



UNION INSTITUTE & UNIVERSITY

International Student Handbook

Union Institute & University
National Headquarters
440 E. McMillan St.
Cincinnati, OH 45206-1925
<http://www.myunion.edu>

<https://myunion.edu/future-students/international-students/>

Chris McNay (PDSO)
Associate Registrar
chris.mcnay@myunion.edu
Phone: 800.861-6400, ext. 1277
513.487.1277 | Fax: 513.487.1075

Sarah Bergh, Ph.D. (DSO)
Assistant Director, MA
sarah.bergh@myunion.edu
Phone: 800.871.6400, ext. 1252

Information in this handbook is specifically for students in the United States on F-1 student visas under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) of 1952 and Section 8 of the U.S. Code (U.S.C.). The MA-CMHC and Ph.D. programs originating from the Ohio Academic Center in Cincinnati are eligible to admit F-1 students. F-1 students are required to register with the Student Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) and are subject to all academic and other requirements of their specific Union Institute & University degree program handbooks. This handbook provides information that F-1 students will need to begin studies at UI&U, and it explains situations most frequently encountered by international students. Please take the time to read this handbook carefully.

Union Institute & University is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission. (<https://www.hlcommission.org/>).

Union Institute & University is authorized as a degree-granting institution by the Ohio Department of Higher Education (formerly known as the Ohio Board of Regents), and the Florida Commission for Independent Education.

Union Institute & University is committed to providing equal education opportunity and support to qualified persons with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires the university to make reasonable accommodations to students with a disability only if the individual requests such accommodations.

Union Institute & University, under the requirements mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, will make accommodations in the learning and instructional environment to meet the documented needs of students with disabilities. The general academic regulations and graduation requirements of university programs are identical for all Union Institute & University students.

Accommodations cannot be made for a student unless he/she requests services directly from the accessibility office. To request accommodations and related services students must complete the [Disability Disclosure Form](#), available on [CampusWeb](#), Union Institute & University's academic and administrative portal.

The completed disability disclosure form is automatically sent to the accessibility coordinator. The accessibility coordinator will then contact the student to request documentation from their health provider and to discuss an appropriate accommodation plan, called an education plan. The accessibility coordinator will prepare the education plan, email it to the student for review and approval, and, once approved by the student, will distribute it to the appropriate staff and faculty. Education plans do not renew automatically: it is the student's responsibility to notify the accessibility office at the beginning of each term to reactivate their education plan. [Note: Union Institute & University's faculty and staff may not accommodate a student who claims a disability unless there is an education plan on record for the student. If a student requests an accommodation and does not have an education plan on file, the employee who receives the request shall advise the student of this policy and procedure, referring the student to the accessibility coordinator.]

All documentation associated with the student's disability is kept confidential and separate from their official academic record.

All statements in this publication reflect current practices. Union Institute & University reserves the right to amend, modify, or revise the criteria and procedures stated herein from time to time as deemed necessary and appropriate.

©2019

This Handbook may be downloaded and printed for personal use as needed.

Contents

Contents

Contents	iii
A Message from the Vice President of Academic Affairs	1
University Mission and Values	2
Mission	2
Values	2
English Proficiency Requirement	3
Transcript/ Credentials Evaluation	3
International Baccalaureate (IB) Credits	4
The College-Level Examination Program® (CLEP)	4
Immigration Issues	4
Important Immigration Documents / Forms:	4
Evidence of Immigration Status	5
Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)	6
SEVIS Fee	6
US-Visit Entry/ Exit System	9
Maintaining Your Status	11
Visa Renewal	13
Visits to the U.S. for Spouse and Children	13
Employment	14
Union Institute & University Designated School Official (DSO) Information	14
When to Contact Your DSO	15

A Message from the Vice President of Academic Affairs

Dear International Students:

On behalf of the faculty, staff, and students, welcome to Union Institute & University. Our university has a long history of providing innovative educational opportunities for adult students through degree programs designed to allow students to grow in the role of scholar/ professional. Our doctoral programs include short-term residency periods of face-to-face contact with faculty, advisors, and a diverse group of fellow adult students that enhance their educational experiences. Students enjoy the benefit of being away from their work and family only for short periods of time.

This *Handbook* presents required information for international students with F-1 student visas to help them maintain their status while attending Union Institute & University. Please read and reference this *Handbook* often to ensure that you are following all requirements for maintaining your F-1 status. Keep in close contact with your Designated School Official (DSO) who is available to answer questions related to your F-1 status and assist when necessary. Please check the International Student Services Web site often to verify that you have the latest information:
<https://myunion.edu/future-students/international-students/>.

Please check the university's Web site (www.myunion.edu) regularly for information on registration, fees, residency periods, and other important institutional news. Individual degree program Web pages provide details about degree requirements and concentration or specialization options. Program administrators and faculty strive to be responsive to students' academic needs and individual goals. We ask that you accept responsibility for fulfilling the requirements of your degree program. We are here to facilitate and foster the pursuit of your academic and career goals.

Best wishes as you begin this wonderful academic journey.

Sincerely,

Nelson Soto, Ph.D.
Vice President,
Academic Affairs

University Mission and Values

Mission

Union Institute & University educates highly motivated adults who seek academic programs to engage, enlighten, and empower them to pursue professional goals and a lifetime of learning, service, and social responsibility.

Approved by the Board of Trustees
June 2015

Values

- **Academic Excellence:** Union Institute & University is committed to academic excellence and ensures institutional quality through continuous assessment and review of programs, processes, policies, and outcomes.
- **Creative and Critical Thinking:** Union Institute & University supports different modes of disciplinary and interdisciplinary inquiry that examine underlying assumptions, explore issues from multiple perspectives, and develop new ways of thinking.
- **Theory and Practice:** Union Institute & University provides an educational experience whereby scholarship and theory are connected and applied to real-world action and practice.
- **Social Justice:** Union Institute & University recognizes that with knowledge comes the responsibility to serve in advancing a culturally pluralistic, equitable, and interdependent world.
- **Diversity:** Union Institute & University is committed to promoting diversity among its academic community and in the world at large.
- **Integrity:** Union Institute & University is committed to the highest ethical and professional standards of performance and conducts its affairs with transparency, integrity, and respect.

Approved by the Board of Trustees
October 2015

English Proficiency Requirement

English proficiency is required of all applicants whose native language is not English. Applicants can demonstrate English Proficiency in a number of ways. You may fulfill the English requirement by taking either the Internet-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL® iBT), the International English Language Testing System (IELTS™) exam (www.ielts.org), or the Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic) (www.pearsonpte.com).

At both the graduate and undergraduate levels, our TOEFL requirement is 79 on the Internet-Based Test (TOEFL iBT). The TOEFL code number for Union Institute & University is 4525. Please use this code number when selecting Union Institute & University to receive your score report. Scores will be sent directly to Union from Educational Testing Service. A list of institution codes is posted on the TOEFL Web site at www.ets.org/toefl.

For IELTS, an overall band score of 6.0 is sufficient for admission. For PTE, a score of 54 is sufficient. No code numbers are required for the IELTS or PTE tests. Test takers will need to select Union Institute & University as the recipient of their test scores.

At the undergraduate level, applicants who complete one full academic year of study in a U.S. high school or college/ university will be deemed to have met the English proficiency requirement. At the graduate level, the English proficiency requirement is met for applicants with degrees (e.g., a bachelor's or master's) earned in English from accredited universities and colleges in the U.S., Canada, England, Australia, New Zealand, or other English-speaking countries. A copy of the degree or transcript is required for such applicants.

Applicants from the following countries are exempt from the English proficiency requirement:

Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, Botswana, Cameroon, Canada (except Quebec), Cayman Islands, Denmark, Dominica, Fiji, Finland, Gambia, Ghana, Gibraltar, Grenada, Guyana, Ireland, Jamaica, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Malta, Mauritius, Montserrat, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Scotland, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Swaziland, Sweden, Tanzania, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, Uganda, United Kingdom, Vanuatu, Virgin Islands, Wales, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Transcript/ Credentials Evaluation

Students with international transcripts are responsible for obtaining an evaluation of their transcripts. For admission purposes, please request a course-by-course evaluation. Union Institute & University requires that evaluations of international credits be performed by organizations belonging to the Association of International Credential Evaluators, Inc. (AICE), or the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES). Fees vary by the type of evaluation requested (high school, bachelor's, master's, etc.) from approximately \$150 to \$280. Turnaround time for the evaluation is generally two to four weeks. Additional fees apply for expedited service and multiple copies of the evaluation. See individual service websites for details about specific services and costs. A complete list of approved member organizations may be found on the individual association's website.

AICE: <http://aice-eval.org/members/>

NACES: <https://www.naces.org/members>

Students should have all foreign credential evaluations sent directly to an agent of UI&U from the evaluating organization.

International Baccalaureate (IB) Credits

Union Institute & University accepts international baccalaureate (IB) credits of four (4) or higher on the higher-level exam.

The College-Level Examination Program® (CLEP)

CLEP testing provides the opportunity to receive college credit for what you already know by earning qualifying scores on any of 34 examinations. Earn credit for knowledge you have acquired through independent study, prior course work, on-the-job training, professional development, cultural pursuits, or internships. All Union Institute & University Academic Centers currently offer on-site CLEP testing. For more information, visit <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/clep/credit.html>.

Immigration Issues

Important Immigration Documents / Forms:

I. Form I-20 Certificate of Eligibility for F-1 Visa

I-20s issued to you are good only for the residency period indicated. If you do not arrive by the date indicated, you must return the form to UI&U. In addition, due to the unique nature of our curriculum, you can be issued an I.20 only for a specific period of residency. You will need to obtain a new I. 20, pay a new SEVIS fee, and obtain a new visa each time you need to enter the U.S. to participate in a residency for your degree program because you will be out of the U.S. longer than five months between residencies. Exception: Students in the Master of Arts with a Concentration in Counseling Psychology may not be out of the U.S. longer than five months between residencies because of the trimester calendar for that program, and they may not need a new I-20 for each residency. Use your I-20 to:

- obtain an F-1 visa from the American embassy/consulate in your home country
- enter the United States for the first time
- reenter after a short visit outside the U.S.
- transfer to another school in the U.S.
- allow family to enter the U.S.
- extend expected program end/activity date

II. **Form I-94 Arrival/Departure Record**

The Form I-94 is a U.S. Department of Homeland Security document issued to nonimmigrant aliens at the time of lawful entry into the U.S. The Form I-94 is evidence of a nonimmigrant's term of admission, and it is used to document legal status in the U.S., including length of stay and departure dates. An electronic record (electronic I-94) will be created when you arrive in the U.S. by air or sea. This information will be available to other U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) agencies such as the Student Exchange and Visitors Information System (SEVIS) and the U.S. Customs and Information System (USCIS). A Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) officer will place an admission stamp (I-94) on your passport that reflects the class of admission (F-1), the date of admission into the U.S., and the admitted until date or D/S - duration of stay. You may visit the I-94 website (<https://www.cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors/i-94>) to enter biographic and entry information from your passport and the I-94 stamp on your passport, receive an electronic I-94 number, and print your I-94. You will need to show your I-94 passport stamp or print copy to the Designated School Officer (DSO) when you arrive at Union Institute & University.

- A new electronic I-94 record will be created each time you reenter the U.S.
- All foreign students should have "F-1" written as the visa classification on their I-94 passport stamps and online I-94s.
- The I-94 stamp should also have an admitted until date or "D/S" for "duration of status". This is the period during which you are a student pursuing a full course of study, plus a 60- day grace period. You must leave the U.S. by the admitted until date

III. **Passport**

A passport is your country's identification of you as a citizen. Your passport must remain valid at all times while you are in the U.S. It is not allowed to expire. You may renew your passport by contacting your embassy/ consulate in the U.S.

IV. **Visa**

A visa is a stamp placed on your passport by an official of the United States (or the country you are entering) that will permit you to enter into the U.S. You must have a valid visa to enter the United States (unless you are from a visa exempt country). However, unlike a passport, once you are in the U.S., a visa is allowed to expire.

Evidence of Immigration Status

- Be prepared to provide copies of your immigration status documents to the Designated School Official (DSO) at the UI&U location you are approved to attend.
- Keep the printed I-94 or passport with the I-94 admittance stamp with you at all times.
- Keep all I-20s you receive during your duration of stay (D/S) in the United States.

Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)

SEVIS is a national tracking/ monitoring system that allows the U.S. government to monitor and track various events of all F-1 students during their program of study. In addition to biographical information, Union Institute & University will be required to provide information regarding a student's academic program, enrollment status, and immigration activities.

Before you enter the U.S., you need to understand that once you have arrived, you must be committed to following all rules related to your status. **Any violations of status will be reported to the U.S. government.**

SEVIS Fee

Before applying for an F-1 visa, you will be required to pay a SEVIS fee of \$350 to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Canadian students and other individuals who are not required to obtain a visa are required to pay this SEVIS fee before entering the United States. The fee can be paid by mail, using Form I-901, or by credit card through the Internet. If your visa has been denied, you do not need to pay the fee again if you reapply for the visa within 12 months after the denial. **You will need to pay this SEVIS fee each time Union Institute & University issues an I-20 for you to enter the U.S. to participate in a residency portion of your degree program.**

I. Who Must Pay the SEVIS Fee?

- Students who are seeking an F-1 visa from a U.S. embassy or consulate for initial and subsequent attendance at a Union Institute & University residency are required to pay the SEVIS fee. The fee must be paid before applying for the visa.
- Students who will enter the U.S. in F-1 status, but who are not required to have a visa (e.g., Canadian citizen) must pay the SEVIS fee. The fee must be paid before applying for admission to the U.S.
- Students who are applying for a change of status to F-1. The fee must be paid before submitting a change of status application.

II. SEVIS fee payment is NOT required:

- For F-2 dependents.
- When you are transferring to another school, program, or program category and your immigration status is F-1.
- If you are requesting an extension of your program or course of study.
- If you paid the fee, but your application for an F-1 visa was denied, and you are reapplying for the same status within 12 months of the denial.

III. SEVIS Fee Payment Process

Option #1: Payment by Credit Card

DHS has a website for electronic submission of Form I-901 and payment of the SEVIS fee by credit card (Visa, MasterCard, American Express) or debit card (Visa, MasterCard). We strongly recommend that you use the credit card option if possible.

- Go to <http://www.fmjfee.com>.
- Follow the online instructions.
- Print the payment screen (coupon) to verify your payment.
- Take the payment verification coupon (Internet Receipt) to your visa interview.

Option #2: Payment by Western Union

This option allows Western Union, in local currency, to collect the SEVIS fee. This option is available only in countries where Western Union offers its Quick Collect/ Quick Pay service.

- Fill out the Form I-901 online at <http://www.fmjfee.com>. A payment coupon will be generated upon completion of the form.
- Print a copy of the payment coupon and take it to your local Western Union.
- Fill out the Quick Collect/ Quick Pay form according to the information found at the bottom of the printed coupon. Example:

Company Name (or Code City):	SEVISFEE
Account Number:	Coupon Number (Example: 010222013872390)
Amount:	350.00*

**Note: The payment amount may differ according to your specific visa type.*

Payment will be linked to your Form I-901, and your online payment confirmation will be available at www.fmjfee.com.

- You must complete the Form I-901 online at www.fmjfee.com prior to visiting your local Western Union. Completing the form online will generate a unique coupon number that you will need to validate and process your I-901 SEVIS fee payment at Western Union. You cannot submit a payment via Western Union without the coupon number.
- You do not have to print and bring the coupon to Western Union; you only need the unique coupon number in order to submit your payment.
- If a third party is paying your I-901 SEVIS fee on your behalf, you will need to provide them with your coupon number to enter into the Account Number field of the Western Union Quick Collect/ Quick Pay form.

Option #3: Payment by Mail—Check or International Money Order

The only forms of payment that will be accepted by mail are checks and money orders. Do not mail cash.

- All checks and money orders must be made in U.S. dollars and drawn on a bank located in the United States.
- All checks and money orders must be made payable to the “I-901 Student/Exchange Visitor Processing Fee.”
- Checks are accepted subject to collection. A charge of \$30 will be imposed if a check for payment of a fee is not honored by the bank on which it is drawn.
- Write the name of the student or exchange visitor and the SEVIS identification number on the check.
- Fees must be submitted in the exact amount. Failure to file forms correctly or with the correct payment will result in the return of this form to you and additional delay in processing. Fees will not be refunded.
- All I-901 payment confirmations must be printed from www.FMJfee.com.

When paying by check or international money order, two options are available:

1. *Internet-generated payment coupon.* Go to the fee payment website (<https://www.fmjfee.com>), enter basic information, print a payment coupon, and then mail a check or international money order with the payment coupon to a lock-box address in Missouri. Once the information and fee are processed, SEVIS will then be updated with the fee payment information.
2. *Paper option.* Download or otherwise obtain Form I-901, fill it in, and mail it with a check or international money order to the specified address in Missouri. Write the Control Number found at the top of the payment coupon, your name, and your SEVIS ID number onto your check before mailing it to Missouri. Once the information and fee are processed, SEVIS will then be updated with the fee payment information.

Mailing addresses for paying by check or international money order using the payment coupon or the paper Form I-901 are:

<p>P.O. Box Address:</p> <p>I-901 Student/ Exchange Visitor Processing Fee P.O. Box 970020 St. Louis, MO 63197-0020 United States</p>	<p>Street Address for Courier/Express Delivery:</p> <p>I-901 Student/ Exchange Visitor Processing Fee 1005 Convention Plaza St. Louis, MO 63101-1229 United States</p>
---	---

All checks and international money orders must be:

- Payable to **I-901 Student/ Exchange Visitor Processing Fee.**
- Only checks and international money orders may be used when paying by mail.
- The check or international money order must be drawn on a bank located in the U.S. and payable in U.S. currency (dollars).
- An additional amount of \$35 will be charged for express delivery of a paper receipt.

Payment of the SEVIS fee is not limited to the student. The DHS will accept fee payment from a third-party individual or institution, either in the United States or abroad, using any of the above options.

The SEVIS fee must be paid at least three (3) business days prior to the scheduled date of your visa interview in order for the payment information to show up in the SEVIS system. **You should bring your I-901 print payment verification coupon to your visa interview.**

IV. Completing Form I.901

- You must have a Form I-20 in order to complete the I-901.
- You must have Union Institute & University's SEVIS school code: **CLE214F10355000.**

V. If You Are a Student from Canada or Bermuda

Students from Canada and Bermuda are exempt from having to apply for a visa, but they will need an I-20 to enter the U.S. and attend Union Institute & University. In addition to the I-20, students from Canada and Bermuda will have to provide the SEVIS fee printed payment verification coupon to an immigration inspector at the port of entry when applying for entry into the United States to attend a residency.

VI. If Your Visa Is Denied

If your visa application is denied, you may reapply for the visa within a 12-month period without having to pay the SEVIS fee again.

VII. If Your Dependents Will Accompany You to the U.S.

A spouse or child needs an F-2 visa to accompany students holding F-1 visas to the U.S. while they are attending a Union Institute & University residency. If you have obtained an I-20 for a spouse or children, they do not have to pay a SEVIS fee in order to apply for an F-2 visa.

VIII. If You Are Admitted to More than One School

If you have been accepted to more than one institution and paid the fee using the SEVIS ID number of another institution but you wish to attend UI&U, you will not have to pay the fee again. You can have the fee transferred to your UI&U SEVIS number. Instructions for making this fee transfer can be found at <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/faq7.htm#Toc81222153>.

US-Visit Entry/ Exit System

US-VISIT is a U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) program that enhances the country's entry and exit system. It is a continuum of security measures that begins overseas and continues through arrival and departure from the United States to ensure that the person crossing our border is the same person who received the visa.

The goals of US-VISIT are to:

- Enhance the security of citizens and visitors
- Facilitate legitimate travel and trade
- Ensure the integrity of the immigration system
- Protect the privacy of visitors

The initiative involves collecting travel information and biometric identifiers from visitors to assist the border officer in determining whether to allow an individual to enter the U.S.

I. Upon Arrival into the U.S.

At an airport or seaport, travel documents, such as your passport and visa, will be reviewed, a U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Officer will ask specific questions regarding your stay in the U.S., and the CBP Officer will scan your passport to create an electronic Form I-94, which is the DHS's Arrival/ Departure Record issued to aliens who are admitted into the U.S. You will have two fingerprints scanned by an inkless device and a digital photograph taken. All this data and information will then be used to assist the border inspector in determining whether to admit you into the U.S.

Careful planning and preparation by students and exchange visitors can ensure that arrival in the U.S. is smooth. Here are some things you should do before you arrive in the U.S.:

- **Passport.** Confirm that your passport and nonimmigrant visa are valid for entry into the United States. The passport should be valid for at least six (6) months beyond the date of your expected stay.
- **Visa Classification.** Check to see that your visa accurately reflects your correct visa classification—F-1 student.
- **New Visa.** If your review indicates any discrepancies or potential problems, visit the U.S. embassy or consulate in your country to obtain a new visa.

- **Prior Arrival Limit of 30 Days.** Students and exchange visitors entering the United States for the first time under their respective nonimmigrant visa classification may be admitted no earlier than 30 days prior to the program residency start date. Do not make plans to arrive more than 30 days before the start date of your program residency, as indicated on your I-20.
- **Sealed Documents.** When you receive your U.S. nonimmigrant visa at the embassy or consulate in your country, the consular officer will seal your immigration documents in an envelope and attach it to your passport. **You should not open this envelope!** The CBP Officer at the U.S. port of entry will open the envelope.
- **Specific Documents.** When you travel, you should carry some specific documents on your person (See B below.). **Do not check them in your baggage!** If your baggage is lost or delayed, you will not be able to show the documents to the CBP Officer and, as a result, you may not be able to enter the United States.

II. Documents to Carry on Your Person

- Passport (including attached envelope of immigration documents) with nonimmigrant visa
- SEVIS Form I-20 issued by Union Institute & University
- SEVIS fee payment verification coupon—Internet receipt
- Visa exempt students (Canadians) entering the U.S. for the first time should have an Internet Receipt, verifying SEVIS Fee payment.
- Evidence of financial resources (these documents should be stapled to your I-20)
- Name and contact information of your Designated School Official (DSO) at UI&U. See page 10 of this *Handbook* for UI&U DSO contact information.

III. Arrival by Air or Sea

You will receive CF-6059 Customs Declaration Forms on board so that you can declare any items that you wish to bring into the U.S. Upon arrival at the port of entry, proceed to the terminal inspection area for arriving passengers. As you approach the inspection station, be sure that you have the following documents:

- Passport;
- SEVIS Form I-20;
- SEVIS fee payment receipt; and
- CF-6059 Customs Declaration Form available for presentation to the CBP Officer.

A CBP Officer will scan your passport to create an electronic Form I-94 Arrival/ Departure Record at your initial port of entry and will place an I-94 stamp on your passport. When asked where you will be staying while in the U.S., the address should be where you will stay for a residency, which may be a hotel address. It should not be Union Institute & University's address. You may print a copy of your I-94 record by going to <http://www.cbp.gov/I94>.

IV. Arrival by Land.

When you arrive at the port of entry, the CBP Officer will provide the necessary CF-6059 Customs Declaration Form and Form I-94 Arrival/ Departure Record. If you do not understand a form, ask the CBP Officer for assistance. Like all entering visitors, you will be asked to state the reason you wish to enter the United States. You will also be asked to provide information about your final destination. *Be sure to tell the CBP Officer that you will be a student at Union Institute & University.* Once your inspection is complete, the inspecting officer will:

- Place a Form I-94 stamp on your passport. The stamp notes the date of admission, class of admission (F-1), and the admitted until date (duration of status—D/S).
- Return your passport to you.

Be sure that your passport has the I-94 stamp.

V. Secondary Inspection Requirements

If the CBP inspector cannot automatically verify your information or you do not have all required documentation, you may be escorted to an interview area known as “secondary inspection.” Secondary inspection allows CBP inspectors to conduct additional research in order to verify information. Verifications are done apart from the primary inspection lines so that an individual case will not cause delays for other arriving passengers.

In limited circumstances, if a student or exchange visitor is mostly in compliance, he/she may be issued a Form I-515A, Notice to Student. This form authorizes temporary admission into the United States for 30 days and requires the student or exchange visitor to take immediate action to submit proper documentation. Noncompliance with the directions contained on these forms can result in future adverse action.

VI. Upon Departure from the U.S.

If you arrived by land, you must return your I-94 to the CBP Officer when departing the U.S. You are not required to return your I-94 if you travel to Canada from the U.S. after a residency or if you arrived by air or sea. International travelers are no longer required to check out at a US-VISIT kiosk. Cincinnati Academic Center students may enter/ exit through the Greater Cincinnati/ Northern Kentucky Airport (CVG).

VII. F.1 Students Currently in the United States

If you already have valid F-1 student status by being enrolled at another school, college, or university in the United States, by now you have completed the required “Transfer Verification Form” supplied by your current school and requested that the international student advisor at your current school release your SEVIS record to UI&U. Your UI&U I-20 will be given to you upon arrival in the UI&U location where you are approved to attend. Once you reach your approved UI&U location, please report to the Designated School Official (DSO) for processing of your transfer. **Keep in mind that UI&U can issue you an I.20 that is valid *only* for the duration of the next residency requirement for your program of study. These residencies typically last between three (3) and nine (9) days.**

Maintaining Your Status

The responsibility for maintaining your immigration status lies with you. To maintain status, you must follow several requirements:

I. Requirement to Keep Your Passport Valid

Your passport must be valid at all times. Renewal applications must be made with the embassy or consulate of the country issuing the passport. Addresses of embassies and consulates are available from the U.S. Department of State Web site at: <http://www.state.gov/countries>.

II. Requirement to Report Address Changes

You are required to report any address change to Union Institute & University **within 10 days of the change**. This requirement includes address changes of any dependents as well. You should report your new address to the DSO at the UI&U location you are approved to attend **within 10 days of moving**.

III. Requirement to Obtain Prior Authorization to Drop Below a Full Course of Study

You are required to pursue a full course of study during the terms that require residency in the U.S. The only exception to this rule will be for graduate students who have completed all required courses and who need to participate in a required residency or to complete the dissertation, thesis, or other final document required for graduation. Students in this situation will need to complete and submit the Reduced Course Load Certification form and obtain authorization from a DSO at UI&U prior to being issued an I-20 for their next residency. UI&U program extensions and SEVIS extensions of stay may be granted for this final term if the student has not completed the program during the originally-specified length of time.

IV. Requirement to Report Departure Date

Due to the unique nature of UI&U programs, you will be in the U.S. for only a short period of time. You are required to inform the UI&U DSO of the date on which you plan to leave the U.S. at the conclusion of each of your residencies. You also need to inform the DSO where you will be staying and contact information during the 60-day grace period if you choose to visit other locations while in the U.S. for your residency.

V. Transfer to Attend Another School

You are currently authorized to attend Union Institute & University. If you decide to attend another school in the U.S., you must notify your UI&U DSO of your intent to transfer and provide the name of the school to which you intend to transfer. This notification is done by submitting the Request to Transfer from UI&U form to your DSO. The DSO will then enter a "Release" date into SEVIS (usually the day that the current term ends) to transfer your sponsorship in SEVIS from UI&U to the new school. After this date is reached, the new school can issue you an I-20 form. You will then have to report to the Designated School Official/ Responsible Officer at the new school **within 15 days of the program start date** in order to complete the transfer.

VI. Requirement to Report a Change in Your Academic Program/ Degree Level or Major/ Concentration

You must obtain a new I-20 if you change your academic program from one degree level to another (e.g., from Master's to Doctoral level), from one major/ field of study to another (e.g., from Education to Psychology), or from one concentration to another (Public Policy & Social Change to Humanities & Culture). **You must receive a new I.20 prior to coming into the U.S. for your next residency if you have been out of the U.S. for five months or longer. A new F.1 visa is also required for each new I. 20 issued to you.**

VII. Requirement to Provide Documentation of Dependents

UI&U is required to report information to the DHS and/or Department of State (DOS) regarding your dependents—spouse and children. Family members, such as spouse and children, must have F-2 visas to enter the U.S. You must notify UI&U of any accompanying dependents in F-2 status and provide biographical information (e.g., full name, address, country of birth, etc.) and immigration information (e.g., passport information, visa information, etc.) regarding those dependents using the UI&U Request for F-2 Dependents form.

IMPORTANT NOTE: This information is not exhaustive and **is subject to change without notice**. International students should contact the DSO at the UI&U location where they are approved to attend with questions on any information presented above.

Visa Renewal

The visa renewal procedure is necessary only when you intend to travel outside the U.S. and your visa has expired. To get a new visa stamp, you will need a valid passport, a properly executed I-20, proof of financial support, and/or letter of certification. You must visit the American consulate/ embassy office located in the country that you want to visit in order to get the visa stamp issued. **A student visa cannot be obtained in the U.S.**

I. Traveling Outside the U.S.

F-1 visa holders need the following documents to reenter the U.S. after a temporary absence:

1. Form I-20 endorsed (signed) by your UI&U DSO for travel within one (1) year of the date of travel return, or within six (6) months if you are on Optional Practical Training (OPT).
2. A valid passport and U.S. F-1 visa (unless visa exempt).
3. Verification of adequate financial support.
4. Verification of enrollment. (Verification of Employment if you are on Optional Practical Training)

II. Returning to the U.S. for Another Residency

You will be need to submit an updated financial certification form and be issued a new I-20 with a new SEVIS number each time you need to enter the U.S. to participate in a residency portion of your program. Each new I-20 requires the payment of the \$350 SEVIS fee. You will also need to obtain a new F-1 visa each time you receive a new I-20. Apply early for a new visa to ensure that you receive it in time to attend the residency.

Visits to the U.S. for Spouse and Children

F-1 students must obtain an I-20 to send to family members (spouse or children) who will accompany them in the U.S. The family member(s) will use the I-20 to support their application for an F-2 visa at the U.S. embassy or consulate. The embassy/ consulate will require evidence that you have adequate financial resources for each family member's support without recourse to employment. As such, you must furnish proof of financial support to UI&U in the amount of \$375 per month for a spouse and \$175 per month for each child for the entire length of your planned program of

study, in addition to the amount needed for your own studies and living expenses. **You must realize that under no circumstances will your spouse be permitted to take any employment after arriving in the U.S.**

Employment

F-1 international students who come to the U.S. are eligible to work on campus 20 hours per week while school is in session. However, because of the short-term required degree program residencies, F-1 students will not be able to work on campus while attending UI&U. Although F-1 students are also eligible for Optional Practical Training (OPT) and Curricular Practical Training (CPT) in order to gain work experience to complement their academic programs, once again, because of the unique nature of the UI&U curriculum, you will not be able to obtain authorization for Optional or Curricular Practical Training while at UI&U.

Union Institute & University Designated School Official (DSO) Information

Academic Center	Program Responsibility
<p><u>Cincinnati, Ohio</u>: Dr. Mary Ginn, PDSO Director, International Student Services and Institutional Review Board Mary.Ginn@myunion.edu Phone: 800.861.6400, ext. 1153 513.487.1153 Fax: 513.861.0779 Union Institute & University Cincinnati Academic Center 440 E. McMillan St. Cincinnati, OH 45206-1925</p>	<p>EdD, PhD, PsyD, MA-Psych</p>
<p><u>Brattleboro, Vermont</u>: Sarah Bergh, Ph.D. (DSO) Administrative Coordinator sarah.bergh@myunion.edu Phone: 800.871.8165, ext. 8915 802.254.0152, ext. 8915 Fax: 802.257.8923 Union Institute & University New England Academic Center 28 Vernon Street, #210 Brattleboro, VT 05301-3669</p>	<p>MA-Psych, PsyD</p>

When to Contact Your DSO

Designated School Officials (DSOs) are here to help you maintain your nonimmigrant status. Your status is your responsibility; seek advice when in doubt. Read all information provided in this *Handbook* and open and respond to all e-mail from your DSO.

The following list is a quick reminder of when you should, or could, seek assistance from your DSO. Remember that seeking assistance early provides you with the greatest number of options and maximum flexibility, which is the case in time-sensitive situations.

Situations that are time-sensitive and must be reported to your DSO:

- You want to change your major or concentration from what is listed on your I-20.
- You want to take less than a full course of study.
- You have moved and need to change your address.
- You plan to quit school.
- You need a release to transfer to another college or university.
- You want to change your immigration status.
- You need to apply for an extension of stay because your I-20 will expire before you complete your degree program (i.e., duration of stay—D/S).
- You do not plan to enroll during the next fall, winter, or spring term.
- You are having academic problems with your courses.
- You have not maintained your F-1 status (i.e., you are out of status).
- An official at the port of entry made an error on your documents or gave you an immigration form to file (perhaps Form I-515A) during your or your family's last entrance into the U.S.
- You plan to travel outside the U.S.
- You need to report departure dates and reasons for leaving UI&U and the U.S.
- You need to provide information on where you will be during the grace period after your program of study is completed and before you depart the U.S.
- You need to provide documentation on dependents.
- Your passport is about to expire.

Situations in which your DSO can offer expert advice:

- You need information about your immigration status.
- You are unsure of your student visa requirements.
- You are not sure about what employment options or restrictions apply to your student visa.
- Unforeseen financial difficulties have arisen after you last entered the U.S.
- You are making plans that you think might have immigration implications.