

How to Obtain Your F-1 Visa & Status



Check Your I-20 for Errors

Check your Form I-20 for any corrections or updates that need to be made. **Your name on the Form I-20 must match your name in your passport!** Enter your complete name, signature, and date in #11 on page 1 of the Form I-20.



SEVIS I-901 Fee

Pay the **SEVIS I-901** fee prior to applying for an F-1 visa, or if an F-1 visa is not required in your case (see next item to find out if you are required to obtain an F-1 visa at the US embassy or consulate), prior to applying for admission to the US in F-1 status. Payment of this fee may be made at <https://www.fmiffee.com/i901fee/>. Print the SEVIS I-901 fee payment confirmation page and attach it to your Form I-20. If your Pepperdine Form I-20 states "transfer pending" in line #3, and you have paid the fee previously, attach the payment confirmation page for your previous payment to your Pepperdine Form I-20.



Arriving to the U.S. Port of Entry

Arrive at the US port of entry **not more than 30 days** before the "program start date" on your Form I-20 (see #5 on your Form I-20) if your Form I-20 was issued for "initial attendance." To avoid delays or problems being admitted to the US, visit the **US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)** website (www.ice.gov) and **US Customs and Border Protection (CBP)** website (www.cbp.gov) for additional information on entry/exit procedures and requirements. If you are cleared for admission, the CBP officer will provide an admission stamp in your passport that is annotated with the date of admission, class of admission (for students, the class is "F-1"), and length of authorized stay (for students, the authorized stay is for "duration of status," or "D/S").



Form I-94

Upon entry to the US, search for your **I-94 number**, which is important evidence of your lawful entry to the US. It is created each time you enter the US as an automated electronic arrival record at an air or sea port of entry. You must go to www.cbp.gov/I94 as soon as you arrive in order to retrieve and print your I-94 number. Keep each Form I-94 for your records.



Report to OISS When You Arrive

Not later than one week of the program start date listed on your Form I-20, you must visit the [Office of International Student Services \(OISS\) website](#) and click on "New Students Upon Arrival." **It is your responsibility** to submit the documents listed on the "on-campus arrival checklist" within the first week of school.



Reporting Your Name

Be consistent in the way you enter your name, date of birth and other information on forms submitted to the US government for immigration, driver license, employment, tax and other purposes. The information you provide should match the information in your passport and on your Form I-20. Your name in the Pepperdine University system should also conform with your passport name.



Transfer or Withdraw

If you decide to cancel or defer your attendance at Pepperdine University, or if you decide to attend another school after entering the US on a Pepperdine University Form I-20, notify the OISS immediately. In order to attend another school, the program start date at the new school must be within 30 days of the date of your entry if your Form I-20 is issued for "initial attendance" or within 5 months of your last school attendance if your Form I-20 was issued for "transfer pending."