

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT & SCHOLAR SERVICES

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Web: <http://www.iss.uconn.edu>

PRE-ARRIVAL INFORMATION FOR NEW F-1 STUDENTS AT UCONN (UCAELI)

Congratulations on your admission to UCAELI! ISSS is the office that helps international students with immigration and cultural support services. Contact International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) at international@uconn.edu if you have questions related to your F-1 status prior to arrival.

FORM I-20 INSTRUCTIONS

Read your Form I-20 pages 1, 2, and 3 and sign the form where it says STUDENT CERTIFICATION at the bottom of Page 1.

If you find any errors on your Form I-20 please tell UCAELI and ISSS before you apply for your visa.

If you have family members who will come on F-2 visas, review the information on their forms as well. You must sign the F-2 Form I-20s where it says STUDENT CERTIFICATION. Your F-2 dependents do not sign the form.

SEVIS I-901 FEE

After you receive your Form I-20, pay the I-901 SEVIS fee. This fee is \$200, and is required **IN ADDITION TO the visa fees charged by the U.S. consulate or embassy**. Pay the fee online at <http://www.fmjfee.com>; print the payment confirmation to bring to your visa interview and carry with you to the U.S. You do not have to pay a SEVIS fee for your F-2 dependents.

APPLYING FOR YOUR VISA

Apply for your F-1 student visa and F-2 visa for accompanying dependents at your nearest U.S. embassy or consulate:

<http://usembassy.gov/>

Complete the online Form DS-160 before you attend an in-person visa interview.

Bring your passport, Form I-20, your UCAELI admission letter, your SEVIS fee payment confirmation, and your proof of financial support equal to at least the amount listed on your Form I-20 to the visa interview. Also bring documents (if you have any) that demonstrate ties to your home country, and be prepared to talk about why you want to study English as a Second Language at UCAELI. Your passport must be valid at least 6 months beyond your program dates at UConn.

Other helpful websites:

F-1 Student Visa Program

<http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/>

ISSS Visa Application Guidance

Isss.uconn.edu > New Students

ARRIVAL TO THE U.S.

With your Form I-20 and approved F-1/F-2 visa, you may travel to the U.S. **up to 30 days** before your program start date listed on the Form I-20.

During your flight to the United States, you will receive a customs declaration form. On the customs declaration form, provide the address of where you will stay in the U.S. You must declare the amount of money you are bringing with you on this form if you are bringing \$10,000 or more. Be sure to tell the truth. There is no penalty for bringing this much money but it **MUST** be declared. You must also include on the form the total value of any goods you are bringing into the U.S. You do not have to be specific, you can use general terms (i.e. clothing, books, gifts). You can estimate the value of the items. You do not have to pay a duty fee on totals less than \$1,000.

When you travel please carry with you your Form I-20, passport, visa, I-901 SEVIS fee receipt, admission letter or offer letter and funding documentation. **Do not pack these documents into your checked luggage.** Present your passport and Form I-20 to the U.S. immigration officer, who will stamp and annotate your documents with "F-1" and "D/S" (Duration of Status). Be sure that the officer admits you using your F-1 visa by checking the entry stamp in your passport - if the officer stamps your passport with any other entry than F-1 and a specific expiration date (not D/S) please go back to have this corrected **BEFORE** you leave the immigration booth.

When traveling, carry your Form DS-2019, passport, visa, I-901 SEVIS fee payment confirmation, invitation letter and proof of your finances (like a recent bank statement). **Do not pack these documents into your checked luggage.**

Present your passport and Form DS-2019 to the U.S. immigration officer, who will stamp your passport and write "J-1 (or J-2)" and "D/S" (Duration of Status).

Self Service Kiosks or Global Entry Program: If your immigration is processed through a self-service kiosk, select the correct visa type (J-1) and be sure to take any receipt issued by the kiosk.

ARRIVAL TO UCONN AND ONLINE CHECK-IN

IMPORTANT! You must complete ISSS online check in by the session start date on your Form I-20. ISSS will register your arrival in SEVIS, U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) database, after you complete check-in.

To complete online check-in, do the following **AFTER** arrival:

1) Update your "Current Local" address field in the UConn Student Admin database. Go to iss.uconn.edu > Update Your Local Address. Write where you are living in the United States.

2) Complete the online check-in form on the ISSS website: <http://iss.uconn.edu/check-in/>

Upload scanned copies of your 1)passport ID page, 2)visa stamp, 3)signed Form I-20, 4) Form I-94 (print this at ISSS) and 5) the entry stamp in your passport. You may use a scanner at ISSS; if you take photos of your documents instead of scanning them, they must be clear and easy to read. ISSS is located in room 183 of McMahon Hall.

Please upload the same documents for any F-2 visa dependents.

You must complete online check-in within 30 days after your program start date on the Form I-20 (or 15 days if you are an F-1 student with a SEVIS record transferred from another U.S. school) If you do not complete online check-in you will be in violation of student visa regulations.

ORIENTATION

You will attend a short ISSS orientation about the F-1 visa during your UCAELI orientation.

MEDICAL (HEALTH) INSURANCE

Medical care in the United States is very expensive. Therefore, all F-1 UCAELI students must purchase UConn student health insurance at the start of the program. Please contact UCAELI for further information. We also recommend that you purchase a temporary insurance from your home country to cover you until the UConn insurance is active.

WORKING

UCAELI students may apply for an on-campus job working for UConn for maximum 20 hours per week. Your work schedule may only include time when class is not in session. Off-campus work is not permitted. If you work off-campus, ISSS will terminate your visa status and you must leave the United States. F-2 dependents may not work. F-1 students who work on-campus for UConn must apply for a Social Security Number.

DRIVING

International students may drive in the U.S. with a foreign driver's license used together with an International Driver's Permit that you get in your home country before coming to the United States. Students may also apply for a Connecticut driver's license; however, it can take several months to get the license. Please live in safe walking/biking distance to campus or on a local bus line.

STUDY

UCAELI students must study on a full time basis to keep the visa status valid - this means that you attend all classes and meet UCAELI attendance policy requirements. If you are sick and need to miss too many classes, you must communicate that with UCAELI and with ISSS as soon as possible. F-2 visa holders may only study on a part-time basis, less than 18 hours per week.

F-1 VISA ADVISING

ISSS has an international advisor who works with UCAELI students to answer questions about your F-1/F-2 visas and immigration requirements and cultural adjustment matters. Contact Sarah Manning (sarah.manning@uconn.edu) if you have questions before coming to the U.S.

PRE-ARRIVAL SUMMARY

- Read this form and your Form I-20.
- Sign your Form I-20.
- Pay your I-901 SEVIS fee.
- Apply for your F-1 visa
- Purchase medical insurance for your first 30 days. Be prepared to pay for medical insurance for the length of your visit after you arrive.
- Obtain an International Driver's Permit while in the home country.
- Enter the U.S. with your F visa documents no earlier than 30 days before the program start date on Form I-20.

- Contact ISSS - Sarah Manning sarah.manning@uconn.edu with any immigration, SEVIS, visa or cultural adjustment questions. (Contact UCAELI with questions about your program, billing or medical insurance).