**New Foreign National Students/Scholars/ Employees/Visitors**

**Why Register with Duke Visa Services?**

- **F and J Students and Scholars:** DVS must electronically report on-campus arrival to USDHS before submission of Drivers Licenses and Social Security Numbers.
- **H-1B, O-1, E-3, and TN:** DVS must verify employees arrived in the correct nonmigrant status and process payroll information.
- **B1/B2/WT/WB:** DVS must verify visitors entered in the correct nonmigrant status to pursue on-campus activities.
- **All other nonmigrant statuses:** DVS must verify nonmigrants have the appropriate visa statuses to enroll and receive payments from Duke.

**J-1 Scholar English Proficiency Requirements**

Regulatory change as of 1/5/2015: English Language proficiency standard change. J students, researchers, professors, short-term scholars and specialists must have "sufficient proficiency in the English language, as determined by an objective measurement of English language proficiency, to participate in his or her program, and to function on a day-to-day basis." [22 CFR 62.11(a)(2)]. J Sponsors (Duke) can use one of the following "objective measurements of English language proficiency" to determine an applicant's language proficiency: (1) A recognized English language test; (2) Signed documentation from an academic institution or English language school; or (3) A documented interview conducted by the sponsor either in-person or by videoconferencing, or by telephone if videoconferencing is not a viable option. J sponsors must also retain evidence of how they measured applicants' English language proficiency so that it may be made available to the Department upon request.

**Graduating Earlier than Expected?**

If you are 100% sure that you will complete all course requirements this semester, please contact your DVS advisor for further instruction.

**Traveling Abroad Information**

- **Travel Abroad and Reentry to the United States**
- **Travel During F-1 OPT**
- **Travel to Contiguous Territory and Adjacent Islands**

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**Off-Campus Student Work or Internship Beginning this Summer**

- If you have ambition to work or participate in an internship this summer for a company off Duke campus, you will need to apply for special work authorization.
  
  **F-1 students:** Apply for [Optional Practical Training (OPT)](https://www.duke.edu) If the work/internship is related to your academic program of study. Apply for [Curricular Practical Training (CPT)](https://www.duke.edu) if the internship will count as academic credit towards your degree program.
  
  **J-1 students:** Apply for [Academic Training](https://www.duke.edu) for internships or work in your field of study.

**TIMELINES FOR APPLICATIONS**

**OPT**

- First day to apply: February 10th
- Last day to apply for continuing students: 90 days prior to employment start date or graduation date
- Last day to apply for students graduating May 2015: July 2nd
- Processing time at USCIS: Approximately 90 days

**CPT**

- Last day to apply: 2 weeks prior to employment start date
- Processing time at Duke Visa Services—Approval after appointment

**AT**

- Last day to apply for continuing students: 2 weeks prior to employment start date
- Last day to apply for May 2015 graduates: April 24th
- Processing time at Duke Visa Services—Approval after appointment

Note to all applicants: **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO APPLY.** If you fail to meet the deadlines and application requirements, you will lose your opportunity to apply for work authorization.

**For May 2015 Graduates**

- **For international students transferring to another institution**
  
  Schedule an appointment with your Duke Visa Services advisor
  Complete the request and SEVIS file transfer before your grace period ends
  Verify the completion of your academic program and/or OPT before transferring your SEVIS file

- **For international students working on Duke’s campus**
  
  May 2015 graduates: Do not work beyond the scheduled graduation date on the I-20. No work is permitted during your grace period without proper work authorization (see above).
  Continuing students may continue to work throughout the summer break, up to 40 hours per week, however, if you are taking summer classes, then you may not exceed 20 hours per week.

**Grace Periods per Visa Category**

What is a grace period? This is the additional time that a Foreign National may legally remain in the US after the end date recorded on their visa document or degree completion.

- **F-1 visa holders**— 60 day grace period after degree or OPT completion date
- **J-1 visa holders**— 30 day grace period after degree or AT completion date
- **H-1B workers/TN/O/E-3 visa holders**— NO grace period. You must exit the US by midnight on the last day you are authorized to work.
- **Dependents**— same grace period as the primary visa holder, but may not remain in the US after the primary visa holder exits during the grace period.

Please [click here](https://www.duke.edu) for more information about maintaining status.
DUKE VISA SERVICES EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Claudia De La Cruz
Senior International Student & Scholar Advisor

Q– How long have you been at Duke Visa Services and what do you do?
A– “I am a Senior Advisor and I have been at DVS for almost 6 years. I process the required documents for international students and scholars to come to Duke and help them maintain their status throughout their stay.”

Q– What do you like most about your job?
A– “I enjoy meeting people from all over the world; however, I truly like interacting with our students. It is amazing to see them flourish and achieve so many things from the time they arrive at Duke and the time they graduate. It is very energizing.”

Q– What do you like to do on your spare time?
A– “I do not have a lot of spare time as I am also a graduate student at Duke. But when I do have some time, I practice yoga, I garden and work on do-it-yourself projects around my house.”

Individual Taxpayer Identification Number
~ITIN~

- The ITIN is a number assigned by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to people who are not employed or who do not qualify for a Social Security number but need to have a number for federal tax reporting or banking purposes.
- It is not a photo identification and it does not change your immigration status or right to work in the U.S.
- If you are a Duke student on a Fellowship, Scholarship or Grant and have not acquired a social security number, you are required to submit an ITIN to receive non-compensatory payments from Duke.
- You can find detailed instructions at: http://studentaffairs.duke.edu/search-custom?for=itin&submit.x=0&submit.y=0.
- Student visa holders and dependent visa holders who are not eligible for a social security number but have a need for a number for federal tax return, claiming a tax treaty benefit or opening a savings account at the bank can request this number.

DHS Extends Eligibility for Employment Authorization to Certain H-4 Dependent Spouses of H-1B Nonimmigrants Seeking Employment-Based Lawful Permanent Residence

USCIS Director León Rodriguez announced today that, effective May 26, 2015, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is extending eligibility for employment authorization to certain H-4 dependent spouses of H-1B nonimmigrants who are seeking employment-based lawful permanent resident (LPR) status. DHS amended the regulations to allow these H-4 dependent spouses to accept employment in the United States.

Please review the full article on the official Department of Homeland Security website.


DEPARTMENT CONTACT SPOTLIGHT
Q & A

Tiffany Yarborough
Economics

Duke Visa Services appreciates Tiffany Yarborough for her assistance processing visa document requests for her department. Her knowledge of Duke policies as well as governmental regulatory issues assists our office in maintaining a high standard in the service to her department’s international population.

Q- What hint would you like to share with other departmental Visa Services administrators that makes your job easier?
A- What makes my job easier is just keeping the Faculty sponsor and the visitor informed of all visa details and timelines, and starting the process well ahead of time. I also send constant reminders to the visitors about completing the web forms and submitting paperwork to me in a timely manner.

Q- How has your contact with Duke’s international population changed your world view?
A- It has changed my world view tremendously. You get to meet and communicate with visitors from all over, and you learn so much about all the different cultures. I have learned to become extremely patient and to just appreciate diversity.

Q- Are there any comments you would like to share?
A- I would like to say that Duke Visa Services plays a major role in me being consistent by always being there to answer any question that I may have. You all are a great resource and you are always on top of all of the rules, regulations and guidelines. You all always help my processing go much more smoothly!

Duke Visa Services
Smith Warehouse, Bay 7, 1st Floor
Box 90790
Durham NC, 27708

Phone: 919-681-8472
Facsimile: 919-681-8492

http://www.visaservices.duke.edu/