

F-1 Immigration Regulations

It is the responsibility of each student to be familiar with the immigration requirements related to their status. Following the guidelines below will help you to avoid many unnecessary problems.

Basic Guidelines

- **Keep your passport valid for at least 6 months.**
Contact your [home country's embassy in the U.S.](#) for information about renewing your passport validity.
- **Keep your local address updated.**
Keep your local residential address current
<https://www.coa.edu/internationalstudentsforms.htm>
- **Maintain full-time enrollment.**
You must be full-time each tri-mester. For immigration purposes, in most cases, students must complete 3 credits per academic term. Placeholder credits do not suffice for full-time registered credits and must be changed before registration add/drop.
- **Get approval before reducing your course load or withdrawing from COA**
If for some reason you must withdraw from your program or drop below full-time, you are required to have approval from The Coordinator of International Student Services along with the Dean of Academic Affairs before doing so.
- **Attend the school noted on your I-20.**
You must have a current, valid I-20 from the school you are attending. If you transfer from another school to COA, the transfer process must be completed before the term begins. If you miss the beginning of the term check-in meeting/dinner, visit the office of International Student Services (ISS) immediately.
- **Keep your I-20 valid at all times.**
Make an appointment with the Coordinator of International Student Services if the completion date on your I-20 will expire within the next 30 days and you need more time to complete your program of study. The completion date can be found in Box #5 on the I-20 form.
- **Get a travel endorsement**
Before your departure from the U.S., request a signature for re-entry from The Coordinator of International Student Services. The Adviser will sign page 3 of the I-20 for this purpose. The signature is valid for one year. Make a copy of the third page for the Coordinator.
- **Get proper employment permission:**
 - **On-campus employment** -- Limit employment to 20 hours per week during the academic year. Employment on-campus may be full-time in the summer and vacation periods. No special work permit is required.
 - **Off-campus employment** -- Do not work off-campus without permission. Work permission for F-1 students must be approved through The Coordinator of International Student Services and the United States Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS).