



UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND
FOUNDED 1830

TO:
FROM: Nancy Colón
International Taxation Specialist
DATE:
RE: Explanation of the SEVIS I-20 Form

US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) administers the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) and acts as the bridge for varied government organizations which have an interest in information on foreign students. SEVP uses web-based technology, the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) to track and monitor schools and programs, students, exchange visitors and their dependents throughout the duration of approved participation within the U.S. education system. SEVP collects, maintains and provides the information so that only legitimate foreign students or exchange visitors gain entry to the United States. The result is an easily accessible information system that provides timely information to the Department of State, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and U. S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

A nonimmigrant student may be admitted into the United States in nonimmigrant status if the student presents a SEVIS Form I-20 issued in his or her own name by a school approved by the Service for attendance by F-1 foreign students and if the student has documentary evidence of financial support in the amount indicated on the SEVIS Form I-20.

To Explain:

1. Schools approved by DHS to accept foreign students issue SEVIS Form I-20 A-B (certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status) to students accepted to their institutions. This form is commonly referred to as simply the I-20. All F-1 and M-1 students enrolled in a DHS approved school must have a SEVIS I-20. Border commuter students must have a new SEVIS I-20 for each semester or term for which they are enrolled.
2. The SEVIS I-20 has a bar code in a rectangular block in the upper right corner of the form. The letters SEVIS appear above the bar code block. "Student's Copy" is shown in the top of the block. Underneath "Student's Copy" is the letter "N" followed by a 10-digit SEVIS student number.
3. SEVIS Form I-20 is the certificate of eligibility for student (F-1) status.

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4. The I-20 is the form F-1 students use to apply for their F-1 visa and to enter the United States. The I-20 is the record of a student's current immigration status in the United States.
5. The international student must complete the program of study by the end date shown on the form I-20.
6. For students seeking initial admission only, the student must intend to attend the school specified in the student's visa (or, where the student is exempt from the requirement for a visa, the school indicated on the SEVIS Form I-20)
7. An F-1 student is admitted for duration of status – D/S. Duration of status is defined as the time during which an F-1 student is pursuing a full course of study at an educational institution approved by the SEVP for attendance by foreign students, or engaged in authorized practical training following completion of studies. A student may remain in the US as long as he or she is “maintaining student status” according to DHS regulations. The F-1 student is considered to be maintaining status if he or she is making normal progress toward completing a course of study. Information about the expected length of study is in item 5 of the I-20.
8. An F-1 student may be admitted for a period up to 30 days before the indicated report date or program start date listed on Form I-20.
9. An F-1 student returning to the United States from a temporary absence of five months or less may be readmitted for attendance at a SEVP-approved educational institution, if the student presents a current Form I-20 or a new I-20.
10. An F-1 student who continues from one educational level to another is considered to be maintaining status.
11. If a student transfers to a different school after admission to the US he/she must have an I-20 from the new transfer school. This new I-20 will not have a DHS stamp on it but will show the “transfer completed” date on items 9 “remarks” of the I-20.
12. Description of SEVIS Form I-20:
 - a. Item 1: contains identifying information about the student
 - b. Item 2: contains the name and address of the school, the name of the DSO, the school's SEVIS school code number and the date the school was approved in SEVIS
 - c. Item 3: gives the reason the I-20 was issued to the student

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- d. Item 4: shows the level of education that the student is pursuing
- e. Item 5: gives the expected duration of study
- f. Item 6: gives the English proficiency requirements
- g. Item 7 and Item 8: contain school expense information and the student's means of support
- h. Item 9: contains a remarks field
- i. Item 10: DSO must sign and date
- j. Item 11: student's signature

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