Preparing to Travel to Boston and Begin Your Studies at Northeastern University

Information for International Students

Office of Global Services
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The Office of Global Services (OGS) offers a vast array of programs and services to more than 11,000 international students and scholars who represent approximately 130 nations.

The OGS also works to promote meaningful interaction and intercultural understanding among citizens of other countries and their peers from the United States, providing educational and cultural enrichment opportunities for all members of Northeastern and the community at large.

The OGS oversees the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) at Northeastern, as mandated by the U.S. federal government, in order to ensure compliance with regulations and procedures affecting those international students and scholars in specified nonimmigrant visa classifications.

Affiliation with the OGS begins with admission to the academic program and continues through such initiatives as the OGS’s cultural festival in February, “OGS Carnevale,” which celebrates the cultural diversity of the entire university community. For a list of OGS services and programs, visit the website.

International students must maintain full-time status at Northeastern to be in compliance with immigration and SEVIS regulations. Also, they must not engage in any type of employment unless authorized by the OGS. Note that timely registration for courses is especially important so that they may remain in compliance with current federal regulations. They should consult with the OGS if they have questions about their individual status.

Coming to Boston

Preparing to travel to Boston and begin your studies at Northeastern University is exciting, and you have many things to do in preparation for both. When you plan carefully, your travels and arrival in Boston should go smoothly. Here are some of the key things you should do to prepare.

- **Obtain your F-1 or J-1 visa** from the U.S. embassy or consulate in your home country to be eligible to study in the United States. An international student may attend Northeastern in a nonimmigrant status other than F-1 or J-1 only if U.S. immigration regulations allow for study in the United States under that specific nonimmigrant visa classification. Some international students must apply and be approved for a change of status (e.g., from B-2 to F-1) before beginning the program at Northeastern. For detailed information/instructions specific to your current nonimmigrant status, as well as eligibility to participate in co-op or other forms of experiential learning required by your academic program, contact the OGS (http://www.northeastern.edu/ogs/visaprocess.html).

- **Mandatory Student Health Insurance**: Since September 1989, Massachusetts law (M.G.L. c.15A, § 18) has required every full-time and part-time student enrolled in a certificate, diploma, or degree-granting program in a Massachusetts institution of higher learning to participate in a Student Health Insurance Program (SHIP) or in a health benefit plan with comparable coverage. The Student Health Program defines a part-time student as a student enrolled in at least 75 percent of the full-time curriculum. (College of Professional Studies graduate students—7 credits, part-time graduate students—6 credits).

- **Health report**: Prior to entering Northeastern, all enrolled students must complete and submit a health report to University Health and Counseling Services (UHCS). It must be completed and returned by the stated deadline. The required record of immunity section is necessary for compliance with the Massachusetts immunization requirements for college-age students. Failure to meet the requirement will prevent future course registration. Additionally, further documentation of immunity is mandatory for students in Bouvé College of Health Sciences. Visit the UHCS webpage (http://www.northeastern.edu/uhcs) to access the health report online.

Planning Information

As a new international student you are expected to arrive by the start date of your program stated on the I-20 issued by Northeastern or on the DS-2019 issued by Northeastern or by your sponsoring agency/government.

When you make your travel arrangements, you should seek admission to the United States no more than 30 days prior to the report date on your I-20 or DS-2019, and you should not arrive after the report date on your I-20 or DS-2019.

All international students will need to attend the scheduled international student orientation program and complete the international student online check-in process. For further details on the OGS international student orientation and online check-in process, and for other information pertinent to international students, check the OGS website (http://www.northeastern.edu/ogs).

International Student Orientation

At the beginning of each semester the OGS organizes sessions, events, and activities designed to ensure you have completed all U.S. documentation requirements and to provide you with information and support to ease your transition to life in the United States and at Northeastern University. During these sessions, you will also have the opportunity to meet other international students, learn from shared experiences, and find any assistance you may need.

Orientation week is very important. Make sure you are following all the instructions provided by your academic department and the OGS about the program, and attend as many scheduled events as you can to ensure a smooth transition during your first few weeks on campus.

For a schedule of required sessions and other events, see the OGS website (http://www.northeastern.edu/ogs/schedule.html).

If you are a U.S. citizen living abroad, you are not required to complete OGS’s activities and sessions. You are more than welcome, however, to attend other sessions and events planned by the OGS during orientation. Visit the orientation schedule on the OGS website (http://www.northeastern.edu/ogs/schedule.html) to see a full listing of other sessions and events.

Participate in Cultural Events

We are proud to offer cultural events throughout the academic year to the Northeastern community. For more information and to register, check the...
schedule of events on the OGS website (http://www.northeastern.edu/ogs/schedule.html).

**SEVIS Compliance**
The OGS is required to comply with immigration regulations governing your student status and must submit information every semester as required by the Department of Homeland Security.

**The OGS: Your Resource for SEVIS Advice and Assistance**
The OGS advises students on the complexities of immigration compliance and interfaces with various U.S. government agencies. The OGS maintains and updates the SEVIS system and advises students on relevant issues related to nonimmigrant student status by individual appointments or through workshops and information sessions. Consult the OGS whenever you have a question relating to your nonimmigrant student status or any aspect of SEVIS compliance.