International Student Pre-Arrival Information
Welcome to SJSU!

Dear International Student,

You are now part of a vibrant and diverse community of close to 5,000 international students and scholars from around the world. We have more than 100 countries represented at SJSU and we are very excited to welcome close to 1,000 new international students this semester.

Our diversity is one of our strengths and we are committed to serving all international students to support their success, safety, and well-being. We are proud to be global Spartans!

We have put together this short presentation to help you prepare for your arrival to the U.S. and answer some of the most common questions new international students have prior to starting classes. More detailed information and guidance will be provided upon your arrival at SJSU.

We look forward to meeting you!

The ISSS Staff

Welcome to the SJSU #GlobalSpartan community!
What is ISSS?

The International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) office is a department in the College of International and Extended Studies. The ISSS office is made up of three units: 1) International Student Advising, 2) Study Abroad, and 3) International House.

The ISSS staff are here to help international students make the best of their time in the U.S.!

International Student Advising

We are the office on the SJSU campus responsible for providing information and guidance on immigration, academic, and cultural adjustment matters for F-1 visa holders.

The ISSS front desk staff, international student advisors, and SEVIS records team serve close to 6,000 international F-1 holders year round.

Our International Student Advisors (ISAs) offer in-person, email, and phone advising on a daily basis on matters such as:

• Rules and regulations to maintain F-1 status
• Taking less than a full course load
• Withdrawing from courses or taking a semester off
• Traveling and re-entering the U.S.
• Working on/off campus
• And much more!

Please visit the ISSS website for further details on advising services.
Important Immigration Terms

Here are a few key terms that you will hear often as an F-1 international student at SJSU:

- **F-1 Student** - An F-1 student is a nonimmigrant who is pursuing a "full course of study" to achieve a specific educational or professional objective at an academic institution in the United States.

- **SEVIS - Student and Exchange Visitor Information System.** SEVIS is a U.S. government web-based system for maintaining information on F-1 visa holders. All international students are required to maintain an active SEVIS record while in the U.S.

- **(P)DSO – (Primary) Designated School Official.** DSOs are dedicated to help F-1 students maintain their non-immigrant status while studying in the U.S. DSOs are also responsible for maintaining your record in the SEVIS database and report F-1 status violations.

- **ISA - International Student Advisor.** ISAs advise F-1 visa holders on various matters. They are also DSOs who have received training to advise students on the benefits and responsibilities of F-1 status.

- **POE - Port of Entry.** POE is a place where one may lawfully enter the U.S., such as the San Francisco International Airport (SFO).

- **CBP - Customs and Border Protection.** CBP officers conduct immigration inspections at U.S. ports of entry to determine a person’s admissibility to the U.S.
What will happen when I arrive at Port of Entry in the U.S.?

CBP will conduct a thorough immigration inspection. During this inspection, you will use your F-1 and Form I-20 to request lawful admission to the U.S.

It is your responsibility to prove your intent to enter the U.S. as a non-immigrant in F-1 student status. **Remember that the primary purpose of the student visa program is to pursue and complete a degree through full-time study.**

Once the inspection is done, the CBP officer will place an admission stamp on your passport indicating “F-1” status and “D/S” (Duration of Status). Be sure to check that you have a **CBP admission stamp** before you leave the CBP kiosk.

- Please make sure to carry the appropriate documents with you while traveling to the U.S. You can refer to the **ISSS website** for more information and samples of all the documents you will need to present to CBP when you enter the U.S.

**IMPORTANT:**
As part of the CBP inspection at the port of entry you may be asked if you intend to work while you are in the U.S. You should emphasize that your intent is to study full-time.
What should I do once I arrive at SJSU?

All new international students in F-1 status must report to their school to have their immigration status cleared and SEVIS record activated by a Designated School Official (DSO) upon arrival at SJSU.

In order to meet this U.S. government requirement, you must attend an ISSS Immigration Check-In Session. During this mandatory session you will also receive information on how to maintain your status, meet the ISSS staff and other new students, and learn about fun SJSU programs and events. Please note: The immigration session is not the same as an orientation program.

Register for an ISSS Immigration Check-in session here!
*The password for registration is: sjsu

IMPORTANT:
Failure to attend an ISSS Immigration Check-in Session may result in the termination of your SEVIS record, which means you might not be able to stay in the U.S. to pursue your studies.

If you are having issues registering for a session or will be arriving late due to visa processing delays, be sure to let the ISSS staff know as soon as possible.

ISSS contact information

#TalkToUs
How do I clear the holds in MySJSU so I can register for classes?

Before you can enroll in classes you need to meet these two SJSU requirements in order for the holds to be removed:

• **Health Insurance Requirement**

SJSU requires international students to purchase health insurance every semester. A hold will be placed on your MySJSU account preventing you from registering for classes until you purchase the university approved health insurance plan. Information on how to purchase insurance can be found on the ISSS website.

• **Immunization Requirement**

All students must submit proof of immunizations for the 2018-19 academic year. A hold will be placed on your account preventing you from registering for Fall 2019 classes if proof is not submitted. For more information click here.

*For questions regarding the SJSU immunization requirement, email immunization@sjsu.edu*
How many classes/units do I need to enroll in?

Federal government regulations require F-1 visa holders to study full time every semester.

- For **Undergraduate** students full time enrollment is defined as 12 units each semester. Of those, 9 units must be **in person**.

- For **Graduate** students full time enrollment is defined as 9 units each semester. Of those, 6 units must be **in person**.

**IMPORTANT:**
Not complying with this requirement is a serious violation of your F-1 status and could affect your ability to stay in the U.S. and complete your studies.

If you feel you are struggling to maintain a full course of study, talk to an International Student Advisor (ISA) immediately. Speak to an ISA before you drop a class.

#TalkToUs
Can I study and work while on F-1 status?

Although some on campus employment or off campus practical training may be permitted while you are an F-1 student, your primary purpose in the U.S. is to pursue and complete a degree through full-time study.

Employment of any kind should never interfere with your studies, nor should it be your primary goal while you are in the U.S.

**ALL** employment on or off campus requires authorization from an ISSS Designated School Official (DSO) **prior** to beginning work.

Before pursuing any employment please speak with an International Student Advisor (ISA).

#TalkToUs

**IMPORTANT:**

Working without authorization is a serious violation of your F-1 status and could affect your ability to stay in the U.S. and complete your studies.

As part of the CBP inspection at the port of entry you may be asked if you intend to work while you are in the U.S. You should emphasize that your intent is to study full-time.
I have more questions. Whom do I ask?

More information will be provided during your mandatory ISSS Immigration Check-In Session and during university orientation programs when you arrive at SJSU.

Please remember to check your “MySJSU” account regularly for messages from the ISSS office before you arrive and throughout your time at SJSU.

An announcement/newsletter will be send out by ISSS 1-2 times each month to all international students. Be sure to check your email regularly!

Also check out the ISSS website. It is a great source of information!

ISSS Contact Information
Phone: 408-924-5920
Email: international-office@sjsu.edu
Follow us on Instagram

We are here to help!
Feel free to reach out and…
#TalkToUs
See you soon at SJSU!