

Dominican University

Pre-Arrival Information for Incoming Students

Students needing an Initial Entry I-20

Step 1: Receive your I-20 from the International Student Office

You will receive a scanned copy of your initial entry I-20, which is now valid for all purposes. You must print the attachment and be sure to sign the printed copy, above your name by the "X". In the same email, you will receive a copy of your official acceptance letter and a letter from the DSO containing important information. Be sure to read the letter carefully *before* scheduling your visa appointment.

Step 2: Pay the I-901 SEVIS Fee

As an international student with an initial entry I-20, you must pay the [I-901 SEVIS Fee](#). This fee is in addition to the visa fee. F-2 dependents are not required to pay the SEVIS fee.

Step 3: Apply for your visa*

Important! Apply for your visa as early as possible.

F-1 visas may be issued up to 365 days before the program start date listed on your I-20.

You *must* apply for a passport in your home country. If you already have a passport, the passport must be valid for at least six months from your date of entry. However, we **strongly** recommend that you enter on a passport that has several years of validity remaining, since it can take a long time to renew your passport from the US. You must always maintain a valid passport while in the US.

Make an appointment for your F-1 visa at the nearest US Embassy or Consulate office in your home country.

***Citizens from Canada** do not need to apply for a visa. You will simply present your passport, the I-20, I-901 SEVIS fee receipt, your acceptance letter and financial documentation to the immigration officer at the US port of entry. For more information, visit [US Embassy & Consulates in Canada](#).

Visa Interview Tips and Required Documents

Visit [Getting a Visa](#) for information about preparing your supporting documents and getting ready for your visa interview.

Step 4: Plan Travel

Earliest Admission Date (30-Day Arrival Window)

As a student with an initial (new) I-20, you are allowed to enter the US up to 30 days before the program start date printed on their I-20. This is the earliest date you are allowed to enter the US and is called the

“30-Day Arrival Window.” The earliest admission date is printed in the Program of Study section on the I-20 form.

Travel Signatures

30-day arrival window	Requirements
First entry:	Your <i>first</i> entry into the US using your Dominican University I-20 does not require a Travel Signature
Multiple entries:	Multiple trips during the 30-day arrival window are not recommended

Step 5: Enroll in Classes and Health Insurance

As an F-1 student, you must maintain adequate health insurance and are required to purchase Dominican University’s International Student Health Insurance Plan.

If you feel you are eligible for an insurance waiver because you already have a qualified plan, please contact Michael Purcell, Director of Health and Wellness, at mpurcell@dom.edu.

Prior to the start of the semester, you must contact your advisor as listed in your acceptance letter in order to register for the upcoming semester.

All undergraduate students must attend a Student Orientation and Registration (SOAR), either online or in-person. All graduate students must attend a graduate orientation. For more information, please contact your advisor.

For further information on F-1 international student enrollment requirements, please visit [Maintaining Status](#).

Step 6: Post Arrival

Within the first week of classes, **you must** contact Dr. Sue Ponremy, DSO, at sponremy@dom.edu or 708.524.6965 for an appointment. You will participate in an immigration orientation and will be registered in SEVIS. Please bring your passport with visa, your I-20 and a copy of your [I-94 page](#).