

- training if their degree program requires all students to engage in training before the 9 months have passed. Undergraduates are not eligible in their first 9 months of study.
- The training employment will result in the awarding of academic credit, at least preponderantly, if not solely, on the basis of the training experience. Included in this category is employment for a course specifically designed to award academic credit for an employment experience. Also included in this category is employment that will result in the award of at least one course credit for an independent study. In both of these cases you must be registered for the course during the period that you are working under curricular practical training authorization.
 - Students in dissertation status where the training opportunity is a necessary component of the student's research without which the dissertation cannot be completed may be authorized to undertake curricular practical training. A letter from the student's dissertation advisor explaining in detail the relationship between the proposed employment and the student's dissertation research must be provided.
 - CPT will NOT be authorized during the LAST semester of study at Auburn University prior to graduation unless it is required of all graduating students for the given degree.
 - CPT will NOT be authorized during the FIRST semester on campus unless the CPT is required participation for all students in the degree program.

2.5.1.4: Optional Practical Training

The U.S. USCIS (DHS) authorizes optional practical training. This authorization can take at least 90 days from the date the DHS receives your OPT application. The maximum amount of time granted to work in F-1 practical training status is 12 months (29 for S.T.E.M. students who will be working for an e-verify employer). You may use some or all of the available 12 months of practical training during your course of study or save the full twelve months to use after you graduate.

To be eligible to apply for optional practical training, you must have been in full time student status for at least one academic year be maintaining valid F-1 status at the time of the application, and intend to work in a position directly related to your major field of study to be eligible to apply for optional practical training. Only one period of practical training may be authorized for the duration of a person's F-1 student status per degree and subsequent higher degree level.

Authorization for optional practical training is granted by the USCIS. It is important that you apply for the authorization well in advance of the date you wish to commence employment. You may submit your application no earlier than 120 days before your anticipated start date.

2.5.1.5: F-2 Spouses/Dependants

F-2 visa holders are not allowed to study full time nor to be employed at any time while in F-2 status. F-2 dependent spouses must apply and be approved for a change of status to F-1 PRIOR to beginning their degree or full course of study program. There are restrictions for employment on all other categories of dependents (for example: H-4 may not work) therefore do not make assumptions about employment benefits. F-2 dependent status is based on the status of the F-1.

2.5.2: Categories of J Program Employment

As with the F program employment, rules vary depending on your specific status, history of employment, visa type, etc. The basic requirements that must be met are:

- You must be in valid status and enrolled for a full course of study (or have recently completed study for post-completion optional practical training).
- You must be authorized by DHS to attend Auburn University.
- You must have written permission from the ISSS to be employed regardless of whether it is a benefit of your status.

If employment is authorized you must maintain eligibility or you will lose your right to continue employment, even if it was authorized in writing.

2.5.2.1: On-Campus - student

A J-1 student is allowed to work on campus after obtaining permission from the ISSS in 228 Foy Hall. You are allowed to work up to 20 hours per week as long as the work does not interfere with your ability to continue as a full-time student. If your DS-2019 was issued by anyone other than Auburn University, you will need written permission from your program sponsor. Please come to the Office of International Student & Scholar Services for further information. Under no circumstances will you be allowed to work more than 20 hours per week while you are a registered student. During vacation breaks, like summer semester or holidays you may work up to 40 hours per week on campus if you are not registered. Students in their first and last semesters who are enrolled during the summer term may only work up to 20 hours per week.

2.5.2.2: Off-Campus - student

You must have the permission of your program sponsor for any off-campus employment. If Auburn University issued your DS-2019, you must come to the ISSS to find out if you are eligible. Off-campus work permission is RARELY APPROVED by ISSS.

2.5.2.3: J-1 Academic Training - student

J-1 student who has earned a degree or finished his/her program of study may request **written permission** from his/ her sponsor to engage in academic training. J-1 academic training may not exceed the length of time of program of study. If the university is your program sponsor, the ISSS may grant you J-1 academic training. You will need a letter from your faculty advisor recommending you for the academic training. Instructions for filing for J-1 academic training are available from the ISSS. If the university is not your sponsor, you will have to contact your program sponsor for instructions for filing for J-1 academic training.

2.5.2.4: J-2 Employment - dependent

A J-2 visa holder must apply to the DHS for permission to accept employment of any type as long as such employment is NOT used to support the J-1. To do so a J-2 must use the USCIS form I-765 and complete the instructions, submit the form to ISSS for review.

2.5.2.5: Research Scholar - Professor Category - Employment

J-1 research scholars or visiting professors are issued DS-2019 expressly to achieve the program objective as stated on the DS-2019 form. J-1 scholars are prohibited from engaging in any other form of employment other than that for which their DS-2019 was issued, whether on or off-campus. Once employed by a department you cannot change your essential activities within the university. A J-1 scholar who wishes to engage in a brief consultation or lecture at another university must first consult with the ISSS to obtain proper authorization. J-2 spouses and J-2 dependents old enough to work (such as high school students) should ask for the instructions and forms to request J-2 work authorization. Questions regarding scholar or scholar dependents employment should be directed to the ISSS office.

2.6: Absence Outside the United States for F-1 and J-1 Visa Holders

2.6.1: Travel Authorization and Vacation Semester

No F or J student or scholar can take a vacation semester unless it is during the official Auburn University summer vacation or within the AU employment policies. For students you can take the summer vacation off if you were a full time student the previous (spring) semester and will be full time student during the (fall) semester that follows the summer semester. If summer semester is your first or last semester, you must be enrolled as a full-time student. You must always notify ISSS in writing of your intent to take a vacation period.

If you plan to travel outside the U.S.A. you should always consult with the Office of International Student & Scholar Services first. Always bring your passport, your I-20 (student copy), or your DS-2019 with you when making inquiries at the ISSS about traveling outside the U.S.A. You will be required to submit your request at least 30 days in advance of any travel. Additionally if your financial documents are older than six months of age you will be required to provide up to date copies of such documents. BOTH F AND J STATUS DOCUMENTS REQUIRE that there be current DSO/RO authorization signatures on your documents for reentry into the US.

Your passport and your visa must be valid beyond the date on which you plan to re-enter the U.S.A. If your visa has expired, and you plan to travel outside the U.S.A. or, if you have changed your visa status while in the U.S.A. you will need to obtain a new visa at an American Embassy or Consulate abroad or in your home country before you may re-enter the U.S.A. For F and J status holders it is not possible to revalidate your visa while you are in the U.S.A. You will need your valid passport, your I-94, and your I-20 or DS-2019 endorsed by the Auburn University designated school official or responsible officer. You must check with the consulate service for each country you will go to as all consulates have different rules for foreign nationals entering their country. If going to Canada or Mexico, you must contact the consulates of the appropriate countries to determine whether you need a visa to enter to Canada or Mexico. Please give the ISSS at least four weeks to review your documents before any trip abroad.

During vacation periods, it is especially important to apply for travel documents very early, since most other students are planning to travel also. You should allow enough time to renew your visa in the American Embassy or Consulate in your home country. Never leave your passport, I-20 or DS-2019/IAP-66 form, or I-94 (or any immigration-related documents) in your luggage! Always carry these items on your person when departing the U.S.A., and upon re-entry.

Immigration inspectors have been known to refuse entry into the country if you are not in possession of any one of these documents. Luggage can be lost, sometimes for days, sometimes forever, and you may be severely inconvenienced if you have to miss your plane because you are held up by immigration.

2.6.2: Absence of more than five months

If you will be outside the US for more than five months you will be required to have an initial attendance I-20 or a new DS-2019 to reinitiate your status. Do not attempt to enter the US after an absence of more than five months from the US.

International students in F or J status who intend to study abroad as part of the AU study abroad offerings must check with ISSS to ensure that your study abroad program is appropriately documented.

2.7: Other Issues Related to Your Immigration Status

2.7.1: Social Security Cards

The U.S.A. Social Security Administration (<http://www.ssa.gov/>) will issue Social Security Cards only to US citizens and anyone who legally is eligible for employment within the U.S.A. and has a valid offer of employment. For specific information check the following: <http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/10107.html>. To apply for a Social Security number and card, you need to complete Form SS-5, which is available for download at <http://www.ssa.gov/online/ss-5.html>. Or you can obtain Form SS-5 by calling 1-800-772-1213 or visiting your local Social Security office. These services are free.

When you apply you must do so in person and you will also need to submit original evidence of your age, identity, and U.S.A. citizenship or lawful alien status as indicated below:

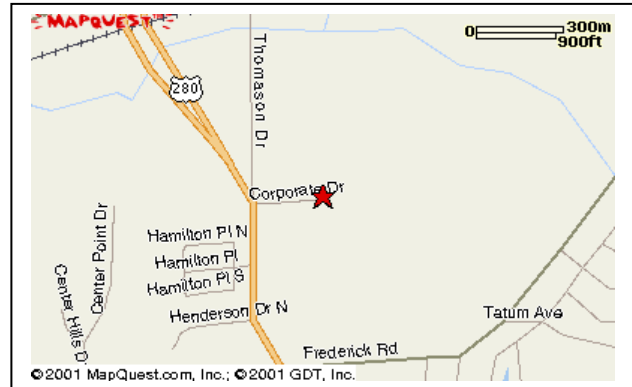
- **Age:** The SSA prefers to see your birth certificate. However, they can accept other documents, such as a hospital record of your birth made before you were age 5 or a religious record made before you were 3 months old. If you were born outside the U.S.A., we can accept your passport.
- **Identity:** The SSA must see a document in the name you want shown on the card. The identity document must be of recent issuance so that they can determine your continued existence. They prefer to see a document with a photograph. However, they can generally accept a non-photo identity document if it has enough information to identify you (e.g., your name as well as your age, height, weight, color of hair, date of birth, or parents' names). They will not accept a birth certificate or hospital birth record as evidence of identity. Some documents that they can accept as proof of identity are: Driver's license, Marriage or divorce record, Military records, Employer ID card, Adoption record, Life insurance policy, Passport, Health Insurance card (not a Medicare card), School ID card, etc.
- **U.S. Citizenship:** They can accept most documents that show you were born in the U.S.A. If you are a U.S.A. citizen born outside the U.S.A., show us a U.S.A. consular report of birth, a U.S.A. passport, a Certificate of Citizenship, or a Certificate of Naturalization. OR
- **Alien Status:** They need to see an unexpired document issued to you by the U.S.A. Immigration and Naturalization Service (DHS), such as a visa plus I-20, IAP-66, Form I-551, I-94, I-688B, or I-766. As of April 2002, if you are not authorized to work in the U.S.A. you are ineligible for a SS card. They can only issue you a Social Security card if you are lawfully here AND have both a letter from your employing A. U. Department and the Office of International Education.
- **All applications from those holding alien status are subject to verification by the SSA with the DHS.** This procedure may result in delay of the issuance of SS #'s for applicants as they must verify your I-94 number in the DHS SAVE system.

All documents must be either originals or copies certified by the issuing agency. **They cannot accept photocopies of documents. They need original documents or copies certified by the custodian of the record. Notarized copies are also not acceptable.**

Take the application and evidence in person to your local Social Security office. You can find that office at: <http://www.ssa.gov/locator/>. Your documents will be returned to you. You should receive your card within two weeks of the date they have all the information they need to process your request. If you have not received your card within this time frame, contact the Social Security office where you filed the application and they will investigate to see why it is being delayed.

Auburn Area SS Office can be found at:

- 1800 CORPORATE DR
- OPELIKA , AL 36801
- (800) 772-1213
- (334) 745-7052
- TTY: (334) 745-2498
- MONDAY – FRIDAY 8:30AM-3:30PM



2.7.2: Individual Taxpayer Identification Number

You need a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) if you:

1. The ITIN is only available to individuals who cannot get a Social Security Number (SSN).
2. You do not have a SSN and will need to file an Income tax return and have no earnings
3. Have income that is reported to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS); or
4. You are claimed as a dependent on someone's Federal income tax return.

The IRS uses the SSN as the TIN if you have been assigned one. If you have any questions about use of the Tax Identification Numbers, contact the nearest IRS office or go to the following web site: <http://www.irs.gov/> or <http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=96287,00.html>

2.7.2.1: What is ITIN?

An ITIN, or individual Taxpayer Identification Number, is a tax processing number that became available on July 1, 1996, for certain nonresident and resident aliens, their spouse, and dependents. It is a 9-digit number, beginning with the number "9", formatted like an SSN (NNN-NN-NNN). The temporary IRS Number previously assigned is no longer valid.

2.7.2.2: What is the Purpose of an ITIN?

ITINs are only used for federal income tax purposes. The issuance of an ITIN does not:

- entitle the recipient to Social Security benefits or the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC);
- create an inference regarding the individual's immigration status;
- give the individual the right to work in the U.S.A.

When completing the tax return (1040, 1040A, 1040EZ, 1040NR, 1040NR EZ), the individual will enter their ITIN in the space for the SSN.

2.7.2.3: How Do I Know if I need an ITIN?

If you must file a U.S. tax return or you are listed on a tax return as a spouse or a dependent and you do not have, and cannot obtain, a valid Social Security Number, you must apply for an ITIN

Please be aware that you are required by US law to file a US tax return as are all US citizens. This is done every year by April 15 of each year.

2.7.3: Alabama Driver's License

For specific information on Driver's licenses in Alabama, including the Alabama Driver's Manual please visit: <http://www.dps.state.al.us/DriverLicense/manuals/DriverManual.pdf>.

You should be aware that the Alabama Department of Public Safety requires that anyone getting an Alabama Driver's License to provide a U.S.A. Social Security Number (section 30-3-194, Code of Alabama, 1975).

International Students and Scholars coming to Alabama should bring current drivers licenses with them if they intend to drive in Alabama upon arrival. Alabama recognizes the International Drivers License and allows you to drive in the State for up to one year on your home country drivers license. However when purchasing or renting a car you will be required to carry liability insurance and if you do not have a US drivers license you will find that the insurance is very expensive. Again, if you plan on driving in the U.S. be aware that **you must carry automobile liability and accident insurance coverage**. For specific information check with any insurance company PRIOR to purchasing any vehicle!

To get an Alabama drivers license students who are F-1 and J-1's who are eligible for employment on campus can get a letter from the ISSS that they can take to the SS Office to apply for a SS number. Once you have the Social Security Number you can then request that ISSS provide you with a Drivers license letter after which you can go apply for a Driver's license. **For dependents such as H-4, F-2 and certain J-2's and for F-1 or J-1's who are not authorized to work either on or off-campus they must follow specific procedures to secure a drivers license in the State of Alabama. As of August, 2003, dependents must go to the Social Security Office and request a letter indicating that they are NOT eligible for a SSN. The F-1/J-1/F-2/J-2/H-4 can then take the letter to the Drivers License office and apply for a driver's license. The office is located at the USA Outlet Stores Mall near Cracker Barrell at the intersection of I-85 N and US 280/US 431.**

2.7.4: Beware of Becoming a Public Charge

International students should be reminded to not accept any public benefits from federal, state, county, or local public service agencies, without first checking on how it will impact their current non-immigrant and possible future intent to apply for other immigration benefits in the United States of America. The following is quoted from the USCIS statements on 5/29/1999 which are posted on their web site.

2.7.4.1: What Does it Mean to be a "Public Charge" Under the Immigration Laws?

"An alien who is likely at any time to become a "public charge" is ineligible for admission to the U.S.A. and is ineligible to adjust status to become a lawful permanent resident. An alien who has become a public charge can also be deported from the U.S.A., although this very rarely happens. These provisions have been part of U.S.A. immigration law for over 100 years, and the recent

immigration reform and welfare reform laws did not substantively change them. Both USCIS (in the U.S.A.) and the Department of State (State) (overseas) make public charge determinations.”

2.7.4.2: How Does DHS Decide Whether Someone is Deportable as a Public Charge?

“In deciding whether an alien is likely to become a public charge, the law requires that the USCIS (in the U.S.A.) or D.O.S. (overseas) take certain factors into account, including the alien’s age, health, family status, assets, resources, financial status, education and skills. The government official examines all of these factors, looking at the “totality of the circumstances” concerning the alien, to make a forward-looking decision. No single factor — other than the lack of an Affidavit of Support, if required — will be used as the sole basis for finding that someone is likely to become a public charge, that is, likely to become primarily dependent on the government for subsistence. As described below, non-cash benefits and certain special-purpose cash benefits will not be taken into account under the totality of circumstances test. Deportations on public charge grounds are very rare because the standards are very strict.”

You should recall that when applying to enter the United States of America using the I-20 or DS-2019 document, you were required to have a sponsor or present proof of sufficient financial resources, in essence, you were presenting official documentation indicating that you would not become a “public charge” while you are in the U.S.A. This does not mean you cannot accept certain forms of public assistance and occasionally, public service agencies including hospitals, clinics, or social services will encourage international students or their dependents to apply for public benefits, such as Medicaid, food stamps, federally subsidized housing, or special charitable benefits. You should realize, however, that because the personnel at the agencies may be unaware of the rules governing non-immigrant status, accepting such assistance could jeopardize your non-immigrant status and future plans.

In many states, the state social service agencies are sharing their databases with the federal agencies including the Department Of Homeland Security. Any non-immigrant listed as having received public benefits may be entered into an DHS computer database. It is then possible that such individuals will be denied new visas at consulates abroad, and therefore may also be denied the opportunity to return to the U.S.A., for having accepted public benefits. In some cases students may have to pay back all of the money provided by the state before being allowed to obtain a new visa to return to the U.S.A. Again, remember when you get your visa, originally enter the United States of America, or renew your I-20 for travel or any other purpose, you will need to show proof of sufficient funds for your program of study. Furthermore, if you have a spouse and/or children with you in the U.S.A., you will also be required to show sufficient funds for each of your family members. When seeking other benefits while in the U.S.A. related to financial or other support, do not forget that these documents are a permanent part of your official DOS and DHS records.

Cooperation between state social service agencies and the US DHS as well as with the Department of State make it possible for an POE inspector or U.S. Consular officer to now become aware of an individual who has accepted public benefits. Remember the acceptance of public benefits can be interpreted as a declaration that the individual is unable to meet his or her financial obligations (a requirement of obtaining and maintaining status) and thereby rendering him or herself and all accompanying dependents as ineligible for F-1 or J-1 or F-2/J-2 status.

For more information on how you might be affected by any public services you accept please check with the DHS or an attorney:

http://uscis.gov/graphics/publicaffairs/factsheets/public_cfs.pdf

2.8: SUMMARY Executive, Legislative, & Regulatory Updates

As you should be aware by now effective January 30, 2003, there were new requirements you should already be aware of. In order to host you as students and exchange visitors Auburn University and all educational institutions, must participate by entering information about you and your family members into the SEVIS system. Additionally all participating institutions now have certain certification requirements that will be reviewed every two years through on site administrative inspections by DHS officers or their representatives. Auburn was last inspected in Spring of 2004 and will be inspected every two years thereafter

You should also be aware by now that after August 1, 2003, entry into the United States was only possible using the SEVIS Form I-20 or DS-2019 and by this date all schools in the US had to enter all students, scholars and their dependents in the SEVIS system. What is the information entered in the system? It is the information that you find on these documents however under the new regulations we must now report the following information within a 10 to 30 day period of time following the activity. The new information that must be entered into the SEVIS tracking system includes:

- *Confirmation that you have arrived on campus to conduct your program activities*
- *Report of non-arrival/failure to begin your F or J program*
- *Enrollment each semester along with date of next term you plan on enrolling*
- *Current work and home addresses and phone numbers and any subsequent change of address (you must notify the AU Registrar and the USCIS within 10 days of every change of address)*
- *City and country of birth and country of legal permanent residence of accompanying family members (every dependent now will have their own documents)*
- *Criminal conviction during F or J program*
- *Disciplinary action during F or J program*
- *Engaging in unauthorized employment*
- *Failure to pursue program activities*
- *Failure to submit change of address*
- *Failure to maintain health insurance*
- *Failure to maintain a full course of study*
- *Suspension or dismissal from school*
- *Graduation and or completion of studies (whichever occurs first)*
- *Violation of F or J program rules and regulations*
- *Any other information that the DHS may request within regulation*

NAME/Passport – Since name information for the new SEVIS I-20s/DS-2019s and SEVIS reporting will be drawn from the Registrar's database, your name as listed in the Registrar's database must match the name as indicated in your passport and current I-20 or DS-2019. In order for an accurate SEVIS I-20/DS-2019 to be made, you should check to make sure that your name as indicated in the Registrar's database matches the name as written in your passport – exact spelling. The entire immigration process requires that all documents are based on your and your dependents passports. Also all passports must be valid at all times for you to remain in status, do not let your passport expire. Always contact your consulate in the US so you can extend or renew your passport well before its expiration date. If you get a new passport or extension bring a copy of that to ISSS so we can update the SEVIS system.

Family members – dependents - Each family member in F-2 or J-2 status will now need his/her own Form I-20 or DS-2019. Given that in the past dependents often required no documents from AU, letters or different levels of document there may be requests by ISSS sent out for you and your dependents to appear in the ISSS so we can review all the documents and update your records. If you have dependents who arrived in the US and who do not have SEVIS F-2 or J-2 documents please make sure they CHECK-IN IN PERSON, email intledu@auburn.edu so we can schedule an appointment for you and your family to meet with our staff and complete the SEVIS registration process. If any dependents are not registered with SEVIS the primary visa holder as well as all dependents will be in violation of the DHS USCIS/USICE regulations which will require you to depart the US.

Travel - It is more important than ever to check with ISSS before traveling to have your documents checked or to have you document signed and reviewed. Also following travel and getting your I-94 (that white postcard looking document) as well as other documents stamped with an entry date you MUST provide ISSS with copies of these entry documents so we can update and or verify the data in the SEVIS system. Yes, in the near future it is expected that all the ports of entry will automatically report your departures and arrivals to the SEVIS system and to your hosting schools. Right now this functionality is not active and we do want to verify the data when we see it.

Address Change Notification Requirement - Under the SEVIS regulations, you and your dependents are required to report your current contact information (U.S. office and residential addresses) to the AU registrar (BANNER) or the office that issued your document within 10 days, and inform them of any subsequent changes of address within 10 days. You are required to maintain a physical local address where you are living (NO Post Office Boxes or Departmental addresses) as well as permanent FOREIGN address (NO PERMANENT US ADDRESSES unless you have declared immigrant intent).

Full Course Of Study Requirement And Reporting Requirements For Exceptions - Schools are required to report to SEVIS when a student drops below a full course of study (9 semester hours for most grads, unless a higher number of units is required by the department, and 12 semester credit hours for undergrads, Intensive English Program and Exchanges have special program specific requirements) or fails to enroll. Under SEVIS you still are able to have the summer vacation period (for AU the term between Spring and Fall semesters) however you must be registered for a full course of study throughout the academic year in order to maintain your valid student visa status. Full course of study and Drop Below full course of study procedures have been posted to the AU ISSS web site. In the past this enrollment was not enforced however now by the end of the first week of classes ISSS will begin the process of terminating any students and scholars who are not appropriately certified in writing. Once terminated students will have to depart the US immediately or apply for reinstatement (which requires considerable detailed explanation from the student/scholar to the USCIS/USICE officers). Again once the SEVIS record is terminated ISSS has no way to reinstate the record only USCIS may do so following the reinstatement process.

Transfer To Another School - Students who have been issued SEVIS I-20s will be expected to notify ISSS of their plans to transfer to another U.S. school at least 30 days in advance of the transfer so that ISSS can release its visa sponsorship to the new school. The new school cannot create an I-20 or DS-2019 for the student/scholar until the AU ISSS releases the electronic record SEVIS. Once the release date has past the record is owned by the receiving institution and students must report for enrollment or risk losing their status. Due to the new electronic processes please note that all new (initial attendance) students coming to AU must attend at least one full semester at AU prior to any transfer.

F Program Practical Training – A major change is that students can no longer apply for Optional Practical training after they have already graduated. However a new benefit is that students who have already used 12 months of practical training based on the completion of one degree level are eligible

for an additional 12 months if they move to a **higher degree** level (i.e. Bachelors to Masters, etc.. but NOT from PhD to Masters). Students who apply for Optional Practical Training based on completion of one degree will have their OPT automatically CANCELLED if they begin another degree program.

Dependents - F-2 and J-2 full course of study – F-2’s may NOT enter a degree program prior to applying for a change of status. F-2’s may study for “avocational” or non-degree purposes and may only do so part time however they should have an approval on file with ISSS to clearly authorize the nature of the study. At AU all F-2’s who are so enrolled must be in a non-degree or audit status. F-2’s may begin to study full time in a degree program only **AFTER** receiving an approved change of status (which can take up to six or more months for approval). The Department of State has also notified schools of its intent to enforce a similar policy for J-2’s. As of 8/02/2004 this rule has not yet been implemented however given the intent of the DOS ISSS highly recommends that J-2’s working on degree programs to immediately begin a change of status to F-1 or J-1 as appropriate. Please note that in the case of F-1 and J-1 programs if you are departing the country for more than two weeks or during the summer vacation months you must check with ISSS if your dependents intend to remain in the US. All dependents are subject to the continued presence of the F-1 or J-1 in the US.

J regulations – Everyone holding J status should be aware that the DOS is in the process of preparing final regulation changes. These changes are not expected to significantly change the J program however it will change the process and procedures to make the J program compliant with the SEVIS regulations. Therefore many of the procedures and processes that function under the F program will become similar. For instance J’s (primary and dependents) will each have a DS-2019 for visa, entry and travel purposes. All J dependents must check in as is now required for F’s. J’s may not enter the US more than 30 days prior to the beginning of their program and may not apply for extensions or benefits after the completion of their program. Additional details will be posted on the ISSS web site.

Extensions – NO extensions are possible if the I-20 or DS-2019 has expired – i.e. after the end date on the I-20 or DS-2019. You will be required to depart the US within 60 days or apply for change of status or other US immigration options.

5 month rule – The USCIS/USICE now has implemented a five month rule for measuring the validity of your status. If you depart the US for five months or more you will need a new I-20/DS-2019. If you transfer to another institution you will need to complete that transfer within 5 months. If you end your program you must leave the US within 60 days or start another program within the five month period (i.e. have an I-20/DS-2019 issued prior to the 60/30 days being up).

The US government has been regularly updating and modifying its regulations regarding immigration. Every effort will be made to provide you with updates on such changes as they occur however no guarantee can be made that ISSS will be able to ensure that you are aware of these changes. It is your responsibility to ensure that YOU are following the regulations and rules.

Students and Scholars should be aware that in light of the increased scrutiny being placed upon offices such as ISSS, we continually review all of our policies and procedures to ensure we and our students and scholars are in full compliance with current regulations and that we are positioned for full compliance with the myriad of complex regulations that are forthcoming. **Our ability to enroll and/or employ internationals at the University is a privilege that has been extended to us by the United States government and we must not jeopardize it.**

ISSS has been making changes in our office procedures to take into account many of the proposed rule changes. What is the most significant change to affect students and scholars: **ALL AUTHORIZATIONS FOR ANY MODIFICATIONS IN YOUR PROGRAM MUST BE DONE WELL IN ADVANCE, NO AFTER THE FACT AUTHORIZATIONS.** Additionally you must check in with ISSS, read your email notifications and check the ISSS

web site for advisory information regularly. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO STAY IN STATUS, OIP will help you do so but only with YOUR HELP.

In closing this chapter we want you to know that ISSS appreciates all feedback on issues, ideas and suggestions that you may wish to offer us to enhance services that may exist on the campus. The mechanisms that we recommend you include in your efforts include your elected student representatives as well as your faculty and staff:

- Student Government Association (SGA) – President
- Graduate Student Council (GSC) – President
- International Student Organization (ISO) – President
- International Student Clubs and their President
- Office of International Student Life and the Office of International Education AND MOST IMPORTANTLY
- Your individual academic units, departments and colleges

US DHS SEVIS FEE - The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) provides for the collection of a congressionally mandated fee to be paid by certain aliens who are seeking status as nonimmigrant students (visa categories F-1, F-3, M-1, or M-3) or as nonimmigrant exchange visitors (visa category J-1). The purpose of this fee (\$100) is to cover the costs for the continued operation of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), including the administration and maintenance of SEVIS, compliance activities, and the establishment of SEVIS Liaison Officers. More information at: <https://www.fmjfee.com/index.jhtml> OR <http://www.ice.gov/graphics/news/factsheets/SEVISFactSheet.htm>

2.9: Auburn University Office of International Student & Scholar Services – Non-immigrant Responsibility Pledge

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR DOCUMENT.

Auburn University Office of International Education Non-immigrant Responsibility Pledge (8/2/2003)

Auburn University is truly a global institution with students, scholars and visitors who come from around the world to participate in the intellectual life of the University. Just as these individuals played a major role in helping to make Auburn the place it is today, we fully expect that your academic achievements will contribute to our continued development as a center of learning. All members of the AU academic community are bound to uphold the highest standards of scholarship and responsibility. As an international student, scholar or visitor, you have an additional obligation to comply with the immigration laws and regulations of the United States. It is illegal to violate U.S. federal immigration laws and regulations for any reason whatsoever. **Being a non-immigrant, you are responsible for learning, understanding, and complying with the U.S. laws and regulations that apply to you. If you fail to do so, you could be deported from the United States and barred from returning for an extended period of time, thereby jeopardizing your academic career.**

AU wants you to be able to successfully complete your studies at the University. Your failure to be aware of and comply with these requirements could jeopardize your not only your academic plans but all future plans. It is extremely important that you read and fully understand this responsibility which includes:

Requirement to Report Address Changes to the Office of International Programs

U.S. federal regulations require you to report any address change **within 10 days** of the address change to the US USCIS. Students and scholars in F and J status must also do so **directly to the Office of International Student & Scholar Services**. This includes address changes of any of your dependents as well. If you are subject to the U.S. Government's Special Registration Procedures, you must also follow all DHS USCIS regulations as well.

For STUDENTS (F/J) - Requirement to Obtain Prior Authorization from ISSS to Drop Below a Full Course of Study

U.S. federal regulations require you to pursue a full course of study. You are allowed to deviate from this full course of study only with PRIOR written authorization by an ISSS international student advisor, and only under very limited circumstances. **AFTER** obtaining written approval from ISSS you must also get approval from your dean and or department as appropriate. Students who begin a semester below the required hours will be reported automatically as being out of status and must apply for reinstatement.

Requirement to Report Departure Date and Reason to ISSS

Sometimes, and for a variety of reasons, students leave the University early or unexpectedly. Some of these reasons include early departures, transfers, graduation, leave of absence, suspension, or expulsion. U.S. federal regulations require you to inform your ISSS international office advisor if you plan to leave the University before the date on your immigration document (I-20 or DS-2019), and the reason for doing so.

Requirement to Abide by Employment Regulations

F-1 and J-1 students may work **NO MORE than 20 hours per week on-campus** while school is in session [8CFR214.2(f)(9)]. These 20 hours include the work you do for your assistantship if you have one. You are not permitted to work off-campus without receiving **PRIOR** written authorization from the U.S. Federal Government and/or your ISSS international office advisor, depending upon your visa status type. Work under other status types is limited to that work related to the immigration petition submitted. There are severe limitations on work authorizations as well as options depending on your status. All nonimmigrants should seek written authorization for employment prior to the start of any employment.

There are numerous other requirements associated with your immigration status in addition to those listed above which can affect your status and that of any dependents. It is also your responsibility to ensure that you are in compliance at all times with AU policies including paying all your bills as well ensuring that you and your dependents are properly enrolled in the AU health insurance program for F and J status holders.

I agree to read all correspondence and email received from ISSS. I agree to read the International Student and Scholar Handbook that is online at www.auburn.edu/aub-ie/office.

- **I also agree** that it is MY responsibility to make sure that I am aware of the expiration dates on MY immigration documents and that I will have secured all appropriate actions related to extensions, etc. WELL BEFORE the expiration dates or making changes to my program.
- **I also understand** that ISSS is the only AU office authorized by AU and the federal government to provide you with advising regarding U.S. immigration regulations and that ISSS is responsible for regularly reporting the conditions of my status to the USCIS SEVIS system.
- **I am aware that ISSS requires a minimum of 30 days notice for ANY requests** for action such as re-issuance of I-20/DS-2019, travel authorization signatures, etc.
- **I have read and understand this information, and I knowingly accept full responsibility for maintaining my status as an international student or scholar during the duration of my stay at Auburn University.**

Non-immigrant Signature

Print Name

SID/SEVIS ID Date