Welcome to UNC Charlotte!

International Student and Scholar Office (ISSO)
Meet the ISSO Staff

- Tarek Elshayeb, Director
- Denise Medeiros, Associate Director
- Dionna Wright, International Student and Scholar Advisor
- Amy Mabery, International Student and Scholar Advisor
- Madelyn (Maddy) Baer, International Scholar Advisor
- Chau Tran, SEVIS Coordinator
- Kadija Alkusaimi, Administrative Assistant
- Student Assistants & Volunteers
ISSO Overview

Location:
College of Health & Human Services (CHHS), Room 202

Business Hours:
Monday to Friday from 8:00am to 5:00pm

Walk-In Advising Hours:
Mon & Fri 10am-12pm
Tues & Thurs 2-4pm

Email and Phone Communication:
• Inquiries to 704-687-7781 or intlsso@uncc.edu
• 3 business days processing time for responses
• ISSO uses Google group to communicate to all international students
ISSO Services

• Immigration advising

• Programming

• Referral services

• General advising

• ‘Home away from home’
ISSO Programs

- Immigration Workshops
- Information Sessions
- Online Resources
- Walk-in advising
- Cross-cultural programs
- International Coffee Hour
- Friendship & Culture Exchange
- Cultural Ambassador Program
- Charlotte Host Family Program
- International Club
- International Festival
Important Academic Services on Campus

- Writing Resources Center (writing & tutorial services)
- University Center for Academic Excellence (academic support services)
- Center for Graduate Life (academic & non-academic services)
- Atkins Library (library.uncc.edu)
- Computer Labs (labs.uncc.edu)
Important Services
Off Campus

• Driver’s license (wait for SEVIS record activation)

• North Carolina Identification Card

• Public Transportation (Charlotte Area Transit System - CATS)

• Bank Accounts

• ATMs on-campus = BB&T, Wells Fargo, Bank of America

• Social Security Number (wait for job offer)

International Student Handbook p. 12-13
Immigration Overview

• Understand basic F-1 and J-1 visa regulations
• Maintain valid F-1 or J-1 status
• Legal employment eligibility and options
• Travel and return to the U.S. in F-1 and J-1 status
Valid Passport

• Can **NOT** expire while you are in the U.S.
• Should always be valid for at least 6 months into the future
• Renewing your passport
  • Contact your home countries embassy or consulate in the U.S.
• 3-4 months before the expiration date
I-20

• I-20 generated by UNC Charlotte via SEVIS (Student Exchange Visitor Information System) upon admission
• Determines your F-1 immigration status in the U.S.
• MUST remain valid at all times (see program end date for expiration)
• Valid travel signature on p.2 prior to travelling outside the U.S.
SEVIS ID: N0004705512 (F-1)  
NAME: John Doe Smith

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DS-2019

- DS-2019 form generated by UNC Charlotte (or other sponsor) via SEVIS upon admission

- Determines your J-1 immigration status in the U.S.

- MUST remain valid at all times (see program end date for expiration)

- Valid travel signature on p.1 prior to travelling outside the U.S.
Visa

• Your visa CAN expire while you are in the U.S. as long as your I-94, and I-20/DS-2019, are valid.

• If you leave the U.S. with an expired visa then you MUST apply for a new visa at a U.S. embassy in your home country in order to reenter.
The State Department will **revoke visas** for anyone arrested (not just convicted) of DUI (**Driving while Under the Influence of alcohol**). Individuals are notified of their visa cancellation by email (address used on the visa application). You may not learn about this visa cancellation until you discover it won’t work. All consequences of the visa revocation are not clear.

**DON’T DRINK ALCOHOL AND DRIVE!!!!**
I-94 Form

- [https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/](https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/)
- I-94 Number
- Duration of Status (D/S)
- Class of Admission
Travel & Re-Entry to U.S.

• Be Prepared

• You MUST get your I-20 or DS-2019 signed by an International Student Advisor (ISSO Staff) BEFORE you travel

• Valid passport, I-20 or DS-2019 and visa are required for re-entry to U.S.

• Contact ISSO 2 weeks prior to traveling to avoid complications

International Student Handbook p. 16
Staying in Status

• Your visa CAN expire while you are in the U.S. as long as your I-94 number & I-20 or DS-2019 form is valid (Duration of Status: D/S)

• If you leave the U.S. with an expired visa, then you MUST apply for new visa at a U.S. embassy in your home country before returning to U.S.

International Student Handbook p. 14-15
Maintenance of Status

Pursue a Full Course of Study

• Undergraduate: 12 credits fall & spring semesters (9 face-to-face + 3 online)
• Graduate: 9 credits fall/spring semesters (6 face-to-face + 3 online)
• Final course in final semester MUST be face-to-face
• Summer enrollment is not required
• Exceptions to fulltime enrollment limited and with documented proof ONLY

**You MAY NOT DROP below fulltime course load without prior authorization from an ISSO advisor!**
Update Local Address, Phone Number and Email

- You MUST report any change of address in your ‘my UNC Charlotte’ account within 10 days which will automatically update your SEVIS record

  - ‘Local/mailing’ address
  - Phone number
  - Personal email address
On Campus vs. Off Campus = Big Difference!

On Campus:

- No employment ‘authorization’ necessary
- Student can work up to 20 hrs/week while school is in session (fall and spring semesters)
- Full time work permitted (20+ hrs/wk) during vacation periods (some exceptions apply). Work does not need to be related to field of study
- Not eligible for federal ‘work-study’ positions
- I-9 employment paperwork done at time of hire

- Sessions at isso.uncc.edu/programs-workshops/

International Student Handbook p. 16-17
Student Employment

Off Campus Employment

- Employment ‘authorization’ by ISSO is **ALWAYS** necessary

- Work **DOES** need to be related to field of study

- **Only** two ways to qualify!

- Consequences of violation are **severe** – please ask ISSO before accepting any work!
Student Employment

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) (F-1)

- Integral part of an established curriculum by regulation

- If eligible, apply for internship through:
  - University Career Center
  - OR
  - Your academic advisor if required for a class or for PhD research toward degree completion

Approval by ISSO
Student Employment

Off Campus Employment:

Optional Practical Training (OPT) (F-1)

• ‘Benefit’ of having completed a degree program (post-completion)
• Seen as practical work experience based upon academic studies
• Workshop schedule and more information available at
  http://isso.uncc.edu/current-students/employment
Eligibility for CPT & OPT
• Must be enrolled full-time in a degree program for one full-academic year (fall & spring semester)

Academic Training for J-1 students
• Similar to CPT or OPT. Contact the ISSO to find out if you meet the required criteria
Violations of F-1 or J-1 Status

DO NOT RISK IT

- Undocumented employment
- Not enrolled or under-enrolled without ISSO permission
- Allowing I-20 or DS-2019 document to expire prior to program completion
- Remaining in U.S. more than 60 days after completion date of I-20 form
- Remaining in U.S. more than 30 days after completion date of DS-2019
- Always consult ISSO – not your friends or professors – on your visa status!
ISSO is your point of reference for any academic, cultural, immigration or financial issues you encounter that may have consequences on your legal F-1 or J-1 status.