# First-Semester Undergraduate F-1 International Student

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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The Enrollment Process

Why is an advisor enrolling me in my first semester courses?

- This process is done to help new F-1 international students ensure that they are enrolled in at least 12 units that can be used towards the student’s major and/or general education (GE). In the past students have left themselves under enrolled while waiting for closed classes they want to become available and were not able to secure seats by the time school began. Due to the enrollment process our first semester international students are guaranteed 12 units as long as they complete the questionnaire on time.
- This process makes transition easier for the many students who are still abroad and/or not familiar with CSUN’s course requirements and enrollment procedures.
- Oftentimes, students have not attempted the placement exams even a week before classes begin or for transfer student’s, transcripts may not yet be evaluated meaning you may not be eligible for major courses. Your advisor is aware of these requirements and may be able to assist you with speeding up the process of enrollment.
- The advisor reviews courses to make sure students have met prerequisites (the classes, exams, grades, etc. required before taking certain classes). Sometimes students do not find out that they do not have the prerequisites for a course until after school has already began and are dropped from the class. This is a serious issue that the advisor can help you avoid.
- In the past students mistakenly put themselves into multiple online classes or courses that they were not eligible for or did not need. Again, you advisor will help avoid this by making sure that you are in compliance with university policies and requirements.

How does the pre-enrollment process work?

- All new undergraduate F-1 international students who fill out the Response Questionnaire will be enrolled by an advisor.
- Priority enrollment is given to students who fill out the Response Questionnaire by the deadlines indicated in their Welcome Letter.
- Schedules are designed to meet the student’s preferences as indicated in their Response Questionnaire (if the classes are available) as well as their major/GE requirements. If a student’s top preferences are not available the advisor will place the student into the next best option.
- Students who decide to withdraw or defer their admission after enrollment should notify an advisor as soon as possible so that they can be dropped from classes and receive a refund.
- Students who inform us late of their intention to attend CSUN may be placed into courses that meet during times that are not ideal, GE that are not your top preference, or risk part-time enrollment.
- Students who wait until after the semester begins to let us know they plan to attend may have to run for permission numbers during the first week to be enrolled. Running for permission numbers is not an easy process since many classes are closed by the start of the semester.

Schedule Change Request
What is the process for requesting schedule changes?

- To request a schedule change students can email ugs.intladvisor@csun.edu with their name, ID number, and the specific change they would like to make.
- Students may request a change to their schedule **no later than** the Friday of the first week of classes, with very limited exceptions.
- Request for schedule changes are not guaranteed. Approvals are based on class availability, student eligibility, and if the class fulfills a graduation requirement.
- Additionally, since advisors create schedules very carefully, students must provide legitimate reasons for why they are requesting a schedule change.
- Since first semester international students are pre-enrolled and guaranteed 12 units whereas other students are not, you will not be eligible to use the Wait List through portal. The class must be open for a schedule change request to be considered or a permission number must be provided by the instructor if the semester has already begun.
- In order to assure our students have a strong start and are not missing multiple class sessions, only one schedule change request will be approved after the semester has begun. If a schedule change is made after the start of the semester it will not be reversed and the student will be responsible for the new course(s).
- Due to the importance of these classes in fulfilling EO 665, no changes can be made to Ling 113A unless moving up based on the placement exam. No changes can be made to Math 92 unless an alternative class is open and the student meets the prerequisites.
- Students who do not fill out the Response Questionnaire or submit the questionnaire as late as 2 weeks prior to the start of the semester forfeit a chance for schedule changes. Most classes are closed/full at least one month before the semester starts.

Why is there a deadline to change my schedule?

We want our students to have a strong, stable start to their first semester. We have found that students who make course changes during the first week typically do worse than students who do not; this is because adding a class late and missing class sessions causes the student to fall behind in assignments. Additionally, this is university, we expect our students to take responsibility for their actions, this means adhering to the set deadlines and processes which students accept upon submission of their Response Questionnaire. In future semesters students will continue to have a deadline, however because international students are enrolled earlier than domestic students during their first semester, their deadline is earlier. Students are given the opportunity to let us know if they need or would like a schedule change up until the end of the first week, therefore they are expected to be accountable for their actions if they miss the deadline.

What if I need an exception after the deadline?

Students must be approved for an exception **before** seeking out a new course in week 2-3. Having a permission number or seeing an open class does not guarantee that you will be approved. Exceptions to the policy have been outlined below however you can see the full policy here [http://www.csun.edu/undergraduate-studies/pre-enrollment-schedule-change-process](http://www.csun.edu/undergraduate-studies/pre-enrollment-schedule-change-process). **Extenuating circumstances not listed below will be evaluated on an individual basis:**

- Freshmen may be approved for a schedule change after the deadline if the student is eligible to move up or down in Math or English based on placement exams.
- Transfer students may be approved for a schedule change after the deadline, under limited circumstances (and with proof), based on the following criterion:
Your DPR has been updated to show that you have been enrolled into a course that is equivalent to one you completed at another college/university.

Due to updated transcripts your DPR now shows that you meet the prerequisites for major coursework. The prerequisite must be an exact equivalent or the student will have to go through the course substitution process. Once the course substitution is approved changes can be made to the schedule.

A major class that was closed/full at the time of enrollment now has seats available.

Will I be automatically dropped from a class if I do not attend?

No, simply not attending class does not mean that you will be dropped. It is the student’s responsibility to notify the advisor if they want to drop a course by the third week of the semester. Students who miss the first two sessions of a class that meets twice a week, or miss the first session of a class that is scheduled only once a week can be asked by the professor to drop or may be given a WU (the equivalent of a fail in your GPA). Students who are forced to drop due to not attending class during the first week are not guaranteed enrollment into another class and may have issues with their VISA for being under enrolled. Students are expected to continue attending their scheduled class even if they have been approved to seek a permission number for an alternative course.

Tuition and Payments

Where can I go for information about tuition and parking fees?

For tuition and parking information, please visit [http://www.csun.edu/stufin](http://www.csun.edu/stufin). If you need a print out of your personal tuition fees please call student finances at 818-677-8000 (choose option #2) or email [Student_Financial_Services@csun.edu](mailto:Student_Financial_Services@csun.edu).

When is my tuition due?

Tuition can be paid as soon the student is enrolled, but usually no later than the Friday of the first week of classes. Students will see an earlier fee due date on their portal, however international students are given extra time to pay during their first semester.

If I drop a class will I receive a refund?

Students are entitled to a refund only if there is a change in the number of units they are enrolled. Students will not receive a refund if they are simply swapping a course, for example swapping one 3 unit course for a different 3 unit course. However, a student swapping a 3 unit course with a 1 unit course will receive the difference in price for the change in units. More information on when and how students will receive refunds can be found here [http://www.csun.edu/stufin/ucs-refund-information](http://www.csun.edu/stufin/ucs-refund-information).

I need help paying my tuition, where can I go for resources?

There are many off-campus resources regarding scholarships and loans that you can review on the financial aid page: [http://www.csun.edu/financialaid/international-students](http://www.csun.edu/financialaid/international-students) or under IESC’s resources: [http://www.csun.edu/international/financial-aid-and-scholarship-information](http://www.csun.edu/international/financial-aid-and-scholarship-information).

For on campus scholarships, some are available to international students, while others are available to only US residents/citizens. A good place to start is to look into merit based scholarships offered by your major department and review the eligibility requirements. You can also use the link on the financial aid web page “apply for scholarships” or meet with a counselor in the financial aid office (BH, 1st floor) about additional resources.
Advisement

Am I required to make an advisement appointment my first semester?

It is recommended, but NOT required that students come in for advisement before the start of the semester. We understand that many students are still abroad until at least a week before school starts and may not be able to come in. Completing the mandatory online workshop will serve as advisement and questions or concerns can be emailed to the advisor.

If I do want to make an advisement appointment before the semester starts, how do I?

Students who would like to make an appointment can do so by calling 818-677-6968 or emailing ugs.intladvisor@csun.edu, with their name, ID number, and availability.

What will be covered during my advisement appointment?

- Our advisors cover issues such as, how to read the Degree Progress Report/Planner, how to lift holds, first semester schedule changes, where to find resources, and university policies.
- We DO NOT create embassy study plans, provide official proof of enrollment, issue I-20’s or process any travel/visa documentations. For questions regarding these issues refer to Immigration Issues on pg7.

Holds

I have an advisement or “V” hold, what do I do?

The advisement hold for new international students will stay on for the first semester only. You DO NOT need to get this hold removed. This process is followed so that new international students are required to consult with an academic advisor before any adjustments can be made to their schedule; this guarantees that students maintain proper enrollment status. The V holds will be lifted when it is time for students to register for the 2nd semester.

I have a Foreign or “F” hold, what do I do?

The Foreign or “F” hold is placed by the International & Exchange Student Center (IESC). To clear the F hold, you must submit proof of health insurance to IESC. Insurance is not included in your tuition. For additional instructions please visit the IESC website at http://www.csun.edu/international/current-students-foreign-hold.

I have a Rubella/ Rubeola hold. Where do I turn in proof of Immunization?

You can submit these records to the Student Health Center by emailing immune@csun.edu or contact them at 818-677-3666 if you need to schedule an appointment. For more info visit http://www.csun.edu/shc/immunizations.

I have a Title IX hold. What is “Not Anymore” and how can I get my hold remove?

To maintain a safe environment, CSUN staff and students are required to complete "Not Anymore" an online, video- based, violence prevention program. Students can complete this course, by clicking the "Not Anymore" link under incomplete task in their checklist. Students will have a registration hold placed on their account until the "Not Anymore" (Title 9) course is complete. Once you complete the training your hold should be lifted within
Exams

What is the Math Selection Assessment (MSA)?
The MSA is a new assessment tool for first semester international students who begin CSUN Spring 2015 or after. This assessment identifies the best fit for placement in Math 92, 93, 102, 103, 131, 140, 105, or 150A. Students who began their education at CSUN Fall 2014 or prior are not eligible for this assessment. Students who do not take the MSA or are not exempt will be placed into the lowest level math. For more information visit http://www.csun.edu/undergraduate-studies/developmental-mathematics/math-selection-assessment.

What is the English Placement Test (EPT)?
The EPT is an assessment tool that allows students to be placed into Freshmen Composition (ENGL/AAS/CHS/CAS/LING/QS 113A, 114A, or 115). All freshmen are encouraged to take the EPT regardless of SAT scores. Some transfer students may need the EPT if they took freshman composition outside the U.S. The TOFEL does not exempt you from the EPT. Students who do not take the EPT or are not exempt will be placed into the lowest level freshman composition.

What is the Upper Division Writing Proficiency Exam (UDWPE) and when should I take it?
The UDWPE is an exam that all students must attempt by the semester in which they will have 75 units. For transfer students with 60 or more units, this typically means the first semester. Registration holds will be placed on students who have not attempted the exam in time. The TOFEL does not exempt you from the UDWPE. To register and view test dates please visit www.csun.edu/udwpe.

Executive Orders

What is Executive Order (EO) 665?
All students are required to complete their developmental requirements (MATH 092/093), (AAS/AFRS/CAS/CHS/ENGL/LING/QS 113A or 114A) within their first year of enrollment. Students who do not meet EO 665 will be required to temporarily leave CSUN and complete their Math and English requirements at another institution before they can enroll again at CSUN. Please consult with an advisor early, if you experience difficulties meeting this requirement. If you have met EO 665, please be sure to complete your General Education Basic Skills requirements as soon as possible.

What is Executive Order (EO) 1100?
Effective Fall 2016 all students are required to complete their General Education Basic Skills requirements (Freshman Composition, Critical Thinking, Math, and Oral Communication) with a “C-” or higher. Students considering applying for Fall 2016 or after as an Upper Division transfer (60 or more units) from a U.S. institution, should be aware that if they do not have their Basic Skills requirements complete with a “C-” or higher they will not be eligible for admission (students in the College of Engineering and Computer Science are not
required to complete Critical Thinking prior to arrival). For all other admission criterion please visit [http://www.csun.edu/admissions-records/international/apply-transfer-student](http://www.csun.edu/admissions-records/international/apply-transfer-student).

**Immigration Issues**

I have been admitted to CSUN as an F-1 Visa student. When will I receive the I-20?

The answer depends if you live inside or outside the U.S. Visit the International Admissions site at [http://www.csun.edu/admissions-records/international/admitted-students](http://www.csun.edu/admissions-records/international/admitted-students) for helpful answers about the I-20.

How do I know if I’m missing immigration requirements?

Upon arrival to the United States, please make sure to complete the “Six-Steps for Immigration” requirements [http://www.csun.edu/international/new-students](http://www.csun.edu/international/new-students). In addition you must go to the International Exchange Student Center in person, check in and bring copies of important documents. Note that the “Six-Steps for Immigration” requirement is different than the requirements for course enrollment listed in your welcome letter.

The third page of my I-20 has no signature. Who needs to sign this?

When you are admitted to CSUN, the International Admissions Advisor signs the first page of the I-20. The third page is left blank and is signed if you travel after admission. You must get a signature and fill out any necessary documents from International and Exchange Student Center before traveling.

My Sponsor/Embassy/Cultural Mission requires that I submit a study plan to them. Where can I request a study plan?

First, obtain the Study Plan form required from your sponsor (if one was provided to you) and fill it out to the best of your ability; you can use the Degree Road Maps as a guide to plan your courses through graduation by clicking [http://catalog.csun.edu/resources/road-map/](http://catalog.csun.edu/resources/road-map/). Then request a letter from Admissions & Records that verifies your study plan. Please fill out the Letter Request form ([http://www.csun.edu/sites/default/files/letter_request.pdf](http://www.csun.edu/sites/default/files/letter_request.pdf)) and under the section “Type of letter requested” write that you need your study plan to be submitted to your sponsor/embassy. Submit the Letter Request form (and Study Plan if applicable) to International Admissions in Bayramian Hall (BH) 160, or the Admissions & Records counter in the BH lobby, or email your forms to intladm@csun.edu. Once submitted, the Letter Request process takes approximately 10 business days to complete.

**Technology Help**

I am having trouble accessing myNorthridge portal. Who can help me?

If you are having problems activating your CSUN portal account or forgot your password, you can do a chat option with CSUN’s Helpdesk at [http://www.csun.edu/it/need-help](http://www.csun.edu/it/need-help) or you can call 818-677-1400 as long as you have your student ID number. Students can also visit [http://www.csun.edu/mynorthridge/portal-help-guide](http://www.csun.edu/mynorthridge/portal-help-guide) for further assistance.

How can I access my CSUN gmail account?

Your CSUN email address can be found by logging into your portal and looking in the Solar Student Center. Your email address will be under the personal information section and you
will be able to login by visiting gmail.com and using the same password that you use for your portal.

What is Moodle/Canvas?

Moodle/Canvas is an online tool used by some professors to post assignments or tests. Moodle/Canvas is typically used for most online or hybrid classes, however not all instructors will use it. You will login to Moodle/Canvas using the same information you use to login to your portal.

Writing and Tutoring Help

Where can I go for writing help?

The Learning Resource Center (818-677-2033) offers the Collaborative Writing Space where a writing consultant can answer short questions. They are located on the 3rd floor of the Oviatt Library. There are also writing labs provided by the African Studies Department (SH 273) and the Chicano Studies Department (JR 142).

Where can I go for tutoring?

CSUN has many free tutoring options for students offered through the Learning Resource Center as well as other departments on campus. To see the full list of resources please visit the section on our webpage labeled “Tutoring and Academic Resources” [http://www.csun.edu/undergraduate-studies/new-f-1-international-student-academic-advisement-process](http://www.csun.edu/undergraduate-studies/new-f-1-international-student-academic-advisement-process).

Housing and Travel Accommodations

Do you have information about on-campus and off-campus housing?

CSUN offers on-campus housing and students can choose between suites, apartments, or family housing. For more on-campus information, please visit [http://www.csun.edu/housing/future-residents](http://www.csun.edu/housing/future-residents). For students seeking possible off-campus housing arrangements, visit this link: [https://housing.csun.edu/portal/och_index.php](https://housing.csun.edu/portal/och_index.php). Students looking for temporary housing can visit [http://www.csun.edu/~presofc/hotels.html](http://www.csun.edu/~presofc/hotels.html) for a list of nearby hotels.

If I already know I will be living in the CSUN dorms, can I check in early?

The move in date for the dorm is typically the Saturday before classes begin. If you expect to arrive earlier you must fill out the Request for Extension Check-In form which can be found on the housing webpage here [http://www.csun.edu/housing/forms-and-service-requests](http://www.csun.edu/housing/forms-and-service-requests).

Does CSUN provide shuttle service from the airport to CSUN?

Unfortunately, CSUN does not have an airport pickup service, but the Flyaway Bus Service from LAX to Van Nuys is approximately 15-20 minutes away from CSUN ([http://www.lawa.org/flyaway/default.aspx](http://www.lawa.org/flyaway/default.aspx)). The Flyaway Bus Service costs $9.00 one-way. Once at the station, you may need to take a taxi from the Flyaway in Van Nuys to campus.

Getting Involved
Are there Clubs or organizations I can join?

CSUN offers many academic and social clubs/organizations for students to join. To see the list, visit: http://www.csun.edu/mic/apps/clublisting/directory.php. Additionally, the International & Exchange Student Center (IESC) works with specific international clubs and plans events for students. For these exciting opportunities, visit http://www.csun.edu/international/get-involved or contact Cindy Cruz at cindy.cruz@csun.edu.

How can I join a sports team?

For information to try-out for an official CSUN sports team, students can contact the Athletics department at 818-677-3820 or visit http://www.gomatadors.com/staff.aspx. However, the Student Recreation Center also offers various intramurals sports that students can join, including flag football, soccer, ultimate Frisbee, and more. For additional information about joining intramurals visit here http://www.csun.edu/src/intramurals.

How can I find a job on campus?

Most jobs can be found by going to a location on campus and asking if they have open positions. For example, it is always good to visit individual offices in person. The list of advisement office can be found here http://www.csun.edu/undergraduate-studies/academic-advisement. However, below are some additional sites where you can look into other job openings. Remember students should always consult with IESC regarding rules and limitations to working while on an F-1 visa before accepting a position.

- The Career Center in BH 413, here advisors can help you work on your resume/cover letter and there is an online system where you can look for jobs both on and off campus http://www.csun.edu/career/students
- The Library http://library.csun.edu/About/Employment
- The Learning Resource Center (LRC) located inside the library http://www.csun.edu/undergraduate-studies/learning-resource-center/job-opportunities
- Associated Students http://www.csun.edu/as/jobs
- The USU http://www.csun.edu/usu/jobs/taleo
- The Student Recreation Center (SRC) http://www.csun.edu/src/jobs/student

CSUN Dining Opportunities http://www.csun.edu/tuc/careers.

Semester at CSUN F-1 Students

I am an international F-1 student who is part of the “Semester at CSUN” program. Who can assist me with enrollment and overall assistance?

The Semester at CSUN (SAC) program is different from our F-1 degree-seeking, matriculated international student population. SAC (http://tsengcollege.csun.edu/programs/IPP/SAC) is offered through the Tseng College’s International Programs and Partnerships (IPP) and students can complete up to two semesters at CSUN. For questions about the program or assistance with the enrollment process, please call them at 818-677-5948 or email sac@csun.edu.