is the stamp that the U.S. consular officer placed on a page in your passport. The visa permitted you to apply for admission into the U.S. as an F-1 student, and need not remain valid while you are in the U.S. If your visa expires while you are in the U.S., the next time you travel abroad you must obtain a new F-1 visa before returning to the U.S.

http://www.travel.state.gov/visa/temp/info/info_1298.html

I-20 Certificate of Eligibility

Issued by Webber, this document 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. The I-20 indicates the institution in which you are permitted to study, your program of study, and the dates of eligibility. The I-20 must remain valid at all times. Allowing the I-20 to expire before you complete your academic program is a violation of F-1 status.

The I-20 is a printout from your SEVIS (Student Exchange Visitor Information System) record. SEVIS is an internet-based database that allows schools and federal immigration agencies to exchange data on the student's academic career in the U.S. Each student has a unique SEVIS ID number, which is printed on your I-20 in the top right corner.

International students must be aware of the expiration date on their I-20. If students cannot complete their degree by the expiration date on their I-20, students must request a program extension before the expiration date on the I-20. Students who do not file a program extension in a timely manner will be considered out of status.

I-94 Arrival & Departure Record

When you enter the U.S., you are issued an admission stamp in your passport. In summer of 2013, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) transitioned to electronic arrival/departure records for air and seaports of entry. For most travelers arriving by air or sea, a paper I-94 card will not be issued. Instead, the CBP official will issue an admission stamp in the passport. Travelers at land borders will continue to receive paper I-94 cards.

You might need a printout of your electronic I-94 information to apply for various benefits. You can obtain a printout of your I-94 record.

<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home>

Maintaining Visa Status

While studying in the United States, it is important to maintain good F-1 visa student status. Your status relates to the purpose, or reason for why you want to come to the United States. The U.S. Department of State issues you your visa based on your intended purpose.

If the Department of State issues you an F-1 student visa, this means that you are coming to the United States to study. You should not take any action that detracts from that purpose. Maintaining your status means:

- Fulfilling the purpose for why the Department of State issued you your visa.
- Following the regulations associated with that purpose.

An F-1 student's primary purpose for coming to the United States is to enroll in a traditional academic program.

It is your responsibility to understand and comply with the terms of your immigration status during your stay in the United States. This includes any updates to the rules and regulations while you are currently studying in the U.S.

Department of Homeland Security's Study in the States Website:

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students>

Full Course of Study

International students must be registered for a full course of study in classes that meet their degree requirements during fall and spring semesters:

- Undergraduate students – 12 credit hours
- Master's graduate students – 6 credit hours

International students are limited in the amount of online courses they are able to enroll in and maintain good F-1 status. Only 3 credit hours or one online course per semester is applicable to the full-time enrollment total. Audit courses are not applicable to the full-time enrollment total.

International students are not required to enroll in courses during summer terms and this rule does not apply to summer terms.

Change of Local Address

Immigration regulations require all international students to report any change of address to be reported to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) within 10 days of moving. Update your local address by emailing the Webber International Student Services and a DSO will update your SEVIS record. This applies to students while they are actively on OPT in the U.S.

Please note that your local address must be your physical address. P.O. Boxes are not an acceptable form of address.

Grace Periods

F-1 students who complete an academic program or OPT have a [60-day grace period](#) F-1 students who have received prior authorization to withdraw from classes have 15 days to depart the US after the withdrawal date. Students who withdraw from classes without prior authorization are not eligible for a grace period.

Reinstatement of F-1 Status

Students who fail to maintain their F-1 status are considered out of status. If they wish to continue their education at Webber as an F-1 student, they must correct their status. They can either travel and re-enter the U.S. with an initial attendance I-20 or if eligible can apply for a **reinstatement of their F-1 status** via mail. Email a DSO to schedule an appointment with an advisor immediately to discuss these options.

Late Arrival for Returning Students

International Students are expected to be physically present in the US by the first day of classes for each semester. If travel or visa application delays will result in a late return to Webber, you must notify International Student Services ISS@webber.edu and obtain approval from the Academic Affairs Office.

Late arrival is defined as arriving after the first day of class but prior to the drop/add period ending (first five business days of class). If the Academic Affairs Office approves you to arrive "late" (past the program start date but prior to drop/add ending), you will need to request a travel letter stating this approval by the Academic Affairs Office. The travel letter should include how late the Academic Affairs Office is willing to let you start the semester, verify that you are pre-registered for full-time enrollment for the current semester, and that you will be able to catch up with your classes. A copy of this travel letter must be emailed to International Student Services.

The travel letter is designed to be helpful when entering the U.S. after classes have started, but your admission into the U.S. is not guaranteed. Admission to the U.S. will be determined by the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Inspector at the US point-of-entry. We strongly recommend that you do everything to arrive on time. Please remember that academic policies and F-1 requirements can intersect, but the F-1 visa regulations are your governing authority and will supersede academic policy.

Students arriving late should keep in mind that different courses have different requirements for absences, assignments, or group work. A student may be dropped from a class if the student has too many absences or it is deemed that the student will not be able to keep up with the course work.

You **MUST** check in with a DSO upon arrival to Webber. You will need to bring a printout of your I-94 record for your file.

Students who arrive late are required to maintain full-time enrollment throughout the semester. Please note, no reduced course loads will be approved for students who are not able to enroll in the right classes or for academic difficulties.

Academic Progress

Making academic progress is very important for all students, especially international students who come to U.S. on an F-1 student visa. To maintain an F-1 immigration status, the regulations require students to make academic progress towards a degree and towards graduation. An international student that fails to progress academically may have difficulties renewing their visa, transferring, or completing their program by the end date on their I-20.

If you are an international student on academic warning, probation, or have been dismissed, please see below for how the academic standing will affect your F-1 immigration status.

Academic Standing Terms and Explanations

The following terms and information relate to undergraduate students. Graduate students need to maintain a GPA of 3.00. Please see the University Catalog for the full Academic Policies and Procedures.

Good Academic Standing

Students must pass 24 credit hours in two semesters to meet the requirements for full-time student classification. Students in good standing are those whose cumulative grade point average is at the required level for the student's class standing. A student is considered doing satisfactory work when a GPA of 2.00 or better is maintained and substantial progress is made toward completion of graduation requirements.

Academic Warning

Students whose semester (term) grade point average falls below 2.00 receive an academic warning. Student grade sheets and transcripts reflect the warning status. International students may be required to meet with a DSO to discuss the negative effect this may have on the student's F-1 immigration status.

Academic Probation

The student will be placed on automatic academic probation at the end of any semester when the student's cumulative grade point average (on all hours attempted at Webber International University) falls below the following minimum standards:

1. 1.59 for those students having attempted up to 12 credit hours
2. 1.85 for those students having attempted 13 – 24 credit hours
3. 1.93 for those students having attempted 25 – 36 credit hours
4. 1.97 for those students having attempted 37 – 48 credit hours
5. 2.00 for those students having attempted 49 – 60 credit hours

Student grade sheets and transcripts state a student is on probation and a letter from the Chief Academic Officer is sent to the student detailing academic restrictions.

International students are required to meet with a DSO to discuss the negative effect this may have on a student's F-1 immigration status. If an international student is on academic probation or suspension, they are no longer eligible to extend the program end date on their I-20.

If additional time is needed to complete the program, the student will be required to apply for immigration reinstatement (the original immigration record will not be extended and will be terminated) or exit the United States and reapply for a new I-20 and visa to resume studies.

To complete by the program end date, a student should consider enrolling in more than the minimum number of credits to be considered full time. A student may also think about taking additional classes during the summer term.

Academic Dismissal

Students on probation who fail to meet the probation requirements will be academically dismissed by the Academic Standing Committee for unsatisfactory progress toward the attainment of their degree.

Any student earning less than a 1.00 GPA based on hours attempted in any semester is subject to academic dismissal.

International students which are academically dismissed will need to do one of the following within one week of grades coming out (winter break or summer break):

- Students may apply for a "Reinstatement."
- Students may transfer to a different school. (The student must first get admitted to a different school or program and show International Student Services the acceptance letter and complete a visa transfer/clearance form from the school you wish to transfer your SEVIS record. The SEVIS record will remain active as long as the transfer is done in a timely manner.)
- Students may withdraw from Webber International University and exit the U.S. within 14 days. The student's immigration record will be terminated.
- Students who take no action will have their SEVIS record terminated and will be out of immigration status. Students who remain in the U.S. will be here illegally.

Reinstatement for Dismissed Students

Students who are academically dismissed who can provide evidence of academic rehabilitation (i.e., two courses passed at another college) may apply for reinstatement at Webber International University six months after their dismissal. You can petition for reinstatement through the Academic Affairs Office.

Completion of Academic Program

After successfully completing an academic program, F-1 students are given a grace period allowing them to remain in the U.S. for a specified time after program of study, OPT or Academic Training. **Travel and re-entry to the U.S. as an F-1 student during the grace period is not possible.** Please review the following guidelines regarding the grace period pertinent to F-1 student status:

F-1 students have a 60-day grace period in which they are permitted to do one of the following:

1. Begin a new program of study at WIU: Students must apply to the new program, be admitted and be issued a new I-20 from the [Graduate Admissions Department](#) before the end of the grace period. Proof of funding is required to issue the new I-20 with the program level change. Please [contact the Graduate Admissions Department](#) with any questions regarding the financial documents necessary for I-20 issuance. Once the student submits the required financial documentation for the program level change, the program level will be updated in SEVIS by a DSO and a new I-20 will be issued.
2. Apply for [Optional Practical Training \(OPT\)](#)
3. Transfer to another institution: Student must apply to another institution, be admitted, and have the WIU SEVIS record transferred out to the new institution before the end of the 60 day grace period. In addition, the start date at the transfer-in school must be within five months of the last date of enrollment at WIU or within five months from the last date of employment on OPT. To request a transfer of the SEVIS record, student will need to submit the [SEVIS Transfer Out Request Form](#) to a DSO.
4. Apply for a change of status: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) must receive the application to change the immigration status before the end of the grace period.
5. Depart the U.S. before the end of the grace period.

F-2 Dependents

The immigration status of an F-2 is dependent upon the F-1 student and they cannot remain in the U.S. under the F-2 status after the F-1 student has departed the U.S. during the grace period.

Travel & Visas

Reentry Into the United States

F-1 students will need their I-20 with a valid travel signature in order reenter the United States. I-20s were redesigned in 2015, and the new version was required by July 1, 2016. Please be sure that you have the new I-20 version prior to travel.

Your I-20 must be signed by a DSO before you leave the U.S. All students are required to obtain a travel signature that allows you to return to the U.S. This signature is valid for one year (12 months) after the signature date and can be used for multiple entries. Students who are on OPT must obtain a travel signature every 6 months.

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. The [Immigration Customs Enforcement](#) website has a list of countries under this agreement. Your passport must remain valid throughout your stay in the U.S.

Valid U.S. Visa

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

Current Class Schedule or Proof of Admission

You can print your current class schedule from your student account or by contacting the Office of the Registrar. For new students, you will need to bring a copy of proof of admission to Webber.

SEVIS I-901 Fee Receipt

If you cannot find your SEVIS fee receipt, visit the [Student and Exchange Visitor Program SEVIS I-901 fee processing website](#) to request a copy of your receipt.

Travel Within the United States

Federal law requires that you and your dependents carry "registration" documentation at all times. This includes a basic identity document such as a passport, plus your current I-20 and I-94 record. We recommend that you keep photocopies of all your documents in a separate location, in the event your documents are lost or stolen.

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.

Travel After Completion of Studies

If you do not apply for OPT, you have a **60-day grace period** after the last day of your final semester. Once you leave the U.S. after completing your studies, you cannot reenter the U.S. with your current I-20. The grace period is for travel within the U.S. and preparation for departure.

Travel and OPT

We strongly discourage you from travelling outside of the United States while your OPT is pending. You are eligible to travel abroad on a temporary basis (less than 5 months) and reenter the U.S to continue employment **AFTER** your OPT has been approved.

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

- I-20 signed for travel by a DSO 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 offers, pay stubs)

Working in the US

Your F-1 student status permits you to work on campus at the university that issued your I-20 while you are enrolled in a full course of study. Your Webber I-20 is your proof of work eligibility for on-campus employment at Webber only. You must maintain F-1 status to be eligible for this employment benefit; **maintaining status** means that you are a full-time registered student (except for approved exceptions) in good academic standing with a valid I-20.

It is your responsibility to research and understand your on-campus work eligibility. It is generally not the job of Webber staff outside of a DSO to thoroughly know the immigration regulations. It is possible you will be offered employment that you are not eligible to accept or for your employment eligibility to expire without the payroll administrator notifying you. Be sure to review all information provided by the DSO and let them know if you have any concerns or questions.

While the USCIS regulations provide a variety of opportunities for F-1 international students to be employed during their time in F-1 student status, working without proper authorization is a serious violation of the F-1 student status. Please consult with a DSO prior to engaging in employment or with any concerns.

On-Campus Employment

Definition of “On-Campus” Employment

On-campus employment includes work done as a teaching or research assistant as well as jobs in the university library, dining facilities, laboratories, fitness facilities, and administrative offices.

Time Limits

You are allowed to work:

- Part-time (20 hours per week or less) during your regular full-time semesters (semester dates are set by the Webber academic calendar and include finals week).
- Part-time (20 hours per week or less) between semesters.

Expiration of On-campus Employment Eligibility

Your on-campus employment eligibility ends:

- When you graduate. It expires the last day of your final semester (per Webber calendar), even if your I-20 expiration date is in the future.
- If you transfer to another university; your work authorization expires on the day of your SEVIS record release date.
- If you violate your F-1 status.

Work Study

College Work-Study (Federally Funded)

International students are not eligible for this type of work-study position on campus, as these positions are funded only for US citizens and permanent residents by the US government.

Elison Work-Study (Funded by School)

International students are eligible for this type of work-study position on campus, as these positions are funded by the University.

Finding a Campus Job

On-campus jobs can be obtained in various departments. You may speak to the Department Head of the department you desire to work to see if there are any positions currently available.

Off-Campus Employment which may Qualify as On-Campus Employment

Immigration regulations allow international students to work at an off-campus location provided the employer is educationally affiliated with Webber. Presently, only the tutoring positions through the Career Services Department qualifies for on-campus employment.

For clarification on whether an employment at off-campus location qualifies as on-campus employment, please make an appointment to meet with a DSO

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

What is CPT?

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is temporary authorization for practical training directly related to your major field of study. Your major field of study is listed on your I-20.

“Practical training” can include employment, internship experience (paid or unpaid), cooperative (co-op) education experience, practicum participation, etc. CPT is authorized by the DSO in accordance with the F-1 regulations. You can apply for CPT during the regular academic year (you must remain registered full-time).

CPT may be part-time (20 hours per week or less) or full-time (more than 20 hours per week). If you accumulate 12 months of full-time CPT authorization, you lose your eligibility for Optional Practical Training (OPT), another type of employment authorization for F-1 students. Part-time CPT and fewer than 12 months of full-time CPT authorization does not affect your OPT eligibility.

Eligibility

You may be eligible for CPT if you:

- Are currently in valid F-1 status.
- Have been enrolled at a college or university in the U.S. on a full-time basis for at least one full academic year. (“One academic year” at Webber is defined as two full-time semesters per the academic calendar, including final exams week).
- The program requirement must be for all students in the program and should be listed on the program’s website in the curriculum description.
- Are in a major (Pre-major students, who are not yet admitted into a major, are not eligible for CPT. CPT cannot be authorized based on a minor or certificate program).
- Will earn your degree from Webber (visiting exchange students are not eligible for CPT).

Credit Requirement

You may request authorization for CPT to participate in training that is integral to your established curriculum. Training may be required or optional for your degree. Required training must be clearly identified and described in the course catalog or similar publication.

If the training is not required by your major degree program, the DSO cannot issue a CPT endorsement. You are required to receive academic credit from an internship, cooperative education program, practicum, or similar course through your academic department. Your academic department might not require you to earn credit for an optional training/work experience, but the DSO requires academic credit be earned in order to authorize CPT. The credit must be earned in the same semester for which CPT is authorized, though exceptions may be granted for students pursuing CPT during their vacation period. You must earn at least one CPT-related credit for each semester of authorization granted. Graduate students may not use thesis or dissertation credit to fulfill the credit requirement.

Requesting CPT Authorization

Before an international student can begin an internship, also known as CPT, work authorization must be approved by a DSO.

In order to gain work authorization, a student must:

- Meet all requirements set forth by the internship coordinator
- Register for the internship course (must be a requirement of the student's major)
- Pay for the internship course
- Gather all required documentation (see below)
- Make an appointment with a DSO
- Receive a new I-20 with CPT endorsement

Documents Required:

- Completed Request for CPT (Internship) Authorization Application
- I-20
- Passport
- I-94
- Job Offer Letter on company letterhead from the potential employer containing the following information:
 - Specific start and end dates of the internship/CPT (must be within the range of the semester in which you are enrolled)
 - Physical address of employment location

- Supervisor's Name
- Description of the position (must be within the scope of your major)
- State whether the position is part-time or full-time

If you qualify for CPT, the DSO will issue you a new Form I-20 endorsed on page 2 with details of your CPT employment. Do not begin working until you receive your I-20 endorsed for CPT. Be careful to comply with the restrictions on your employment as stipulated in the endorsement. Your endorsed I-20, together with your passport and I-94 card, is evidence of your eligibility to work and may be used to complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 that all U.S. employers are required to complete.

Please allow one week for processing.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the difference between Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and Optional Practical Training (OPT)?

CPT is employment that is an integral part of your major curriculum and allows you to participate in an internship, practicum or cooperative education program. CPT is employer specific and must be done before you graduate. OPT is optional for any student who meets the eligibility requirements and you do not need to earn credit. OPT is not employer specific and may be done before or after you graduate.

Do I have to be registered while on CPT?

You must maintain F-1 student status, which generally requires full-time registration. Most students are required to register as full-time students while on CPT.

Does CPT usage affect OPT eligibility?

You may use as much CPT as is required for your degree program. However, if you use a total of 12 months or more of full-time CPT, you are not eligible for OPT. Part-time CPT does not affect OPT in any way.

Do I need to have a job to apply for CPT?

You must have an offer of employment to apply for CPT since the authorization is for a specific employer.

Can I change the number of hours I work?

You can change within the limits of part-time or full-time. For example, you may change from 10 hours per week to 15 hours per week without a new authorization.

However, if you change from part-time to full-time (or vice versa) you must request a new authorization.

Can I change employers?

Since CPT is employer specific you must apply for a new CPT authorization before you work for the new employer.

Can I extend my CPT?

You are authorized for specific dates of employment on your I-20. You may not begin before the start date or continue after the end date. You must apply for an extension in sufficient time to allow the DSO to issue a new CPT authorization before you can continue beyond the end date of your current CPT.

Do I need a Social Security number?

Yes, if your CPT is paid employment. You will need a social security number in order to receive payment from your employer. You will apply directly at the Social Security Administration Office for a social security number if you do not already have one.

Will I be required to pay Social Security and other taxes?

In general, as an F-1 student you will be exempt from Social Security (FICA) taxes for your first five years in the U.S. as long as you continue to declare nonresident status for tax purposes.

Unless you qualify under a tax treaty between the U.S. and your home government, your earnings as an F-1 student will be subject to applicable federal, state and local taxes, and employers are required to withhold those taxes from your paychecks. For more information on taxes, consult the Internal Revenue Service.

Will I receive an Employment Authorization Document (EAD)?

No. The CPT authorization on page 2 of your I-20 is your proof of employment eligibility and together with your I-94 card may be used to complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 required by your employer.

Request for CPT (Internship) Authorization Form Below.



CPT (Internship) Authorization

You must submit this completed form along with your required documentation at your CPT/Internship appointment with the Designated School Official (DSO).

You may not begin working in any capacity until you have been approved for CPT and received your I-20 endorsement. You will be in violation of your F-1 status without the proper endorsement.

SECTION I—TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT (please PRINT legibly all information requested):

TODAY'S DATE: _____

LAST/FAMILY NAME: _____ FIRST NAME: _____

MAJOR: _____ DEGREE OBJECTIVE: BACHELORS
 MASTERS

SECTION II—TO BE COMPLETED BY INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR:

Is the internship required for the student's major? YES NO

Has the internship been approved? YES NO

INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR SIGNATURE DATE

SECTION III—TO BE COMPLETED BY REGISTRAR'S OFFICE:

Is the student registered for an internship class? YES NO

State the term the student has registered for the internship class? FALL SPRING SUMMER

REGISTRAR'S OFFICE SIGNATURE DATE

SECTION IV—TO BE COMPLETED BY BUSINESS OFFICE:

Has the student paid for the internship class? YES NO

BUSINESS OFFICE SIGNATURE DATE

SECTION V—DSO APPROVAL

CPT REQUEST STATUS:

- APPROVED
- DENIED

IF APPROVED:
DATE SEVIS RECORD
UPDATED AND NEW I-20
ISSUED:

DSO SIGNATURE: _____

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

What is OPT?

Optional Practical Training (OPT) provides F-1 students with an opportunity for hands-on work experience (work authorization) related to the academic field of study.

Eligibility

You are eligible to apply if you meet the following criteria:

- You are currently in F-1 status.
- You have been enrolled in a full course of study for one academic year (two semesters, including final exams weeks) or will complete one academic year by the date the OPT approval begins.
- You have not exceeded 12 months of full-time Curricular Practical Training (CPT) authorization. (Part-time CPT does not affect OPT eligibility.)
- You do not need a job offer first; you can apply for OPT without a job offer.

You are eligible for 12 months of full-time OPT per academic level. For example, you may apply for 12 months of OPT after completing a bachelor's degree and then another 12 months after completing a master's degree. You may apply for OPT authorization during your academic program, after your program completion, or a combination of both. You do not need to have a job offer before applying for the first 12 months of OPT.

Post-Completion OPT

OPT authorization that begins after completion of your academic program is called "post-completion" OPT. This is the most common type of OPT. Post-completion OPT is full-time, and it can begin:

- after you complete your degree program
- after you complete all course requirements for your degree

You must apply for OPT based on your last registered semester.

Pre-Completion OPT

OPT used while you are still pursuing a course of study is called "pre-completion" OPT. Pre-completion OPT is rather uncommon. Usually current students are eligible for alternate employment authorization, such as Curricular Practical Training (CPT).

Because pre-completion OPT is deducted from the 12 months of OPT eligibility, most students prefer to save OPT for after program completion. You may start the OPT application process up to 120 days before your requested employment start date. Pre-completion OPT can be approved for different rates:

- Full-time (more than 20 hours per week) or part-time (20 hours per week or less) during your annual vacation period and between semester breaks
- Part-time (20 hours per week or less) while enrolled in a full course of study

While approved for OPT, you are still in F-1 status and must report address changes and employment information to your DSO.

OPT Application Process

In order to apply for OPT, you must make an appointment with a DSO. This appointment will take approximately 30-45 minutes. You may apply for OPT no earlier than 90 days prior to graduation and no later than 60 days post-graduation.

Items Required to Apply for OPT:

- Optional Checklist for Form I-765 (c)(3)(B) Filings <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>
- Degree Completion Form (obtained in the Registrar/Financial Aid Office)
- Two (2) New Passport Photos (can be obtained at Walgreens or CVS)
- USD Cashier's Check/Money Order for I-765 Filing Fee (check I-765 instructions for appropriate filing fee amount)
- Passport
- Visa
- I-765 <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>
- I-20 (most recent)
- I-94 <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/request.html>

Once you have the required items and documents, you will need to schedule an appointment with a DSO.

It is your responsibility to complete the OPT packet and mail the completed OPT packet to USCIS. The DSO is here to provide the I-20 endorsement and help assemble the completed packet. We strongly suggest you take your completed packet directly

to the US Post Office directly after the appointment because the OPT packet must be received by the USCIS Office within 10 days of your I-20 update. If the USCIS does not receive your packet within 10 days of the I-20 update, it will result in being denied OPT.

After You Apply

You have now applied for Optional Practical Training (OPT). You may now begin looking for employment while your application is processing through the USCIS. The processing generally takes 90 days. Please understand that you CANNOT begin working until your OPT request has been approved and you have your Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card in your possession.

Reporting OPT Employment

Once you find an employer, you are required under F-1 visa regulations to provide a DSO at Webber employment details within 10 days.

Required Employment Information:

- Employer Name
- Employer EIN (tax identification number)
- Employer Address
- Your Job Title
- Start Date (not to begin prior to the date shown on your EAD card)
- End Date (not to exceed the date shown on your EAD card)
- Full-time or Part-time
- Supervisor's Name
- Supervisor's Phone Number
- Supervisor's Email
- Brief statement on how this employment directly relates to your major

Once we receive this information, you will receive a new I-20 with updated employment information. Failure to report employment in a timely manner will result in your OPT being cancelled by SEVIS.

Unemployment While on OPT

You are only allowed to be unemployed for 90 total days while on OPT. If you do not report employment for 90+ days, your OPT will be cancelled and your I-20 terminated by SEVIS. It is imperative that you report employment as soon as you secure a job.

Maintaining Status While on OPT

You are required to remain in good F-1 status while on OPT. You must maintain an up-to-date physical address in SEVIS. Any physical address changes you make must be reported to a DSO at Webber within 10 days. Failure to report your physical address in a timely manner will result in you being in violation of your F-1 status and could result in the termination of your I-20.

Communications While on OPT

It is vital that you keep in contact and ensure that your information is up-to-date at all times in SEVIS. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to Webber International Student Services.

Any email sent to ISS@webber.edu will reach all school DSOs or you may email a DSO directly to their work address.

Information for students needing to change their address while waiting on OPT approval:

Address Changes while OPT Pending

If you move while OPT is pending, please provide USCIS with an updated address. You will also need to provide this address to a DSO to update your SEVIS record. For more information about address changes, please visit the USCIS website at www.uscis.gov/ar-11, and click on "Change Your Address Online."

Degree or Last Semester Verification Form Below



Degree or Last Semester Verification Form

This form serves as proof of degree completion or pending degree completion required for the OPT application. Please take this form to the Registrar's Office for completion.

Date: _____

_____ is / is not (please circle)
in his/her last semester of classes that are required for graduation.

The graduation ceremony is held at the end of the spring semester.
_____ did / will (please circle)
complete all graduation requirements at the end of:

_____ (please state exact semester)

_____ (please state exact date)

Registrar's Office Signature

Date

Severe Economic Hardship

F-1 students who have maintained F-1 status for an academic year and who are in good academic standing can apply for “off-campus employment based on economic hardship” if part-time employment through on-campus employment is not available or is otherwise insufficient. Economic hardship refers to the financial problems caused by unforeseen circumstances beyond the student’s control. If the financial problems are great, it may not be possible to solve the problem through part-time employment. Adjudication of the application by USCIS may be within two weeks up to 90 days or more.

If you wish to apply for work permission based on economic hardship, you are required to make a good faith effort in locating employment on-campus before applying for employment based on economic hardship. If you are granted authorization for off-campus employment based on economic hardship, you are limited to work 20 hours per week while school is in session and full time during vacation periods and summers. The work permission may be granted for one year and is renewable.

Qualifications

In order to qualify for economic hardship employment, immigration regulations require that you meet the following conditions:

- You are a full-time student in good standing and have been in valid F-1 status for at least one full academic year.
- You must document that the circumstances which led to your economic situation were unexpected and beyond your control.
- You must be capable of continuing full-time studies and maintaining F-1 status while engaged in economic hardship work permission.

Immigration regulations state that unforeseen circumstances:

“...may include loss of financial aid or on-campus employment without fault on the part of the student, substantial fluctuations in the value of currency or exchange rate, inordinate increases in tuition and/or living costs, unexpected changes in the financial conditions of the student’s source of support, medical bills, or other substantial and unexpected expenses.”

Only unforeseen problems can be the basis for hardship employment since students must first demonstrate that all of the financial resources needed for their program of study are available before they are able to obtain an I-20 and enter the US in F-1 status.

How to Apply

You must apply by first meeting with a DSO by submitting the following:

- Completed Webber International University Severe Economic Hardship Request Form
- Supporting materials documenting the unforeseen nature of the economic hardship
- Supporting materials documenting a good faith effort in locating employment on-campus

If it is determined that Webber will make the recommendation for economic hardship based on the certifications submitted above, your I-20 will be updated with a special endorsement. You will need to make an appointment with a DSO to complete your packet and submit the following:

- [Form I-765](#) (write I(3)(iii) in item 16)
- Filing Fee (amount is found in the instructions to the Form I-765, make your money order payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security)
- Photocopy of Form I-20, with your DSO's recommendation for economic hardship employment
- Two passport style photos
- Photocopy of I-94
- 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

Processing Times

USCIS can easily take up to 90 days or more to process this type of application. Approval is **not** guaranteed, and you may not begin employment unless you have received written approval from USCIS.

Application Mailing Instructions

The USCIS "Dallas Lockbox" filing location is applicable to the following states and territories:

Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, U.S. Virgin Islands, or West Virginia.

Express Mail & Courier Services:

USCIS
ATTN: AOS
2501 S. State Highway 121 Business
Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067

US Postal Service Address:

USCIS
P.O. Box 660867
Dallas, TX 75266

If the state you put on form I-765 in item 3 is not in this list, refer to the mailing instructions in the I-765 Instructions.

Finally, we recommend that you mail your application by express mail such as Federal Express or UPS, or by Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, so you will have a record of its delivery.

Restrictions

If approved, you will receive an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card from the USCIS granting you permission to work off-campus. Typically, permission is granted for up to one year. Note also the following:

- You may work a maximum of 20 hours per week during the school year, full-time (over 20 hours per week) during vacation periods.
- Economic Hardship work permission is not limited to employment in your field of study – you may accept any type of lawful employment once you have received your EAD.
- You may not start employment until you have received an EAD or before the start date indicated on the EAD. You must stop employment by the EAD expiration date or by the date you finish your studies, whichever is earlier. You may, however, apply for a renewal of Economic Hardship work permission if you are still a full-time student and if the conditions underlying the original application remain in place.
- You must remain a full-time student and make full-time progress toward degree completion while on Economic Hardship work permission.
- If you transfer to another institution, your EAD becomes invalid as of the date the transfer.

Volunteering

F-1 students are allowed to do volunteer service for humanitarian purposes. Some examples of acceptable volunteer work would be at a local homeless shelter, charitable food pantry, or American Red Cross. A volunteer arrangement with an F-1 visa student and the employer in a job that would normally be paid, both the F-1 visa student and the employer are taking a big risk. DHS sees "volunteer" activity as work that is "holding" a position for the future and is therefore compensating or "paying" you with the reward of a future job.

The lack of remuneration or any other type of compensation is not the only factor in determining if the work would qualify as volunteering. If the work relates to your studies, it is likely considered training, and requires authorization. Please check with a DSO prior to engaging in any type of volunteer work.

Federal law limits severely the kinds of employment an alien in temporary visa status may undertake in the U.S. People who are unable to accept paid employment often ask whether they are permitted to engage in "volunteer" work and what activities are acceptable. The first assumption people make is that the only issue is money – a volunteer provides a service for free, but an employee gets paid. The answer is more complicated than it seems. Various U.S. government agencies have authority to control the activities of aliens in the U.S. in a number of ways, including the activity of "volunteering."

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has the authority to make determinations regarding the activities of aliens in the U.S. The Department of Labor (DOL) has the authority to make determinations regarding services, compensation, and the nature of work, both for U.S. workers and for alien workers.

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) guides and directs how the DOL and employers must view and treat those who provide labor or services.

From the DOL perspective, both to protect U.S. and foreign workers from abuse and to protect U.S. jobs, the FLSA says that if a person provides a normal service for which a person would normally be employed, the activity is work/employment, and the employer must pay the person.

From the DHS perspective, if the alien is providing a service normally provided by a paid employee, then the activity is work and the alien is receiving the "compensation" of valuable training or experience and/or the compensation of possible future paid employment. It does not matter that no money changed hands at the time the work was being done. Being paid or compensated in the future does not change the fact that one is performing real work in the present.

Applying for a Social Security Card

Social Security numbers generally are assigned to people who are authorized to work in the United States. Social Security numbers are used to report your wages to the government and to determine eligibility for Social Security benefits. Social Security will not assign a number to you just to enroll in a college or school.

If you want to get a job on campus, you should contact your DSO for international students. This official can tell you if you're eligible to work on campus and can give you information about available jobs. Also, your school may approve certain limited off-campus employment, as permitted under Department of Homeland Security (DHS) regulations. If your school has authorized you to work and you meet Social Security's eligibility requirements described in the next section, you can get a Social Security number.

Social Security Administration (SSA) Website: <https://www.ssa.gov/>

International Students and Social Security Numbers: <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10181.pdf>

How to Apply

To apply for a Social Security number at your local Social Security office:

- Complete an application for a Social Security card
- Show us documents proving your work-authorized immigration status
- Age
- Identity

Immigration Status

To prove your immigration status, you must show us a current admission stamp in your unexpired foreign passport and Arrival/Departure Record (Form I-94), if available. If you're an F-1 student, you must also show us your Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status (Form I-20).

Work Eligibility – On Campus

If you're an F-1 student and eligible to work on campus, you must provide a letter from your DSO that identifies you; confirms your current school status; and identifies your employer and the type of work you are, or will be, doing.

Work Eligibility – CPT

If you're an F-1 student authorized to work in curricular practical training (CPT), you must provide us your Form I-20 with the employment page completed and signed by your school's designated official. A letter from Webber is not required for students on OPT.

Work Eligibility – OPT

F-1 students on OPT are able to apply for a social security number (SSN) once they have been approved for OPT. You can apply by taking the following original documents to the nearest Social Security Administration (SSA) Office:

- Passport
- A printout of the I-94 Arrival/Departure record
- OPT I-20
- EAD card

Please note, you must wait until your EAD card start date to apply for the social security number. A letter from Webber is not required for students on OPT.

Cap-Gap Extension

Each year, F-1 students seek to switch nonimmigrant classification from F-1 student status to H-1B temporary employment status after completing a program of study or post-completion optional practical training (OPT). The Cap-Gap allows for some F-1 students to be eligible for an F-1 status extension and authorized period of post-completion OPT.

What is the Cap-Gap?

The cap refers to the limit on the number of individuals who can receive H-1B status every fiscal year. For example, for the period between October 1, 2015 and September 30, 2016, U.S. law limits, or caps, the number of individuals who may receive H-1B status to 65,000. The gap is the period between the end of an individual's F-1 status and the beginning of the individual's H-1B status.

Background

An individual's potential employer files the H-1B petition. Regulations prohibit employers from filing H-1B petitions until six months before the date of actual need for the employee. This means that once U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) reaches the cap of 65,000 individuals in one fiscal year, employers must wait until April 1, which is six months before the start of the next fiscal year, before filing H-1B petitions again.

For purposes of the cap, each fiscal year begins on October 1 of the prior calendar year, so fiscal year 2015 begins on October 1, 2014. The October 1 date is the date of actual need for the next fiscal year. Therefore, employers may begin filing H-1B petitions six months prior to October 1, which is April 1.

Many F-1 students complete a program of study or post-completion OPT in mid-spring or early summer. F-1 students have 60 days after this to take steps to maintain legal status or depart the United States. Because the change to H-1B status does not occur until October 1, an F-1 student may have two or more months following the 60-day period with no legal status. Before the Cap-Gap extension, an F-1 student would have to leave the United States or apply for an H-1B visa at a U.S. Consulate or Embassy, and then seek readmission to the United States.

The Solution: The Cap Gap Extension

In 2008, DHS published a rule that automatically extends F-1 status and, if applicable, post-completion OPT employment authorization, from April 1 to September 30 for eligible F-1 students.

You may be eligible for an extension of your F-1 status through September 30 if you meet the following requirements:

- Your potential employer files an H-1B petition in a timely manner with USCIS with an employment start date of October 1
- You are maintaining your F-1 status on the date your potential employer files your H-1B petition
- USCIS receives the H-1B petition in a timely manner

You may be eligible for an extension of your F-1 status and authorized period of post-completion OPT in the following circumstances:

- Your employer files an H-1B petition in a timely manner with USCIS with an employment start date of October 1
- You are maintaining your F-1 status on the date your potential employer files your H-1B petition
- You are in an authorized period of post-completion OPT on the date your potential employer files your H-1B petition
- USCIS receives the H-1B petition in a timely manner

While you are generally eligible for a Cap-Gap extension if you meet the above qualifications, your individual case may be different. You should always talk with your DSO about whether you would qualify for a Cap-Gap extension of your F-1 status and, if applicable, your work authorization. Additionally, you should maintain regular contact with your potential employer to receive updates on the status of your H-1B petition should they file one for you.

Traveling on the Cap-Gap Extension

An F-1 student may generally travel abroad and seek readmission to the United States in F-1 status during a Cap-Gap period if:

- The student's H-1B petition and request for change of status has been approved by USCIS*.

- The student seeks readmission before his or her H-1B employment begins (normally such employment begins at the start of the fiscal year, i.e., October 1).
- The student is otherwise admissible (e.g., has all proper documentation including a valid, signed Form I-20, "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Status" and an F-1 visa).

The student does not need to provide an Employment Authorization Document (EAD). This requirement does not apply because during the Cap-Gap period the student's EAD card will have already expired, and USCIS will not renew the EAD card during the interim period.

Visit the Department of State's Foreign Affairs Manual on this topic.

As with all other international arrivals at a U.S. port-of-entry, the final decision whether to grant admission into the United States lies with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers. Visit our [Getting to the United States](#) page and CBP's website for more information regarding the appropriate travel documents and supporting evidence required for entry into the United States.

* Please note that if an F-1 student travels abroad before USCIS approves their H-1B change-of-status petition, USCIS will deem the petition abandoned. The student's F-1 status will expire per the program end date listed on their Form I-20. Meaning, if a student leaves the United States before USCIS approves their H-1B change-of-status petition, that student will not be able to re-enter the United States as an F-1 student pursuant to the Cap-Gap extension provisions.

Cap-Gap Extension I-20 Request Form below



Cap-Gap Extension I-20 Request

SECTION I—TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT (please PRINT legibly all information requested):

TODAY'S DATE: _____ DATE OF BIRTH: _____

LAST/FAMILY NAME: _____ FIRST NAME: _____

STUDENT ID: _____ SEVIS NUMBER: _____

MAJOR: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

LOCAL U.S. ADDRESS: _____

Instructions for Cap-Gap Extension I-20

1. Complete Cap-Gap Extension I-20 Request Form
2. Provide the following documents to International Student Services (ISS@webber.edu)
 - All attachments MUST be sent in one email. Incomplete applications will be denied.
 - PHOTOCOPY of Current OPT I-20
 - PHOTOCOPY of most recent Employment Authorization Document (EAD) (front side only)
 - For a receipted or approved H-1B petition issued by USCIS:
 - PHOTOCOPY of the form I-797C (Receipt Notice for Pending H-1B Application)
 - For a properly filed H-1B petition:
 - PHOTOCOPY of a statement from the employer that the student is the beneficiary listed on a properly filed H-1B petition
 - PHOTOCOPY of proof of delivery to a USCIS Service Center showing date of receipt

STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING:

By signing below, I acknowledge that I am the above-mentioned student who is currently on an approved OPT. I have read and understand the OPT Cap-Gap Extension requirements. I also understand that my SEVIS record will automatically terminate on October 1st.

STUDENT SIGNATURE_____
DATE

A copy of the Cap-Gap Extension I-20 must be submitted to your employer as proof of verification of the extension of your F-1 status and work authorization.

Company Name: _____ Employment Start Date: _____

Employer Address: _____

In three sentences, explain how this employment is related to your major:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Tax Information

Who Must File Tax Forms?

Every international student has an obligation to complete a tax form once per year for the first five calendar years that you are in the U.S. as a non-resident for tax purposes. After the first five calendar years that you are in the U.S., you will be considered a resident for tax purposes.

If you received U.S. source income in 2018 and you are a non-resident alien for tax purposes, you must file Form 1040NR or Form 1040NR-EZ. You must also submit Form 8843 attached to your income tax return.

If you received no U.S. source income in 2018 and you are a non-resident alien for tax purposes, you must file Form 8843 by June 17, 2019. If you are only submitting Form 8843, you do not need to apply for a Social Security number or ITIN (individual tax identification number).

Who Must File Form 8843?

All non-resident aliens present in the U.S. under F-1 and F-2 nonimmigrant status **must** file [Form 8843](#) "Statement for Exempt Individuals and Individuals With a Medical Condition"- **even if they received NO income during 2019**. Form 8843 must be filed if an individual is:

- present in the U.S. during 2019
- a nonresident alien
- present in the U.S. under F-1 or F-2 status

If an individual meets all three qualifications above, the individual **must** file [Form 8843](#), regardless of the individual's age and even if the individual is not required to file a U.S. income tax return Form 1040NR or Form 1040NR-EZ.

What is Form 8843?

Form 8843 is not an income tax return. Form 8843 is merely an informational statement required by the U.S. government for certain nonresident aliens (including the spouses or dependents of nonresident aliens).

Do I Need a Social Security Number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number to File Form 8843?

If you already have an SSN or ITIN, the number must be included on Form 8843, regardless of your age and even if you are not required to file a U.S. income tax return Form 1040NR or Form 1040NR-EZ.

How Do I Submit Form 8843?

Form 8843 is typically attached to an income tax return.

If, however, you have NO income and are ONLY filing Form 8843, you must print, sign, and mail it by June 17, 2019, to the address as shown below:

Department of the Treasury

Internal Revenue Service Center
Austin, TX 73301-0215
USA

Each individual who has NO income and files ONLY a Form 8843 MUST send the form in a separate envelope. Do not include more than one Form 8843 per envelope.

Links to IRS Tax Form:

Form 1040NR

<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f1040nr.pdf>

Form 1040NR-EZ

<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f1040nre.pdf>

Form 8843

<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8843.pdf>

Updates

Many kinds of updates must be reported to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) through SEVIS and must be changed on your I-20. Notify Webber International Student Services of the following changes and request an updated I-20. Keep every I-20 for your permanent record, even after you graduate. Webber will not retain copies of your I-20s. It is your responsibility to keep I-20s in case you need them to apply for future immigration benefits.

Change of Level

If you will complete your current program of study and plan to continue at Webber in another program, your I-20 must be updated.

Change of Major

If you change your major, you must request a new I-20 reflecting your new program of study.

Change of Funding

If there is a substantial change in the source or amount of your funding, report this change to the Webber International Student Services and a new I-20 will be issued to you.

Name Change

The name on your I-20 should match the name on your passport. If you change any part of your 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, Webber will wait for you to change your passport first, before updating the I-20. Note that SEVIS is a separate database from the Webber database.

Change of Address

Immigration regulations require all international students to report any change of address to be reported to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) within 10 days of moving. Update your local address by emailing the Webber International Student Services and a DSO will update your SEVIS record. This applies to students while they are actively on OPT in the U.S.

Please note that your local address must be your physical address. P.O. Boxes are not an acceptable form of address.



Change of Status

SECTION I—TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT (please PRINT legibly all information requested):

TODAY'S DATE: _____

LAST/FAMILY NAME: _____ FIRST NAME: _____

STUDENT ID: _____ SEVIS NUMBER: _____

FIRST DATE OF ATTENDANCE: _____ DATE OF BIRTH: _____

CURRENT MAJOR: _____ DEGREE OBJECTIVE: BACHELORS
 MASTERS

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

LOCAL U.S. ADDRESS: _____

PLEASE SELECT THE CHANGE OF STATUS YOU ARE REQUESTING **Change in Program Level** (*requires proof of admission into the program*)
Indicate new program level: Bachelors Masters Other: _____ **Change in Major** (*requires Academic Advisor and Registrar approval*)
Please select new major: General Business Accounting Computer Information Systems
 Corporate Communications Criminal Justice Management
 Finance Hospitality and Tourism Management
 Management Marketing Sports Business Management
 International Business **Name Change**
Present your passport reflecting the name change on your passport to a DSO. Your name cannot be changed without this proof of the name change. A copy will be kept in your student record file. **Change of Address:**_____
STREET ADDRESS APT/SUITE NO._____
CITY STATE ZIP CODE_____
STUDENT SIGNATURE DATE_____
DSO SIGNATURE DATE

Change of Status

If you have a change of immigration status while studying at Webber, you will need to provide the documentation verifying your change of status. If you are seeking a change of status, please request an appointment with Webber International Services. The process of changing status can be challenging and we want to discuss your options with you. You might also want to consult an immigration attorney.



Change of Status to Permanent Resident

SECTION I—TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT (please PRINT legibly all information requested):

TODAY'S DATE: _____

LAST/FAMILY NAME: _____ FIRST NAME: _____

STUDENT ID: _____ SEVIS NUMBER: _____

FIRST DATE OF ATTENDANCE: _____ DATE OF BIRTH: _____

MAJOR: _____ DEGREE OBJECTIVE: BACHELORS
 MASTERS

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

LOCAL U.S. ADDRESS: _____

Please provide a copy of one of the following documents:

- Your Alien Registration Card
- Your stamped passport which states "Processed for I-551 temporary evidence of lawful admission..."

Alien Registration Number: _____

Date Obtained: _____

DSO SIGNATURE_____
DATE_____
STUDENT SIGNATURE_____
DATE

Program Extension

If you are unable to complete your course of study before the academic program completion date noted on your I-20. You must request to extend your I-20 **PRIOR** to your current I-20 expiration date. If the expiration date on the I-20 has passed, students must meet with a DSO immediately, as the student is considered to be out of status and is not eligible for reinstatement.

Eligibility Requirements

To qualify for a program extension, F-1 students must meet the following requirements:

1. The expiration date of the I-20 has not yet passed
2. Continuously maintained the F-1 student status
3. The delay in completion of program must be due to one of the following reasons:
 - Compelling academic reason (change of major, change in research topic, unexpected research problems, etc.)
 - Compelling medical reason (documentation is required from U.S. licensed medical physician).
4. Must have sufficient funds to cover the additional time needed to complete program requirements, which includes tuition and living expenses.

NOTE: Delays caused by academic probation or suspension are not acceptable reasons for a program extension. Program extensions may affect future CPT eligibility. Please consult with a DSO.

Please set up an appointment with a DSO to discuss the I-20 Extension Process for F-1 students.

You will be responsible for proof of funding (tuition plus living expenses through a funding letter or bank statement). Please submit the Program Extension form along with the proof of funding to a DSO at least three weeks before the expiration date of the I-20.

Print and Fill Form below.



Program Extension

SECTION I—TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT (please PRINT legibly all information requested):

TODAY'S DATE: _____

LAST/FAMILY NAME: _____ FIRST NAME: _____

STUDENT ID: _____ SEVIS NUMBER: _____

FIRST DATE OF ATTENDANCE: _____ DATE OF BIRTH: _____

MAJOR: _____ DEGREE OBJECTIVE: BACHELORS
 MASTERS

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

LOCAL U.S. ADDRESS: _____

Required Documents:

Please provide a funding letter and/or a bank statement for the following:

- Tuition plus \$1,000 for personal expenses
- Additional \$4,500 for spouse, \$2,500 for each child

SECTION II—TO BE COMPLETED BY ACADEMIC ADVISOR:The above names student needs additional time until _____ to complete the requirements for his or her degree for the following reason: *(expected graduation date)*

- Medical Reasons (Medical Doctor (MD) documentation required)
- Change of Major
- Other: _____

Academic Advisor Signature_____
Date

SECTION III—DSO APPROVAL

PROGRAM EXTENSION REQUEST STATUS:

- APPROVED
- DENIED

IF APPROVED:
DATE SEVIS RECORD
UPDATED AND NEW I-20
ISSUED:

DSO SIGNATURE: _____

Transferring SEVIS Record

Transferring Out

If you decide to transfer to another school, contact the Webber International Student Services prior to completing your final semester at Webber. You will be required to provide an acceptance letter to your new SEVP certified school and complete their visa clearance form. A DSO will process your transfer out request.

Transferring In

Students desiring to transfer in to Webber from another school will need to meet all admissions requirements and be admitted. The student will provide the acceptance letter and complete our Visa Transfer Form to the transfer-out school. This will allow the transfer-out school to process the request for transfer. After a student has been admitted and paid the admissions deposit, the Office of Admissions will have a DSO initiate an I-20 request.

Print and Fill Form below.



Visa Transfer Form

ALL INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS TRANSFERRING FROM A U.S. INSTITUTION:

You are required to obtain a release prior to transferring to Webber International University. We must determine and verify your visa status. Please complete and sign the top part of this form and then take it to the DSO at the institution you are currently attending. Please fax or scan the completed form as soon as possible to:

Fax: 863.638.2919

Email: ISS@webber.edu

School Code: MIA214F00236000

We cannot issue your I-20 for transfer until your SEVIS record has been released from your current institution and until we receive the completed Visa Transfer Form verifying your status.

SECTION I—TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT (please PRINT legibly all information requested):

Webber International University Admission Term: Fall Spring Summer

NAME

LAST/FAMILY: _____ FIRST/GIVEN: _____

EMAIL

ADDRESS: _____ PHONE: _____

CURRENT

STREET ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

I request and authorize my present DSO to provide the information below as part of my application to transfer to Webber International University and to release my electronic SEVIS record.

SIGNATURE

DATE

SECTION II—TO BE COMPLETED BY DSO:

Visa Type: F-1 SEVIS ID#: _____ SEVIS Transfer Release Date: _____

J-1 Sponsor: _____

Other Type: _____

Date of Initial Entry into the U.S.: _____

Last Semester Enrolled at your Institution: _____

Is the student currently in status? Yes No

If "No," please explain: _____

Has the student ever been granted any kind of practical training? Yes No

If "Yes," list type and duration: _____

NAME OF DSO: _____ TITLE: _____

INSTITUTION NAME/CAMPUS LOCATION: _____

SIGNATURE OF DSO: _____ DATE: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____ PHONE: _____

Reduced Course Loads (RCL)

F-1 students should not drop below full-time enrollment until they have received authorization from a DSO. Students who drop below full-time enrollment without the proper authorization from a DSO will be considered out of status.

Academic Difficulty (RCL)

Students may request an RCL due to academic difficulty only once per degree level. Academic difficulty could be due to the following reasons:

- Difficulty with English language or reading requirements
- Unfamiliarity with U.S. teaching methods or
- Improper course placement

Students who receive an academic difficulty RCL must resume a full course of study in the next available semester in order to maintain status.

Medical RCL

A DSO may authorize a medical RCL due to a temporary medical condition with an appropriate doctor's letter recommending the RCL for medical reasons. Students must receive prior approval from a DSO for the medical RCL. To submit a medical RCL, F-1 students must meet with a DSO at Webber.

Requirements of Medical RCL:

- Letter from licensed physician, medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, or licensed clinical psychologist that recommends student to take less than the minimum units required for full time enrollment
- Receive prior approval from a DSO and academic department before dropping classes
- No more than 12 months (3 semesters) total of Medical RCL is permitted per degree level. The 12 month aggregate total includes semesters in which a student has taken a Leave of Absence (LOA) for medical reasons and remained in the U.S. to receive treatment
- Must take a minimum of 6 credit hours for undergraduate students or 3 credit hours for graduate students

If a doctor believes that a student is unable to meet this minimum credit hour enrollment, then the student should consider a Medical Leave of Absence.

Final Semester RCL

A DSO may authorize a final semester RCL for students who are in their final semester of study and only have a few credit hours remaining to meet academic program requirements. Students may request an RCL due to final semester only once per degree program.

Print and Fill Form below.



Reduced Course Load (RCL) Request

SECTION I—TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT (please PRINT legibly all information requested):

TODAY'S DATE: _____

LAST/FAMILY NAME: _____ FIRST NAME: _____

STUDENT ID: _____ SEVIS NUMBER: _____

FIRST DATE OF ATTENDANCE: _____ DATE OF BIRTH: _____

MAJOR: _____ DEGREE OBJECTIVE: BACHELORS
 MASTERS

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

LOCAL U.S. ADDRESS: _____

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) regulations require that international students ENROLL and COMPLETE the following number of credit hours each semester to maintain valid F-1 non-immigrant student status:

Undergraduate: 12 credit hours Graduate: 6 credit hours

The deadline to submit this form is the Friday of the second week of classes in Fall and Spring semesters. A reduced course load form is not necessary for the summer session.

SECTION II—TO BE COMPLETED BY ACADEMIC ADVISOR:

Reasons for a Reduced Course Load (RCL):

- Academic difficulty (can be used one semester only per degree)
- The student only needs _____ credit hours in order to graduate (only if it is the student's final semester)
- Illness or other medical condition (medical doctor documentation required)

Semester Requesting for: _____ Number of Credits Student will Register for: _____

As the Academic Advisor for this student, I approve this student to carry less than the required number of credit hours as indicated above.

Academic Advisor Signature

Date

SECTION III—DSO APPROVAL

RCL REQUEST STATUS:

- APPROVED
- DENIED

IF APPROVED:
DATE SEVIS RECORD
UPDATED AND NEW I-20
ISSUED:

DSO SIGNATURE: _____

Leave of Absence (LOA)

F-1 international students who wish to take a semester off during the academic year (fall and spring semesters) and not enroll in courses must receive authorization for a Leave of Absence (LOA) from a DSO and their academic department.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Student must be in good academic standing when requesting an LOA from a DSO
- Student must be outside the U.S. during the LOA

In order to apply for a LOA, the student must schedule an appointment with a DSO to discuss the LOA they are requesting.

Medical LOA

F-1 students are eligible to take an LOA due to medical reasons. Students have the option to return to their home country or remain in the U.S. to receive medical treatment if recommended by a doctor. Students who wish to remain in the U.S. must obtain a doctor's letter recommending the LOA for medical reasons. Students who remain in the U.S. without obtaining advance approval for medical LOA from a DSO will be considered out of status.

Requirements and Limitations of Medical LOA:

- Must have a letter from a licensed medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, or licensed clinical psychologist recommending leave for a specific semester
- Doctor's note should specify if the student should remain in U.S. to receive treatment
- Must have PRIOR approval from DSO and academic department before withdrawing from courses
- No more than 12 months total leave are allowed per degree level. The 12 month aggregate maximum includes all Reduced Course Load approved for medical reasons
- Students considering a LOA due to medical reasons must meet with a DSO

If the student with an approved LOA remains outside the U.S. for longer than five months, the student must obtain a new I-20 with a new SEVIS ID number in order to re-enter the U.S. and return to Webber. The current I-20 will be invalid after being outside of the U.S. for more than five months.

It is the student's responsibility to email the Admissions Department and a DSO at least two months prior to returning to Webber to request the new I-20. Students will need to use the new I-20 to pay the SEVIS fee and apply for a new F-1 visa, even though they may possess an unexpired visa associated with their previous I-20 SEVIS ID number.

LOA and Off-Campus Work Authorization

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) regulations state that an F-1 international student must be in status for a full academic year in order to be eligible for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) or Optional Practical Training (OPT). This regulation is especially important to note for students who are considering an LOA of over five months in their final year of studies at Webber.

Returning from LOA

All students returning from an LOA must validate their return to Webber by reporting to a DSO within 21 days of the start of the new semester.

Students must bring the following documents to the appointment:

- Copy of stamped I-20
- Print out of I-94 Arrival/Departure record
- Copy of F-1 visa in passport

Print and Fill Form below.



Leave of Absence (LOA) Request

SECTION I—TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT (please PRINT legibly all information requested):

TODAY'S DATE: _____

LAST/FAMILY NAME: _____ FIRST NAME: _____

STUDENT ID: _____ SEVIS NUMBER: _____

FIRST DATE OF ATTENDANCE: _____ DATE OF BIRTH: _____

MAJOR: _____ DEGREE OBJECTIVE: BACHELORS
 MASTERS

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

LOCAL U.S. ADDRESS: _____

This form must be approved by a DSO prior to the student initiating the Leave of Absence from the academic department. Once copy should be given to the academic department and the original stays with International Student Services. Students should also keep a copy for their own records. LOAs are only granted on a semester by semester basis. If you need more than one semester of leave, you must reapply.

All students on a Leave of Absence MUST report to a DSO immediately after re-entry to the U.S. for status verification.

Students whose Leave of Absence will exceed 5 months must:

1. Request a new I-20 from a DSO 3 months prior to intended return date (ISS@webber.edu)
2. Pay the SEVIS I-901 fee
3. Apply for a new F-1 visa even if the current F-1 visa is still valid
4. Enter the U.S. no earlier than 30 days prior to the start date on the new I-20

Students who will be absent from the U.S. for more than 5 months will be ineligible for CPT/OPT during the first academic year upon arrival as they will be entering on an initial (new) I-20 record.

Leave of Absence requested for the following semester:		<input type="checkbox"/> Fall ____	<input type="checkbox"/> Winter ____
		<input type="checkbox"/> Spring ____	<input type="checkbox"/> Summer ____
Departure Date from the U.S.:	_____	Re-entry Date to the U.S.:	_____
The Student: <input type="checkbox"/> is returning to home country <input type="checkbox"/> has documented medical reasons for LOA (attached)			

ACADEMIC ADVISOR SIGNATURE DATE

DSO SIGNATURE DATE

STUDENT SIGNATURE DATE

Dependents (Spouse and Children)

F-1 students who wish to bring their spouse and/or unmarried children (under the age of 21) to the US as their dependents must request an F-2 I-20 for each of their dependents. Dependents will need their dependent I-20 in order to apply for the F-2 visas at the US Embassy in their home country. You will be required to provide financial documentation for each dependent on the Certification of Financial Responsibility prior to being issued the F-2 I-20(s).

Parents of F-1 students are not considered dependents and are not eligible for F-2 visas. Please visit the US Department of State's website for more information regarding dependents and the F-2 visas.

Resources

Student Medical Insurance Plan

Eligibility for Coverage

The Federal F-1 visa regulations require international students to maintain adequate health insurance throughout their stay in the United States. All international students attending Webber are required to be covered by the University's Student Medical Insurance Plan and will be automatically enrolled in the Plan.

The Student Medical Insurance Plan documents can be located on the Webber Intranet. If you have questions regarding coverage or medical providers, please contact studentinsurance@webber.edu.

Florida Driver's License for Non-U.S. Citizens

How to get your Florida Driver's License

The first step to getting a Florida driver's license if you are not a US Citizen is to provide the required identification. That information can be found at the following website:

<https://www.flhsmv.gov/driver-licenses-id-cards/what-to-bring/non-immigrant/>

Identification Requirements

You must show proof of birth date and social security number (if issued). Immigrants and non-immigrants have different identification requirements. Once the state of Florida verifies identity and legal status, a driver's license or identification card will be issued within 30 days from Tallahassee and mailed to the address on the driver record.

Completing the Required First Time Driver Course

Before going to the driver's license office, you must first complete the four-hour long Drug and Alcohol Traffic Awareness (DATA) course and the written DMV test on road signs and road rules. Both the DATA course and the written DMV test are available online from DMV approved schools.

Once you receive your Certificate of Completion for the DATA course and DMV test you then make an appointment with your local driver's license office to take the behind-the-wheel driving test. The vehicle you bring for your driving test must have a valid tag, proof of insurance, and pass a vehicle inspection. During the driving test, the examiner will observe your ability to control the vehicle and how well you obey traffic laws. It is important to study the Florida Drivers Handbook in advance of taking the written DMV test and the behind-the-wheel driving test.

Going to the Driver's License Office (DMV)

Along with your Certificate of Completion you must bring the accepted forms of identification listed above. At the driver's license office you will also take a vision test, behind-the-wheel driving test, pay a driver license fee, and get your picture taken for an operator's license. Upon identity and legal status verification, a driver license will be issued within 30 days from Tallahassee and mailed to your address.

The DMV written test is also available at your local driver's license office but to save time you can take it online after completing the DATA course. Once you receive your Certificate of Completion for the DATA and DMV tests, then you make an appointment at the driver's license office to take the road test. You will need to bring your Certificate of Completion for the courses and two forms of identification to verify your birth date and social security number.

Florida DMV Website: <http://www.dmvflorida.org/drivers-license-nc.shtml>

Apostilles

An apostille is a stamp or seal verifying the authenticity of an official document. Most official documents are recognized only in the country in which they were originally issued. The U.S. is a signatory to a 1961 treaty that provides mutual recognition of documents bearing an apostille. In the U.S., apostilles are issued by the Secretary of State for the state in which the document was issued.

How to Apply

To obtain an apostille for your Webber diploma and transcripts, you will need to submit original document(s) for your apostille request(s).

If you need a newly-printed original diploma and transcripts, you can submit a request online through our website or in person, along with payment, to the Webber Registrar's Office.

The documents that have been signed and stamped by the Registrar's Office will accompany the Apostille and Notarial Certificate Request Form (form can be located on the website link below) to request the apostille through the Florida Department of State.

For information on obtaining an apostille, please visit the Florida Department of State's Authentications (Apostilles & Notarial Certifications) website shown below or contact the Registrar's Office at Registrar@webber.edu.

Website

Department of State's Authentications (Apostilles & Notarial Certifications) Website:
<http://dos.myflorida.com/sunbiz/other-services/apostille-notarial-certification/>

Invitation Letters

Family members who are not the children or spouse of the F-1 student must apply for a B-1/B-2 visitor visa to gain entry into the U.S. to attend your graduation ceremony.

Family members from certain countries may be eligible to travel to the U.S. to visit for stays of up to 90 days without obtaining a B-1/B-2 visa through the U.S. Department of State Visa Waiver Program.

<http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/visit/visa-waiver-program.html>

International Student Services at Webber does not produce letters of invitation for the purpose of inviting students' family members to visit the United States. These letters are not required by the United States Consular Offices in order for family members to obtain visitor visas.

Helping Family Apply for B-1/B-2 Visa

There are several steps to apply for a visa. The order of these steps and how your family member is to complete them may vary at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate where they apply. Please consult the instructions available on the U.S. Embassy or Consulate website where you will apply. <http://www.usembassy.gov/>

You do not need a letter from any part of Webber specifically inviting your parents to come to the U.S. You will need an enrollment or degree verification letter from Webber (enrollment verification) and an invitation letter from you. The Registrar's Office can provide you with the enrollment or degree verification letter upon request. Please allow 5 business days for processing.

Providing your family members with this documentation may improve their chances of obtaining a visa; however, there is no guarantee a visa will be issued. The success of their request for a visa lies in their ability to prove that they have no intention of staying permanently in the United States.

Letter Template

As a courtesy to our students, we are providing a letter template for students who wish to write their own letter to invite family members to the United States. If you choose to write your own letter, it should only serve to invite primary family members (parents, grandparents and siblings). The template is below.

Your U.S. Address
City, State, Zip

[Date]

Consular Office
United States [Consulate or Embassy]
Address
City, Country, Postal Code

Re: Visitor Visa Application – [Name of Family Member(s)]

Dear Consular Officer,

My name is [type full name here] and I am an international student in F-1 status at Webber International University pursuing a [Bachelor's or Master's] degree in [field of study]. I am graduating in [May or December] 20__.

I would like to invite my family [and/or friends] listed below to attend my commencement ceremony and other celebration activities that will be held in [May or December] 20__.

First Name LAST NAME (as in passport), relationship to you, his/her address, date of birth, country of citizenship.

(list same information as above for more guests here)

My guest(s) will stay at [U.S. address of location] during their visit, [and may visit a few other U.S. cities before returning home.] It would be greatly appreciated if you would grant [him, her, or them] a visitor visa so that [he, she, or they] may join me to celebrate my graduation.

If you have any questions, I can be reached by email at [your email address] or by phone at [your phone number].

I trust that this information is sufficient to support their application for a visitor visa. Thank you for your time and consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

Signature
[Type Student Name]

Contact Us

Office of Admission

Email: admissions@webber.edu

Phone: 1-863-638-2910

International Student Services

Email: ISS@webber.edu

Phone: 1-863-638-2944

Designated School Officials (DSO)

Maggie Taylor, PDSO

Email: TaylorME@webber.edu

Jessika Hester, DSO

Email: HesterJ@webber.edu

Patricia Beasley, DSO

Email: BeasleyPA@webber.edu