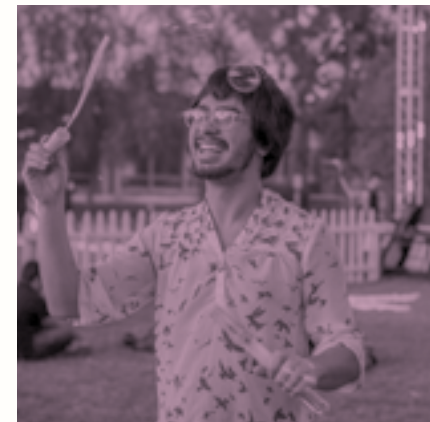


CALARTS INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HANDBOOK

**OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL
STUDENTS AND PROGRAMS**



CaLARTS

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND PROGRAMS

Our office provides assistance with arrival information, obtaining a driver's license, opening a bank account, and obtaining a Social Security Number, as well as many other services. Most of these issues will be covered during the New Student Orientation sessions. We provide informational workshops throughout the school year that are relevant to F-1 visa topics.

calarts.edu/international-student-support
hub.calarts.edu/pages/international-students
facebook.com/calartsintl
instagram.com/calartsinternational/

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Every country has its own ideas about what is considered academic integrity. In the US, we have a high standard for academic integrity. As a student in the US, it is in your best interest to be aware of and abide by academic rules in order to be successful academically.

CalArts has a specific policy regarding plagiarism. Plagiarism is the use of ideas and/or quotations (from the Internet, books, films, television, newspapers, articles, the work of other students, works of art, media, etc.) without proper credit to the author/artist. While the argument in a paper can be enhanced by research, students are cautioned to delineate clearly their own original ideas from source material.

For more information regarding CalArts' Plagiarism Policy, [please go here](#).

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS POLICY

Both federal and state laws prohibit the unlawful possession or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol.

In the state of California, anyone under the age of 21 cannot be served or be in possession of alcohol. As an international student you are governed by federal immigration regulations. Federal laws are established at national level, and federal laws override state laws. California State law, passed as Proposition 64, allows the legal sale of marijuana to people 21 and over as of Jan. 1, 2018. However, federal law still prohibits the use or possession of marijuana. As an international student or scholar, marijuana use, even in California, is considered an illegal activity by federal agents.

For more information regarding CalArts' Alcohol and Drugs Policy, [please go here](#).

WHO ARE WE?

**The Office of International
Students is open
Monday–Friday
9am–5pm
Phone: 661-291-3418
Office: F207 B, C, F**



LAURA VALENZIANO

Assistant Director
lvalenziano@calarts.edu

Welcome to CalArts! We are looking forward to meeting all of you. We are here to assist you as you study and live in the United States. There are no silly questions, and it is always better to ask than assume an answer.

PERSONAL FACTS

I spent nearly two years in Austria, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein.

I speak fluent German and conversational Spanish.

My interests include travel, languages, reading, photography, dance, gardening, and spending time in nature.



JESSE FORREST

International Student Advisor
jforrest@calarts.edu

My name is Jesse and I am originally from Green Bay, Wisconsin, so of course I am a big Packer fan (American football)! I completed my Bachelors in Spanish & Psychology at UW Milwaukee and my Masters at Concordia University Irvine. I came to CalArts after working in the international offices at Texas A&M and UC Riverside. I've also lived and worked in Hangzhou, China and Cartagena, Colombia, primarily as an English professor to university/adult students.

I'm always ready to talk about music and love getting music recommendations. My music taste spans all over the globe from Kpop to Afrobeats to Reggaeton and more. Pre-pandemic you could find me in LA for a concert almost every weekend. I also love to learn new types of dance (I'm not very good but I enjoy trying!). My other hobbies include reading, walking, and doing puzzles.

WHAT DO WE DO?

The Office of International Students and Programs provides a wide range of services for international students at CalArts, including information on all aspects of visas and immigration matters, off-campus housing, and US tax information.

Immigration and Visa Advising

We are here to answer questions about your student visa status, including guidance with off-campus work authorization (OPT, CPT), travel and re-entry considerations, and visa renewals. Each year the office organizes workshops on different topics. Check our “What’s New” section on the Hub.

US Tax Preparation

We offer general guidelines for completing a US tax return. We host workshops during the spring term, so that you can understand your obligations as an international student filing US taxes.

Registration and Course Advising Day

As a new student, Course Advising Day is an opportunity for you to meet with your mentor, receive approval of instructor for courses not accessible during online registration, and sign up for classes. Once you are considered a returning student, the majority of the registration process will take place online.

English Language Support

If you need additional English language support, we can direct you to on- and off-campus language courses and other resources.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. WHAT ARE IMPORTANT REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO MY F-1 VISA?

As a student on an F-1 visa your obligations are:

- **YOU MUST BE ENROLLED FULL-TIME.** Minimum units required to meet full-time enrollment are based on federal regulations.
- BFA 12 units
- MA and MFA 12 units *varies
- * Minimum units vary with each metiér.
- **HOLD A VALID, CURRENT I-20.** If you decide to take a leave of absence, change majors, or if you are graduating earlier or later than expected, you must notify the Office of International Students and Programs to make the necessary changes on your I-20.
- **NOTIFY THE OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND PROGRAMS OF ANY ADDRESS CHANGES WITHIN 10 DAYS OF MOVING.**
- **MAINTAIN A VALID PASSPORT AT ALL TIMES.** Your passport must be valid at least six months into the future.
- **YOU CANNOT WORK OFF CAMPUS WITHOUT A WORK AUTHORIZATION; THIS INCLUDES FREELANCE WORK.** You must contact the Office of International Students and Programs to see if you meet the appropriate eligibility requirements to receive off-campus work authorization. While

you are enrolled as an international student you may work on campus for a maximum of 20 hours per week while school is in session and 40 hours per week during vacations without authorization by USCIS.

2. WHAT IS UNLAWFUL PRESENCE? HOW DOES THAT AFFECT ME AS AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT?

Unlawful presence is a stay in the United States with any unauthorized activities or after the period authorized by immigration authorities. Individuals in F, J, or M status who fail to maintain their status will start accruing unlawful presence on the earliest of any of the following:

- The day after you no longer pursue the course of study or the authorized activity.
- The day after the authorized grace period ends after completing the course of study, program, or any authorized practical training.
- The day after the I-94 expires.
- The day after an immigration judge, or in certain cases, the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA), orders them excluded, deported, or removed (whether or not the decision is appealed).

3. WHAT IS AN I-94?

When you travel to and from the US, the Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) tracks your exit and re-entry. This record is called the I-94 and can be viewed online. Certain activities such as applying for a driver's license, Social Security Number, or any type of work permit will require a print-out of the I-94 record. You can print your I-94 record [here](#).

4. WHAT IS A TRAVEL SIGNATURE AND HOW OFTEN DO I NEED TO GET IT SIGNED?

A travel signature is on the second page of the I-20. It is a signature from a DSO, which acknowledges that you are a full-time student in F-1 status and that you are maintaining your active status at CalArts. It signifies that you are

eligible to come back into the United States. The travel signature is valid for one year for current CalArts students. If you are on OPT it is only valid for six months. It is your responsibility to make sure that your travel signature is valid before you leave the United States.

5. HOW CAN I FIND A PLACE TO LIVE OFF CAMPUS?

If you are put on the waitlist for on-campus housing or you choose not to apply for on-campus housing, you will need to find your own accommodations. The Office of International Students and Programs has created a list of possible options. CalArts is not affiliated with the companies/groups in this list. We cannot recommend or not-recommend any of the services. Please use the list as a reference and use your good judgement to find housing that fits your needs. The list can be found [here](#).

6. WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I BECOME SICK OR GET INJURED?

In the United States, medical attention is not free and can be very costly if you do not have health insurance. Since fall 2014, all new international students entering CalArts are automatically enrolled in health insurance coverage through the CalArts Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP). As a new member in SHIP you will receive a health identification card in the mail which is to be used whenever you need medical attention and to purchase prescriptions at any pharmacy. Health insurance coverage may vary, so you will need to be familiar with the specifics of what your insurance covers and whom you are allowed to see for reduced rates. For minor illness or first aid injuries, you can visit Student Health Services at CalArts. The office is located in D208 on Level 2 between the main stairwell and Tatum Lounge. More information can be found [here](#).

PLEASE NOTE: Urgent care is a good option for seeking medical services after normal office hours, and less expensive than going to the hospital emergency room.

7. HOW CAN I FIND A JOB ON CAMPUS?

Gaining employment on campus can be challenging as there are more job seekers than there are positions available. You can search for jobs via the [CalArts Internal Student Job Board](#). You can also go to various offices on campus and ask if there are any student worker positions available or ask current student workers.

As an international student you are NOT eligible for positions that are designated as federal work-study. In the CalArts Internal Student Job Board under “Type” you are eligible for jobs designated as Both or Non-Work Study. Once you have a job offer, you can apply for a Social Security Number (SSN). A handout on How to Apply for a SSN can be found in the International Student section in the Hub.

8. WHAT IS A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER AND HOW DO I GET THE CARD?

The Social Security Number (SSN) uniquely identifies and gathers information about an individual for the US government for a wide range of purposes, but mostly for tax purposes. SSNs are generally assigned to people who are authorized to work in the United States and is used to report their income to the government. In the United States you MUST have a SSN in order to work, but you do not need one in order to open a bank account or apply for a Driver’s License. If you are eligible to work (either through on-campus employment or Curricular Practical Training(CPT)/ Optional Practical Training (OPT) authorization) you are allowed to search for a job.

A handout on How to Apply for a SSN can be found in the International Student section on the Hub.

9. HOW AND WHEN SHOULD I GET A CALIFORNIA DRIVER’S LICENSE?

You may drive in California with a valid out-of-state driver’s license or your home country’s driver’s license for 30 days once you have moved to California. The international driver’s license is not valid on its own and must be used in conjunction with your home country’s driver’s license. You must wait at least 10 days from your initial arrival to the US and until your SEVIS record is registered “active” before you can apply for a California driver’s license. The initial SEVIS registration is done during the third week of school.

A handout on How to Apply for a Driver’s License can be found in the International Student section on the Hub.

10. WHAT ARE SOME OTHER IMPORTANT RESOURCES?

Center for Life and Work (CLW) (F207 D) staff can assist you with resume/CV, cover letter, and interviewing tips and techniques. CLW can also help you to research internship opportunities [here](#).

- The Office of Student Experience (D214) staff can provide you with a variety of support services that include personal counseling, academic support, special event/activities, and student sponsored clubs and organizations. Their website is: calarts.edu/life-at-calarts/supportand-advocacy

- The Writing Center (located in the Library) is a place where students can meet one-on-one with trained writing tutors to work on any writing-related task they face—from academic papers to artist statements, grant applications to resumes. Their website is [here](#).

11. HOW DO I GET AROUND SANTA CLARITA AND BEYOND?

- Santa Clarita Transit has buses that have routes around Santa Clarita and beyond. Information on fares, schedules, services, and more for Santa Clarita Transit can be found [here](#).
- The Metrolink is a commuter rail system in Southern California consisting of seven lines and 62 stations operating on 534 miles (859 km) of rail network. The Newhall Metrolink station will connect passengers to the other lines. Information on fares, schedules, services, and more can be found at: metrolinktrains.com
- Uber, Lyft, and registered taxis are available in the Los Angeles county area. Please review all policies before purchasing a ride.
- Buying a car, motorcycle, or other motorized vehicle is another option for international students. You can buy a used or new car in the local area. It is NOT recommend to buy a car off Craigslist or to pay any money upfront until you have seen the car and know there is a clean title.
- If you purchase a car you are required to have a driver’s license and buy car insurance before you drive the car. You are encouraged to get quotes from different car insurance companies BEFORE you purchase; you want to know the monthly cost and what that monthly cost covers.

THE LOCAL AREA

**For your convenience, a list
of businesses in the area.**

ART SUPPLIES

Blick Art Materials

11531 Santa Monica Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90025
dickblick.com
310-479-1416

Michaels

25686 The Old Road
Stevenson Ranch, CA 91381
michaels.com
661-255-7132

BANKS

(To open an account you need to
bring your passport, school ID, I-20,
and proof of address.)

Bank of America

26960 The Old Road
Stevenson Ranch, CA 91381
661-255-3523

Chase

25880 The Old Road
Stevenson Ranch, CA 91381
661-284-3640

Citibank

26542 Bouquet Canyon Road
Saugus, CA 91350
661-673-7339

Union Bank

24240 Valencia Blvd.
Valencia, CA 91355
661-799-8531

Wells Fargo

25662 The Old Rd,
Stevenson Ranch, CA 91381
661-753-5440

COFFEE

The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf

24201 Valencia Blvd.
Santa Clarita, CA 91355
661-291-1134

Noah's Bagels

25910 The Old Rd C1,
Valencia, CA 91381

Starbucks

25900 The Old Road
Valencia, CA 91381
661-254-3570

GROCERY STORES

Ralphs

24975 Pico Canyon Rd
Stevenson Ranch, CA 91381
or
25930 McBean Parkway
Valencia, CA 91355

Sprouts Farmers Market

24285 Magic Mountain Pkwy
Valencia, CA 91355

Tokyo Japanese Lifestyle

24201 Valencia Blvd
Santa Clarita, CA 91355

Trader Joe's

26517 Bouquet Canyon Road
Santa Clarita, CA 91350

Vons

25850 N The Old Rd
Santa Clarita, CA 91381

Walmart

25450 The Old Road
Stevenson Ranch, CA 91381

Whole Foods

24130 Valencia Blvd.
Valencia, CA 91355



GLOSSARY OF IMMIGRATION TERMINOLOGY

CPT: Curricular Practical Training

CPT is work authorization that allows F-1 international students to take part in unpaid/paid off-campus academic internships while they are in school. The internship must be considered a necessary part of the student's academic program.

DHS: Department of Homeland Security

DHS consists of three organizations: United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). DHS provides the basic governmental framework for regulating the flow of visitors, workers, and immigrants to the US.

DS-2019

A form which allows you to obtain a J-1 visa from a US embassy/consulate and enter the US in J-1 status.

D/S: Duration of Status

D/S is granted in the immigration inspection area. D/S allows students to remain in the US for the length of time necessary to complete their studies. D/S generally ends on the last day of classes (ie I-20 or DS-2019 expiration date), plus a 60-day grace period for F-1 students and 30-day grace period for J-1 visa holders.

DSO: Designated School Official

A staff member at your school who acts as the liaison between you and the Department of Homeland Security. CalArts has several DSOs and one PDSO (Primary Designated School Official).

EAD: Employment Authorization Document

A work permit issued by the USCIS that allows you to legally work in the US beginning and ending on the dates of your authorized employment.

Grace Period

F-1 visa holders have a 60-day departure preparation period immediately following a student's I-20 completion date or Optional Practical Training (OPT) completion date. J-1 visa holders have a 30-day departure period immediately following a student's DS-2019 completion date or Academic Training completion date.

Green Card

Permanent Resident Card, Form I-551 (formerly called Alien Registration Card, also known as green card), is a wallet-sized card documenting that the holder is a lawful permanent resident (immigrant) in the US.

In Status

Every visa is issued for a particular purpose and for a specific class of visitor. Each visa classification has a set of requirements that the visa holder must follow and maintain. Those who follow the requirements maintain their status and ensure their ability to remain in the US. Those who do not follow the requirements violate their status and are considered "out of status."

I-9

A form that verifies employment eligibility for job candidates.

I-20

A form that allows you to obtain an F-1 student visa from a US embassy/consulate and enter the US as an F-1 student. It is a three-page document sent to you before you attend school. It shows your field of study, starting and ending dates of study, and financial information.

I-94: Arrival-Departure Record

The I-94 is electronically issued to all nonimmigrants by US immigration inspectors at the port of entry. It is evidence of legal entry into the US, indicating date of entry, status granted (F-1 or J-1), and length of stay granted. To retrieve your I-94, visit the I-94 website.

Nonimmigrant Visa

A US visa allows the bearer, a foreign citizen, to apply to enter the US temporarily for a specific purpose. Student visas are examples of nonimmigrant visas.

OPT: Optional Practical Training

OPT is temporary employment that is directly related to an F-1 student's major area of study. Eligible students can apply to receive up to 12 months of OPT employment authorization before completing their academic studies (pre-completion) and/or after completing their academic studies (postcompletion). However, all periods of precompletion OPT will be deducted from the available period of post-completion OPT.

Overstay

An "overstay" occurs when a visitor stays longer than permitted on his/her Arrival/Departure (I-94) record. A violation of the CBP-defined length of admission may make you ineligible for a visa in the future.

PDSO: Primary Designated School Official

The person designated by a Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP)-approved school to have primary responsibility for students in that program and maintaining SEVIS records.

SEVIS: Student and Exchange Visitor Information System

An online reporting database for tracking and reporting F, J, and M students in the US.

SEVIS ID Number

The unique identifying number assigned to a student or exchange visitor within SEVIS that appears on the Form I-20 or DS-2019.

Status

Once nonimmigrants enter the US, they are classified by the immigration inspectors according to the visa used to enter. If you use an F-1 visa to enter the US, you will be granted F-1 status.

USCIS: United States Citizenship and Immigrations Services

A US governmental agency in charge of matters concerning immigration.

Visa

A document placed in your passport by the US that allows you to enter the country. Visas cannot be issued from within the US.

Work Authorization

If you are not a citizen or a lawful permanent resident, you may need to apply for an Employment Authorization Document to prove that you are eligible to work in the US.



GLOSSARY OF HEALTH INSURANCE INFORMATION

Annual Deductible

The amount you pay each plan year before the insurance company starts paying its share of the costs. If the deductible is \$2,000, then you would be responsible for paying the first \$2,000 in health care you receive each year, after which the insurance company would start paying its share.

Annual Out-of-Pocket Maximum

The most cost-sharing you will be responsible for in a year. It is the total of your deductible, copays, and coinsurance (but does not include your premiums). Once you hit this limit, the insurance company will pick up 100 percent of your covered costs for the remainder of the plan year. Most enrollees never reach the out-of-pocket limit, but it can happen if a lot of costly treatment for a serious accident or illness is needed. Plans with higher premiums generally have lower out-of-pocket limits.

Copayment (or Copay)

A fixed, upfront amount you pay each time you receive care when that care is subject to a copay. A copay of \$30 might be applicable for a doctor visit, after which the insurance company picks up the rest. Plans with higher premiums generally have lower copays and vice versa. Plans that do not have copays typically use other methods of cost sharing.

Deductible

A fixed amount you are required to pay before the insurance company begins to pay or contribute toward your medical expenses.

In-Network Doctor

When a provider is “in-network” they agree to accept the insurance approved amount for their services. Doctors or hospitals who aren’t in your network don’t accept your insurance-approved amount. You’ll be responsible for paying the difference between the provider’s full charge and your plan’s approved amount.

Out-of-Pocket Expenses

The terms “out-of-pocket cost” or “cost sharing” refer to the portion of your medical expenses you are responsible for paying when you actually receive health care.

Out-of-Network Providers

Providers “out-of-network” do not have a signed agreement with the insurance company to accept the insurance. The insurance will cover a portion of the “usual and customary” (average) expected amount for each procedure, according to the policy. If the doctor you chose charges a higher rate, you will be responsible for the difference. In other words, you may still choose to use an out-of-network doctor but your costs may be higher.

Preferred Provider Organization (PPO)

A PPO plan offers a network of healthcare providers you can use for your medical care. These providers have agreed to provide care to the plan members at a certain rate.

