
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION

CREATED WITH ASSISTANCE FROM THE CWRU ISS OFFICE



CLEVELAND
INSTITUTE OF MUSIC

WELCOME TO CIM!!

We're so happy you chose CIM for your studies! We are looking forward to getting to know you and guiding you through your time here in Cleveland.



MAINTAINING YOUR F-1 INTERNATIONAL STUDENT STATUS



UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCE

VISA

- This is the actual stamp in your passport.
- Think of it as the key that allows you to enter the US.
- It's okay if it expires during your stay in the US, if you are maintaining status and have a valid immigration document.
- You need to review it only if it is expired, and you are re-entering the US.
- You can **ONLY** renew a visa outside the US.

VISA Status

- Maintaining your status means:
 - You are abiding by all the regulations related to having a student visa.
 - You always have a valid immigration document (the **I-20** as an F-1 visa holder).



SEVIS & CIM'S RESPONSIBILITY

- The nature of your student visa requires you to follow a set of rules to maintain your status, which is directly linked to the Student Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) record that CIM created for you.
- CIM is obligated to report required information to the government through your SEVIS record on your behalf to help you maintain your status.
- The regulations apply once you are in the United States.



YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AS AN F-1 STUDENT

- Attend orientation and the first week of classes.
 - The Registrar's Office will register you with the SEVIS database once they have confirmed your attendance to orientation and the first week of classes.
- Maintain full time enrollment and complete your program by the end date listed on your I-20.
 - You must speak with the International Student Advisor before dropping below full-time enrollment.
 - Full time enrollment is defined as **12** credit hours for undergraduate students and **9** credit hours for graduate students.
 - Failure to maintain full time enrollment could result in the loss of your F-1 student status.
- Maintain a current and accurate I-20.
 - The I-20 is the document that proves your legal status in the US. It is your responsibility to make sure it is always up to date and valid.
 - You must have a current and valid address listed in Populi. Any changes to your address must be reported within ten days of the change.



MAINTAINING YOUR I-20 DOCUMENT

- You need to update your document if any of the following items change:
 - Changing/adding a major of study
 - A significant change in funding
 - Change in personal information (like your name or citizenship)
 - An extension of your program
 - If you need additional time to complete degree requirements, you must apply for an extension at least one month in advance



WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU RECEIVE A NEW I-20

- Any time you are given an updated I-20, the new document becomes your current and valid one to use.
- You must always be in possession of your valid document.
- NEVER discard your previous documents.
- Keep all of your immigration documents stored in a secure fashion. We cannot keep copies of your valid documents since it is only valid after you sign it.



WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU ARE TRAVELING

- Always maintain a valid passport.
 - Your passport must be valid for at least six months into the future at all times.
 - Most countries will allow you to renew your passport from the United States.
- If you are traveling internationally, you must have a valid travel signature to reenter the United States.
 - You must obtain a travel signature from one of CIM's Designated School Officials (DSO).
 - You must plan to obtain the signature at least two weeks in advance of your travel so you are well prepared.
- Travel signatures are generally valid for one year at a time and you can travel as many times as planned during that period.
- As a reminder, be sure to check if there are any travel restrictions in other countries or entering/exiting the United States.



TALK TO YOUR INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADVISOR

- If you want to do any of the following, you must talk to the International Student Advisor.
 - Change major, program, or education level
 - Transfer to a new school
 - Take a leave of absence
 - Travel outside the US
 - Move to a new address
 - Extend your program



COMPLETING YOUR PROGRAM

- You have 60 days after the completion of your program to leave the US.
- If you wish to stay in the US after graduation, talk to the International Student Advisor about the following options:
 - Attending another school
 - Changing your education level (ie: pursuing another degree here at CIM)
 - Applying to change visa status
 - Pursuing post-completion OPT



WORKING IN THE US



IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING WORKING IN THE US

- **You must never work without the proper authorization from CIM.** Working without authorization has serious consequences for your visa status. You will be forced to leave the US and may not be able to return later.
- You must apply for and receive your social security number (SSN) before you begin work.
 - Please see the International Student Advisor as you will need letters from your employer and CIM to apply for your SSN.
- As an international student, you cannot start work until all proper paperwork is completed with Human Resources and you have been cleared to work by Human Resources or the International Student Advisor.
- United States tax laws require everyone present in the United States to file taxes, even if no income is earned.
 - Tax filing season occurs from the end of January until mid-April.



APPLYING FOR A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (SSN)

- Social security numbers are given to students who are authorized to work on- or off-campus.
- To apply for a social security number, you must complete a form **SS-5** and provide documents to prove your work-authorized immigration status, age, and identity.
- To prove immigration status, you must show a current admission stamp in a valid passport, and a **Form I-94**. You must also show your **I-20**.
- To prove work eligibility, you must provide a **letter from the International Student Advisor** that identifies you, confirms your status as a student, and identifies your employer.
- You must also show evidence of your work by providing a **letter from an employer** describing your job, employment start date, number of hours working, and your supervisor's name and telephone number.
- Your application will not be processed if your CPT work begins more than **thirty days** from your application date.



TYPES OF WORK ON AN F-1 VISA

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

- CPT is training that:
 - Is directly related to your area of study
 - Is an integral part of your curriculum
 - Occurs before the program end date on your I-20
 - Is authorization for one specific employer over a set period of time

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

- OPT is training that:
 - Relates directly to your area of study
 - Is authorized by USCIS
 - Allows you to work for any employer



ELIGIBILITY

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

- You must be in valid F-1 status
- You must have passed the TOEFL and must not be enrolled in an ESL program
- You must be enrolled full time, except during summer
- Your new job must be directly related to your major
- Your new job must not require more than twenty hours of work per week during the academic year

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

- You must be a full-time student for one academic year before you can apply for OPT. Generally, we encourage students to only apply for post-completion OPT so that they can enjoy a full year of employment after graduation.
- You must have passed the TOEFL and must not be enrolled in an ESL program
- Your proposed employment must directly relate to your major
- You must not have been authorized for twelve months of full-time CPT



IMPORTANT FACTS

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

- You may hold multiple CPT authorizations at once
- CPT must be authorized **before** you can start working
- You must have the work opportunity secured **before** you are authorized for CPT
- **Undergraduates** cannot be authorized for CPT in your **first year** at CIM
- You can work part time during the school year and full time during the summer

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

- CIM can only recommend you for OPT in SEVIS. Your application is reviewed by USCIS and can be approved or denied
- You do not need to secure employment before applying for OPT
- You are issued an Employment Authorization Document (EAD), which you must have in order to begin working
- Periods of OPT cannot overlap
- You may work for twelve months on OPT
- When you change education levels, you are eligible for an additional twelve months of OPT.



STEPS TO APPLY

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

- You must be authorized to work in the United States.
- You must have a job offer.
- Request CPT by completing CIM's CPT request form (can be found on the Academic Affairs Page in STUDIO)
- The International Student Advisor will:
 - Review your request and determine your eligibility.
 - Authorize the CPT in SEVIS (see next slide).
 - Sign your new I-20 and send it to you.
- **You cannot begin work until this process is complete. You will only be able to start work on or after the CPT date listed on your I-20.**

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

- Submit CIM's OPT application form
- The International Student Advisor will:
 - Confirm your eligibility.
 - Enter the request in SEVIS and send you a new I-20.
- You must sign your new I-20 and complete Form I-765 within thirty days of the International Student Advisor's recommendation in SEVIS.
- USCIS issues you Form I-797 that contains a notice that your application was received
- USCIS makes a decision. If you are approved, USCIS will issue you an EAD.



CPT AUTHORIZATION IN SEVIS

- In order to authorize your CPT in SEVIS, the form requires:
 - Employment start date
 - Employment end date
 - Employer name
 - Employer address
 - A brief description of the work you will be doing and how it relates to your major
 - Signature of your Principal Instructor

ALL information and detailed steps regarding work at CIM are found on the **International Student Hiring Protocol Sheet**, always available for your reference.



HEALTHCARE AND INSURANCE



STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE

- As a CIM student, you are **required** to have medical/health insurance. It is recommended you purchase the Student Medical Plan through Case Western Reserve University.
- You have access to CWRU's University Health Services – do not go to the Emergency Room unless it is a true emergency.
- You can receive dental care through the CWRU School of Dental Medicine, and you can get vision care through the Aetna discount program
- Deductible is \$400; annual out of pocket limit is \$5000; copay for physician, urgent care, and mental health office visits is \$30; emergency room copay is \$250
- Always keep a copy of your insurance card in your wallet. You will need to show your insurance card for all medical visits.
 - If you do not have your card, you may be charged at a significantly higher rate and then adjust your bill.
 - Healthcare costs in the United States are extremely high without insurance.



FINAL NOTES



IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT SCAMS

- Scam alerts
 - Government officials will not contact via phone or ask for money. Anyone asking for gift cards over the phone is usually a scam caller.
 - Do not give out your credit card numbers or bank numbers to anyone over the phone, especially if they contact you.
 - If you believe you've been contacted by a scammer, connect with a staff member at CIM. We are all very familiar with the scams in the United States and can help you understand if the call was a scam.



QUESTIONS?

- If you have questions, please connect with CIM's International Student Advisor in the Registrar's Office. This staff member is the main resource for you during your time at CIM.
- The Registrar's Office is in CIM's Lennon Building – Room NI06.

