

## OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

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## Advising the International Student

We hope faculty will find this guide useful when advising international students about their academic careers.

### Who is an International Student?

An international student at Pacific University is anyone whose immigration sponsorship is coming directly from the institution and whose primary purpose while residing in the US is full-time study.

### What is the Difference Between an International Student and an Exchange Student?

Exchange students are a subset of international students. Exchange students typically visit Pacific for a semester or year on a non-degree basis. They will be transferring credits from their work here back to their home university. These individuals receive immigration sponsorship from Pacific for a [J-1 Exchange Visitor visa](#).

Regular international students apply to Pacific through our usual application channels and plan to earn a degree here. These individuals receive immigration sponsorship from Pacific for [an F-1 Student visa](#). In many cases, these students are first-year students and have no experience with higher education, although some may be transferring from a different US university or community college to complete their degree with us.

Pacific currently also sponsors a dual-degree program with Kansai Gaidai University in Japan. Students complete their first two years of study at Kansai Gaidai and then do an additional two years of study at Pacific to earn a degree from both institutions simultaneously. These students are taking part in a sister school exchange, but stay here longer than most exchange visitors.

### Other Types of Students with International Backgrounds

You may also encounter other types of students from outside the U.S. These students may be the dependent of a family member employed by a US firm, a worker themselves, or a refugee. As these students do not have F-1 or J-1 visas, they are not subject to the regulations we are describing in this document.

## The Academic Department and the Office of International Programs

The US government has greatly increased its oversight of F-1 & J-1 international students in the past few years. Sponsoring universities are required to [report to the government](#) about the progress international students are making towards their degrees. Areas monitored by the government are:

• <a href="#">Full-time Enrollment</a>	• <a href="#">Reduction in Credit Load</a>
• Extension of Program Duration	• <a href="#">Change &amp; Declaration of Major</a>
• <a href="#">Change &amp; Declaration of Minor</a>	• <a href="#">Off-campus Internship/Employment</a>
• Leave of Absence	• <a href="#">Amount of On-line Study</a>
• <a href="#">Taking Classes at Multiple Schools</a>	• <a href="#">Suspensions &amp; Probation</a>

The Office of International Programs may need academic advisors to provide information about these issues. Even issues that are routine for US students, such as enrolling for an online class, may require approval. Forms from our office used to document this approval protect both the student and the institution if immigration compliance is reviewed by the government. If you are presented with any form regarding these issues and you have any questions or concerns about what is being asked of you, contact International Programs directly.

If an international student suddenly stops attending classes or expresses an intention to drop out, it is critical that the faculty member/advisor notify International Programs immediately. International Programs will follow up to ensure the student is aware of the immigration regulations governing international students.

### Full-Time Enrollment Requirement

To maintain legal F-1 or J-1 status in the United States, international students must register for and pursue a full-time course load each semester. Any and all exceptions to this, whether for academic, medical or personal reasons, must be pre-approved by International Programs and properly documented

The required amount of credits for undergraduates is 12 per semester. There are few exceptions to this rule, and all require International Programs pre-approval. To determine the student's eligibility for the full-time enrollment exception, IP asks that the academic advisor complete the Academic Advisor Certification for Reduced Course Load Form prior to the beginning of the semester for continuing students and before the end of the add/drop period for new students.

NOTE: IP Approval must be granted before any change to a student's enrollment is made at the Registrar's Office.