

WELCOME TO SUNY Maritime College



International Student Handbook

International Student Services
SUNY Maritime College

Dear International Students,

International Student Services of SUNY Maritime College welcomes you! We are excited to have you join our campus community. SUNY Maritime College serves approximately 125 international students from 17 different countries whom are interested in obtaining a degree that will guide them towards a career in the maritime industry, government, military, or private industry. Our goal is to provide you with the resources to understand the regulations governing your stay in the United States. We will offer you advisement, answer your questions and concerns, and provide you with information to help make your stay at Maritime enjoyable.

You have been afforded the opportunity to expand your cultural experiences and receive a top notch education from an institution that boasts about its career placement rate. ISS encourages you to participate in activities and outings, and to take advantage of the academic tutoring services and clubs offered on campus. The U.S. culture/college experience can be overwhelming, but International Student Services is here to guide you. We will make sure that you receive the services necessary to feel comfortable and confident on campus.

We look forward to your achievements of valor and excellence on the SUNY Maritime Campus.

Welcome Privateers!

Sincerely,

*Ms. Devon Switzer
Coordinator of International Student Services
SUNY Maritime College*

About ISS:

International Student Services acts as your campus resource for the immigration rules and regulations you must follow while studying in the United States. It will be your advisement center for any immigration services for the duration of your stay at SUNY Maritime College. Drop-ins are welcome! For more time consuming authorization processes, please schedule an appointment to ensure availability.

Office Location:

Baylis Hall, Student Life Office

Office Hours:

Monday-Friday
9AM-5PM

ISS Communications:

ISS Website

www.sunymaritime.edu/iss

The ISS website may be used as a resource to answer many of your questions and concerns. General information about the immigration rules and regulations for F-1 students can be obtained here, in addition to important updates and office contact information.

ISS Phone

(718) 409-7356

Ms. Devon Switzer is available by phone Monday through Friday 9AM-5PM. You are welcome to call at any time to discuss your questions and/or concerns about the topic of immigration. When calling outside of scheduled hours please leave a message with your name and phone number. Your phone call will be returned within the next business day. In an emergency, please refer to the information in "ISS E-mail."

ISS E-mail

dswitzer@sunymaritime.edu

All questions and concerns may be directed to Ms. Devon Switzer, Coordinator of International Student Services through e-mail or by phone. When e-mailing, please provide your full name and student ID, along with the topic of discussion in the e-mail subject heading. This will ensure that you receive the best service. E-mails will be sent out regularly from the e-mail address above to your *Maritime Student E-mail Account* with important information.

Forms:

Authorization is required for most immigration procedures. You can locate any form necessary to your situation on the ISS website, or all forms are available to pick up in the International Student Services office. Once completed, they should be returned to Ms. Devon Switzer in Baylis Hall, Student Life Office.

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International Student Advisement:
(Please schedule an appointment to ensure availability)

Ms. Devon Switzer

Office Location: Baylis Hall, Student Life Office

Hours: M-F, 9-5pm

E-mail: dswitzer@sunymaritime.edu

Phone: (718) 409-7356

Fax: (718) 409-4735

Website: www.sunymaritime.edu/iss

International Student Health Insurance

- ALL international students are required to have health insurance.
- SUNY Maritime College provides health insurance to international students through HTH Worldwide.
<http://www.hthstudents.com/>
- International student health costs will automatically be added onto your bill.
- Your health insurance card is provided by SUNY Maritime College Health Services. It is your responsibility to pick the insurance card up from Ms. Cortney Worrell in Health Services.
- You may e-mail student@haylor.com with any questions and/or concerns about your health insurance.
- Dental Care is NOT covered by HTH Worldwide insurance. A web search will provide you with links to services that offer free or low cost dental care.

Have your own health insurance?

- You must provide a Health Insurance Waiver Form to the Student Accounts Office located in Baylis Hall, to determine if your insurance is comparable to the coverage offered by SUNY Maritime College.
- The coverage must be effective in the United States.

Using your health insurance:

- If you are injured or ill you should seek medical attention from the Health Center located on campus.
- If you require additional care, the health center will refer you to an off-campus provider.
- Without a referral from SUNY Maritime College Health Services Staff you will be required to pay a deductible.
- In the event of an emergency, call 911 or go directly to the hospital emergency room.
- You are required to give the medical provider your insurance identification card at the time of service.

- Do NOT wait until you are injured or ill to be carrying your health insurance card. You should have your health insurance card with you at all times.

SUNY Maritime College Policies

- You are responsible for following the rules and regulations provided by SUNY Maritime College as part of maintaining your student status. Make a strong effort to familiarize yourself with the policies and Code of Conduct of Maritime College. Ignorance is not an excuse, as each policy is made available to you for review.

http://www.sunymaritime.edu/documents/2012/3/8/2012StudentHB_FINAL.pdf

Immigration Documentation

FORM I-20:

- The *Form I-20* is the document issued to you upon acceptance at SUNY Maritime College. You must keep this document with you at all times, as it serves as proof that you have entered the United States legally. If you lose your Form I-20, contact International Student Services immediately to receive another copy.
- After reading page 2 of your Form I-20, you should have signed page 1 indicating that you have both read and understood the information it contains. Page 2, itself is not always completely accurate. For the most up to date information, consult the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services website (www.uscis.gov), and speak to the international student advisor.
- You must keep all Form I-20's that have been issued to you, as you will need them for any future application processes.

VISA:

- You must also have a valid visa to enter the United States. If your visa expires while in the U.S., you may remain within the states as long as your Form I-20 is still valid. If you travel outside of the U.S., you may not re-enter unless you have renewed your visa. This must be done outside of U.S. borders.
- You may renew your visa in either your home country or a U.S. adjacent country (Canada or Mexico) or island. By visiting another country to renew your visa, you risk the ability to re-enter the United States. If the consulate in another country other than your home country denies your request to renew your visa, they may send you directly home. You must also stay in that country for the duration of the decision.

- **Automatic Visa Revalidation:** You may visit a U.S. adjacent island or country for less than 30 days on an expired visa and be able to re-enter the United States. Keep your I-94 Arrival/Departure Record in such case.

PASSPORT:

- Your passport must be valid for at least six months after you enter/re-enter the United States.
- You may renew your passport within the United States. Contact your country's embassy or consulate for information.

I-94:

- I-94 is your Arrival/Departure Record. You will return this card to the port authority each time you leave the country and receive a new one when you re-enter the United States.
- The only time you must keep your I-94 is when you are visiting a U.S. adjacent country or island for less than 30 days to receive automatic visa revalidation.

Maintaining Your F-1 Student Status

- As an F-1 Student Visa Holder, you are required to maintain your student status. Part of this means you are required to take a full-time course load each semester (Fall/Spring). You must register for and complete **12** credits if you are an undergraduate student and **9** credits if you are a graduate student. The international student advisor registers you in the Student Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) at the beginning of each semester to verify you are in good academic standing. Failure to register for the appropriate number of credits will cause you to be out-of-status.
- You must obtain authorization from International Student Services (ISS) to drop below a full-course load. Dropping any course(s) prior to approval will result in your being out-of-status.
- As an international student you are limited to the number of online courses you may take. You may only enroll in **one** online course per semester. An on-line course does not require your physical presence in the classroom.
- If your address changes, you must notify International Student Services within 10 days. The change must be recorded in your SEVIS record, Student Exchange Visitor Information System, a system that maintains your Form I-20 data, and tracks your international student status. You must also notify the Registrar's office about the change of address. You must complete the form located on the school website and return it to the Registrar's office.

- You must contact ISS within 10 days if there are any changes to your personal information as well. This includes, your name, program of study, level of study, program dates, etc.
- Pay close attention to the program end date located on your Form I-20. If there are any concerns about completing your program on time, or you will complete your program earlier than expected, see International Student Services. You will need to complete the appropriate forms to address the necessary changes.
- You must comply with the U.S. Federal Employment Regulations. As an international student it is illegal to work off-campus. Review the Employment section for available options.
- You must always follow the proper procedures for your situation. The international student advisor will advise you of the proper forms to complete and endorsements to receive. It is your responsibility to ask questions, we are here to help you. Do not seek the advice of other international students as their situation may have different circumstances than your own.

Traveling on an F-1 Student Visa

- Before you travel outside of the United States, Page 3 of your Form I-20 must be endorsed for travel by the international student advisor, a Designated School Official. If the international student advisor is unavailable, you may obtain the travel signature from another Designated School Official.
- Your passport must be valid for travel. Make arrangements in advance to renew your passport if it is nearing the expiration date.
- Your visa must be valid to re-enter the United States. If your visa has expired, you should have already made plans to renew your visa in your home country.
- Your travel signature is valid for one year from the date it has been endorsed, unless you are participating in Optional Practical Training. If participating in OPT, the travel signature is valid for only six months from the date it has been endorsed.
- When traveling, you must carry ALL of the following documents and have them easily accessible: Form I-20 endorsed for travel, valid passport, valid visa, I-94 arrival/departure record, SUNY Maritime College Student ID, and health insurance card.
- If you are in the regiment and traveling when school is in session, to receive your travel endorsement, you must present the international student advisor with a copy of the Special Liberty Form signed by all required officials.

Employment

TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT:

- On-campus
 - Off-campus
 - Curricular Practical Training
 - Optional Practical Training
-
- You are allowed to work **on-campus** up to 20 hours per week while school is in session, and up to 40 hours per week during scheduled school breaks.
 - It is **illegal** to work off-campus as an international student. If you are experiencing financial hardship, in which your finances have unexpectedly changed, you may apply through International Student Services **and USCIS** to work off-campus. This is not an easily obtained employment authorization.
 - Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is employment that is an integral part of an established curriculum. You must earn credit towards your graduation requirements. To participate in CPT, authorization is required by your department chair/academic advisor and International Student Services. A new Form I-20 will be issued if you receive authorization.
 - Optional Practical Training (OPT) is employment that is authorized by USCIS after receiving appropriate documentation from ISS. This is available to students after the completion of their program. Or if desired, the student can participate in Pre-completion OPT which occurs during their studies. OPT and Pre-completion OPT requires separate applications and application fees.
 - You may view more detailed information about employment at:
<http://www.sunymaritime.edu/ISS/employment.aspx>

Social Security

- All international students are not eligible to apply for a Social Security Number.
- You do not need a Social Security Number if you are opening a bank account or phone service, obtaining a NYS driver's license, or entering into a rental agreement.
- The international students who are legally employed in a paid position should obtain a Social Security Number for payroll identification purposes. These students may schedule an appointment with International Student Services to obtain an enrollment letter.

- An enrollment/student status letter is required by the Social Security Office in addition to the Form SS-5 (Application for Social Security Card), a valid passport, I-94, Form I-20, letter of employment, and Employment Authorization Document (EAD) if you have been issued one.
- You must bring all the required documents to the local Social Security Office to apply for your Social Security Number. Keep in mind, as an F-1 student you are not guaranteed to get a social security card, and the office does not have to issue you one.

Taxes

- All international students must file with the United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Tax information is not within the realm of expertise of your international student advisors, and we are therefore unable to offer any tax advice. Please visit: <http://www.irs.gov/>
- **Form 8843** is required by every student.
- Other forms required to be filed by students will be dependent upon employment and/or scholarship and teaching assistantships.
- If you do not have a Social Security Number, you will need to apply for an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN). File **Form W-7** with your tax returns to receive your ITIN.

Bank Accounts

- To open a bank account, you will need to bring the following documentation to your bank of choice: SUNY Maritime College Student ID, an initial deposit, your immigration documents (valid passport, visa, I-94, and Form I-20) and an enrollment letter issued by the international student advisor.
- Visit the international student services website to find a list of banks within close proximity of campus.

Driver's License

- You do *not* need to apply for a NYS Driver's License. You may drive with your foreign license in the state of NY.
- You should obtain an **International Driving Permit**. You must contact the authorities in your home country to get an International Driving Permit. You

cannot apply for the permit in the United States because you are not a resident of the U.S.

- It is your driver's license that allows you to drive in NYS, not the permit. The permit verifies that you hold a valid license in your home country in several languages. An authority figure, who cannot read the language on your driver's license, will be able to read the International Driving Permit.
- Go to New York State's Department of Motor Vehicles for information <http://www.dmv.ny.gov/>

Additional Responsibilities

- At the beginning of each semester you must check in with International Student Services to acknowledge your arrival on campus, enrollment in courses, and update any information. If you do not check in, your SEVIS record will be terminated and you will be out of F1 student status.
- When filing any application(s), you are responsible for mailing the appropriate documentation to the correct address. The international student advisor will help to review your application, but is not responsible for any missing documentation, or mailing service.
- It is your responsibility to make sure the appropriate agencies have your return address correct. You may NOT use SUNY Maritime College offices to receive any mail.
- You are responsible for your own documentation. Another student may not collect endorsements or documentation on your behalf.

International Student Services looks forward to making your experience at SUNY Maritime College enjoyable.