U.S. Immigration Responsibilities for F1 and J1 Students

Although the OISS is here to help you understand and comply with US immigration regulations, maintaining legal immigration status is the responsibility of the individual student or exchange visitor. Below is a list of immigration regulations and OISS policies that you must follow. Be sure to read each statement CAREFULLY and make sure that you understand each statement. If you have any questions, please ask an OISS advisor.

☐ Update your local US address. Report all address updates in the AGORA Portal within 10 days of moving.

☐ Maintain full-time student status. Full-time status is 12 credits for undergraduate students and 9 credits for graduate students. If you want to drop below full-time, speak with the OISS before dropping any classes.

☐ Observe online course limits. Students with “Initial Status” I-20s may NOT enroll in ALL online-only courses. Students with “Continued Attendance” or “Transfer Pending” I-20s may enroll in more than 1 online-only course. Consult OISS for details.

☐ Obtain travel signatures. If you plan to travel outside the US, you must have your I-20 (F-1 students) or DS-2019 (J-1 students) signed on page 2 by an OISS advisor. Travel signatures are valid for one year for most students. (Canadian citizens require a signature every six months).

☐ DO NOT WORK WITHOUT PERMISSION. If you are interested in working on- or off-campus, please speak with an OISS advisor before you do so.

☐ Report changes in your academic status. For example, any leaves of absence, changes in completion of studies dates, and/or withdrawal from BC must be reported to OISS in advance.

☐ Obtain extensions. If you require additional time to complete your studies, you must apply for an extension BEFORE your current I-20 or DS-2019 expires.

☐ Observe grace periods. F-1 students have a 60-day grace period and J-1 students have a 30-day grace period to depart the US following the completion of studies date. (This date may be different from the date on your I-20 or DS-2019 and is not necessarily the same as your graduation date.)

☐ Maintain the required health insurance coverage. All students are required to enroll in BC health insurance.

☐ Keep copies of all issued Immigration Forms, including those from past schools. We recommend keeping scanned copies of all immigration documents (I-20s or DS-2019s, visas, passports, etc.).

☐ Check your BC email account regularly. OISS will send important notices, updates, and other immigration information to your BC email account.

NOTE: This list outlines basic immigration regulations, but is not inclusive. All regulations are subject to change. Check your BC email and the OISS website regularly for updates from the OISS.