

F-1 VISA IMMIGRATION INFORMATION

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

OBEDY ALL U.S. LAWS.

CHECK YOUR UMASS EMAIL DAILY. [You can forward your UMass emails to another email address.](#)

MANDATORY SEVIS REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

SEVIS REGISTRATION FOR NEW STUDENTS: Mandatory SEVIS reporting will be during your first 2 weeks at UMass (including students changing degree level, i.e. MS to PhD)

CHANGE IN NAME, VISA STATUS, CITIZENSHIP, MAJOR/DEGREE PROGRAM, LEVEL, ANTICIPATED GRADUATION DATE, FUNDING, REMOVING/[ADDING DEPENDENTS](#) (additional documentation required)

[LEAVING THE UNIVERSITY OR DISCONTINUED FROM THE UNIVERSITY](#)

[TRANSFER TO ANOTHER SCHOOL](#)

UPDATED CONTACT INFORMATION: In SPIRE update the MAILING address type with your local US address and the LOCAL/CELL phone type with your U.S. phone number. U.S. address cannot be a post office box. Notify IPO if you need to update your HOME COUNTRY address type (DO NOT update this yourself).

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT F-1 REGULATIONS

FULL-TIME STATUS: International students must be enrolled as full-time students (*a minimum of 12 credits/term for undergraduate students and a minimum of 9 credits per/term for graduate students*) with a few [exceptions](#).* Enroll as a full time student by Add/Drop at the beginning of each academic term. Consult IPO first if you are planning to withdraw or change to audit credits as this may put you below full time. Repeat course credits do not count towards your full time status.

DEPENDENTS (F2): Dependents of F1 visa holders are not allowed to enroll in degree programs or work.

EMPLOYMENT: You may work *on-campus*, without permission up to 20 hours/week when school is in session and up to 40 hours/week during university holidays. NOTE: [Off-campus employment](#) requires permission from the visa sponsor.

TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF THE U.S: Before you travel make sure you have a valid visa stamp in your valid passport along with a current travel signature on page 2 of your I-20 from your visa sponsor.

VISA: The I-20 is a "Certificate of Eligibility" and allows you to apply for an F visa at an U.S. embassy. The visa stamp in your valid passport is the entry permit to the U.S. You should be in possession of your valid passport (with a valid visa stamp) and an I-20 with the required travel signature (see above) to enter the U.S. The visa can expire while you are here in the US. You need to renew visa if/when you leave the U.S. and plan to re-enter the U.S. for your studies.

COMPLETION OF DEGREE/PROGRAM: The grace period to remain in the U.S. following degree/program completion is 60 days for F-1 students.

ABSENCE FROM THE U.S: If you are planning to leave the U.S. for an extended period (*e.g. doing dissertation research overseas/personal leave*) contact an [advisor at IPO](#).

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*FULL-TIME STATUS EXCEPTIONS

ALL STUDENTS MUST OBTAIN PERMISSION FROM INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS BEFORE DROPPING BELOW FULL-TIME STATUS. The authorization will be noted in SEVIS. For all cases, documentation is required.

- During your **first term** at UMass, you encounter one of the following:
 - Initial difficulty with reading requirements
 - Initial difficulty with English language
 - Unfamiliar with American teaching methods
 - Improper course placement
- If you have a **medical condition** that demands that you reduce your course load (written recommendation from your doctor is required).
- It is your **final term** studying at UMass and the requirements for your degree can be completed in fewer courses.

GRADUATE LEVEL STUDENTS ONLY: Immigration allows for flexibility in defining full-time status for graduate students (*ie. you are registered for 6 credits and have a TA or RA in your department or you are working on your thesis research and paying continuous enrollment. Consult your Academic Advisor regarding the possibility of full-time status.*)

[IPO INTERNATIONAL STUDENT & SCHOLAR HOMEPAGE](#)

(413) 545-2710

70 Butterfield Terrace, UMass Amherst MA 01003

Hours of Operation: Monday - Friday, 8.30am - 4.30pm

Walk-In Advising Hours (no appointment required): Monday and Thursday 1pm-4pm, No advising on Wednesday, Tuesday and Friday 9am-12pm