

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HELPFUL HINTS

### **HOW TO OBTAIN YOUR FORM I-20**

After completion, submission, and verification of the admissions and financial documentation, your I-20 will be mailed to you unless special arrangements are made in advance. The International Student Advisor or Designated School Official (DSO) can send your documents using the other express services, but **you will need to make arrangements to cover the cost of mailing.**

Please contact the campus International Student Advisors or DSOs, EGF campus – [Fontes, Mary](#) or TRF campus – [Carlson, Nicki](#), to discuss this option if you are interested.

### **OBTAINING I-20 FORMS FOR DEPENDENTS**

#### General Information

- Dependents are the spouse or minor children (under age 21) of the principal F-1 or M-1 visa holder.
- Dependent status for the categories discussed here is indicated by the number 2: F-2 or M-2
- Dependents' status depends on the principal visa holder maintaining their status.
- Dependents may come with the principal at the beginning of the program or they may come later.
- Dependents may not engage in any kind of study. Minor children are allowed to attend public schools through Grade 12.
- Dependents who have graduated from high school may only study part time for recreational or avocational purposes (e.g. an ESL class or a craft class). They may not pursue specific academic goals (degrees, certificates) in F-2 status. If a dependent is interested in pursuing a degree program, he or she should apply for a change of status to F-1.
- Dependents may travel with the F-1 or M-1 student or on their own. To re-enter the United States, F-2 or M-2 travelers must present:
  - Passport
  - Valid I-20 form with a current signature on page 3
  - Valid F-2 or M-2 Visa
- Recommended Documents
  - Copies of documents showing F-1's continuing legal status (I-20, I-94, visa, passport, transcript, etc.)
  - Current financial support documents

You may bring dependents-spouse or children-with you when you come to the United States.

- Each dependent will need to apply for an F-2 or M-2 visa.
- Each dependent will need his or her I-20 form.
- Dependent I-20's (F-2, M-2) forms will be issued at the same time as the student forms.

If you are bringing dependents, be sure to indicate the following information on your financial support documentation:

- That you are bringing dependents
- That you have the additional funding sources requested for dependent I-20s (indicated on the certification of finances form)
- Provide the requested biographical information for each dependent, and if possible, provide copies of the passport for each applicant

**VISA APPOINTMENT AND INTERVIEW**

**Canadian Students**

Canadian citizens are visa-exempt. They do not need visa stamps to enter or re-enter the United States. As an F or M student, you are required to show proof of your international student status:

**Mandatory Documents**

F-1/F-2	M-1/M-2
Current Form I-20 Signature on page 3 must be less than 6 months old when you return	Current Form I-20 Signature on page 3 must be less than 6 months old when you return
Passport*	Passport*
I-901 Receipt (if applicable)	I-901 Receipt (if applicable)
Current Financial Documents	Current Financial Documents

**Recommended Documents**

Current Financial Support Documentation (Bank Statement, Sponsor Letter, etc.)  
Proof of registration for current or coming semester  
Copy of transcript

**I-94 Card**

During brief trips to Canada, it is not necessary to turn in your I-94 card. You may retain the card and show it upon re-entry.

**\*Passport Requirements**

Due to the Implementation of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), all citizens of Canada are now required to use passports to enter the U.S. when arriving by air. Land border requirements are expected to be implemented shortly. Click for the latest information on [WHTI requirements](#).

### **Scheduling Your Visa Appointment (Non-Canadians)**

In most circumstances you will not be able to schedule your visa appointment until you have your I-20. You will need your I-20 for the appointment. If you are able to schedule the appointment without your I-20, be certain that you will have it in time for the actual appointment. Contact the nearest [U.S. Consulate](#) to schedule your visa interview

### **Preparing for Your Visa Interview**

- Review the information on the U.S. State Department F-1 Student Visa Information Page and on the website of the consulate for detailed lists of what you will need to bring to your visa interview.
- Gather all of the documents that you will need.
- Pay your SEVIS (I-901) Fee before the day of your interview. You will need to bring the receipt with you to your interview.
- Pay your non-refundable Machine Readable Visa Fee (Visa application Fee) as directed by the U.S. Consulate
- Be prepared to answer questions honestly and clearly about your program of study, your plans, your finances, your intent to return after your studies. Remember that your visa interview is a conversation not just a review of your documents.

### **After the Interview**

There are three possible outcomes of your visa interview

- *Approved:* Your visa is approved. You will receive information from the consular official regarding the production of the visa and approximately when you will receive it. Often your passport with the new visa is sent to your home within a few days.
- *Denied:* Your visa application is not approved. The consular official will give you a paper with a written explanation of the denial. Be sure to keep the paper. If you choose to pursue the application again, it will be important to have the written information about why you were denied the first time.
- *Pending:* A decision has not yet been made on your visa application. It may be necessary for the consulate to do an additional background check or clearance, do additional review or your case or you may need to provide the consulate with additional documents. You should be given an explanation in writing telling you what the next steps will be in your case.

In general, the International Student Advisor or DSO cannot intervene in the visa application process. However, if you have questions, you are welcome to contact an International Student Advisor, EGF campus – [Fontes, Mary](#) or TRF campus – [Carlson, Nicki](#), at any time.

### **WHEN TO ARRIVE IN THE UNITED STATES**

You may enter the United States a maximum of 30 days before the start date listed on your Form I-20.

### **INTERNATIONAL STUDENT TUITION AND COSTS**

The MnSCU Board of Trustees has authorized NCTC to charge in-state tuition rates to nonresident students which includes international students classified under 8, U.S.C. 1101 (a) (15) (B), (F), (H), (J), and (M).

#### **Canadian Student Financial Aid**

You can obtain a full-time Canada Student Loan to attend NCTC. First, contact your provinces or territory's Student Assistance Office to make sure NCTC is recognized as a designated institution.

### **CANADIAN STUDENT IMMIGRATION REGULATIONS**

U.S. Immigration regulations require Canadian students to complete a Certificate of Finances form [Certification of Finances document](#) before an I-20 can be issued. Upon admission to NCTC and receipt of the form, an I-20 will be mailed to you. You must pay the I-901 Fee. Information on how to pay the SEVIS (I-901) Fee is found at: <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/> or you may pay the fee online at: <https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/> Present the I-20 to the immigration officer when crossing the U. S. Border. The officer will stamp it and issue an I-94 arrival/departure card. Keep both the I-20 and the I-94 with you at all times. You need them to be in the U. S. as a student. Canadian students don't require a visa to study in the U. S.

You will be required by Immigration to carry at least 12 credits per semester to stay in the U. S. Special permission for fewer credits must be approved by the International Student Advisors/DSOs, EGF campus – [Fontes, Mary](#) or TRF campus – [Carlson, Nicki](#). Immigration regulations forbid you to work off-campus without special permission.

When you arrive at NCTC, you must report to the campus International Advisor/DSO, EGF campus – [Fontes, Mary](#) or TRF campus – [Carlson, Nicki](#). They will complete the registration process in SEVIS and activate your immigration record. If you fail to do this, there can be serious problems. The International Advisors/DSOs are here to help you with your needs and if they can't assist you directly, they may refer you to internal and external resources for assistance.

## **TRANSFERRING TO ANOTHER INSTITUTION IN THE UNITED STATES**

International students who are applying for admission as transfer students from another United States college or university to NCTC are required to complete:

### **International Student Transfer form**

The transfer form must be completed and then signed by the international student advisor at the student's current institution and returned to NCTC prior to admission.

### **International Student Application**

Click the following link for the NCTC International Student Application [international student application](#)

### **Certification of Finances**

Click the following link for the Certification of Finances [Certification of Finances document](#)

### **Academic Standing**

A transfer student must be in good academic standing and eligible to return to any college or university attended. Students transferring to NCTC must have maintained at least a 2.0 or 'C' average at the institution previously attended. The transfer student is not at liberty to disregard any part of his or her previous college record.

### **I-20 issuance for International Transfer Students**

Please note that only one school can have access to your SEVIS record at any one time. When you indicate your intent to transfer to NCTC, your advisor will update your SEVIS record with a "release date" (most likely the end of your current semester). Only once that release date has passed will NCTC be able to access your SEVIS record and issue you a new I-20 form. If you are leaving the U.S. during a vacation period, you must make sure that you use your new I-20 from NCTC when you re-enter the U.S. after your trip. Please contact an International Advisor, EGF campus – [Fontes, Mary](#) or TRF campus – [Carlson, Nicki](#), at NCTC if you have questions about the transfer process.

### **Transfer Credit from International Institutions**

If transferring from a college or university outside of the United States, a course-by-course evaluation of non-U.S. post-secondary credentials is required. The evaluation form may be obtained from [www.wes.org](http://www.wes.org). The form must be submitted with official transcripts/academic records from all post-secondary schools attended, along with word-for-word English translations. There will be a cost for the service charged by the World Education Service.

**TRAVELING**

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**Non-Canadian Students Traveling to Canada**

**Preparing to Enter Canada**

When traveling to Canada, you may need a Canadian Visitor's visa. This is determined by your country of citizenship. Check the [Citizenship and Immigration Canada website](#) for a list of countries whose citizens require visitor's visas.

If you need a Canadian Visitor's Visa, you should apply through the Canadian Consulate in Detroit. Please refer to their [information page for applying for a visitor's visa](#).

### **Returning from Canada**

When returning from Canada, you will need all of your travel documents to enter the United States, the same as you would for any return from outside the United States. Refer to the list on the general [Travel Information](#) page. There are two differences in how your paperwork might be handled.

### **I-94 Card**

When entering Canada for a stay of 30 days or fewer, you should keep your I-94 card. You will show the card upon re-entry to the United States.

### **Automatic Extension of Visa Validity**

In some circumstances, students with expired visa stamps in their passports may visit Canada, Mexico or the Adjacent Islands for brief time (30 days or shorter) and be allowed to re-enter the United States. This is called Automatic Extension of Visa Validity. To be eligible for this, you must meet all of the following requirements:

- You have a valid I-94 marked "D/S" by Customs and Border Protection
- You are in valid student status and are returning to continue that status.
- You have a form I-20 that is valid and has a current signature by the DSO (I-20)
- You are returning after an absence of no more than 30 days and only have been in Canada, Mexico or the Adjacent Islands (other than Cuba)
- You have a valid passport
- You have not applied for a new visa during the trip
- You have not been declared inadmissible or have had a visa canceled due to a violation
- You are not a citizen of a country that has been designated as a "state sponsor of terrorism" (Currently Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, and Syria).

If you plan to re-enter the U.S. under this benefit, be sure to consult with an International Student Advisor before you leave for the most current information.

*Northland is an equal opportunity educator and employer. This document is available in alternative formats to individuals with disabilities by contacting ASC Director at 1-800-959-6282 or TTY 1-800-627-3529.*

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