

MANHATTAN COLLEGE

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT

HANDBOOK

2008-2009

W E L C O M E !!!

Dear International Student:

On behalf of my office and the International Student Association (ISA), I would like to welcome you to Manhattan College. We will be sponsoring many diverse programs and activities in response to your needs and suggestions.

Throughout your time here, the following people and offices will be available to assist you in any way possible:

1. Advisor to the International Students -
Ms. Debbi Damico, Miguel Hall, Room 207A.
--information on immigration regulations, assistance in completing immigration forms and other documents as required by individual governments.
2. Health Insurance - Brochures and Information on Student Health Insurance are available in the office of the Vice President/Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer's Office (Memorial Hall, Room 301) and also from the International Student Advisor.
3. Counseling services are available through the Counseling Center, Room 500, Miguel Hall.
4. Academic advising can be received from the Chairperson of your department or from your Academic Advisor. Check in your Dean's office for further information.
5. The Health Services office is located in Alumni Hall, Room 104
6. The International Student Association (ISA), a student organization, can be reached by campus mail in the Student Activities Office, Manhattan College, Riverdale, New York 10471 or through the International Student Advisor.

I look forward to meeting with each of you during your stay at Manhattan College.

BEST OF LUCK TO YOU ALL!!

Debbi Damico
International Student Advisor

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GENERAL INFORMATION ON MONEY AND BANKING

MONEY

DO NOT CARRY LARGE SUMS OF CASH WITH YOU OR LEAVE CASH IN YOUR ROOM ON CAMPUS OR IN YOUR APARTMENT!! It is helpful if you open a bank account in which you can deposit your money. You can also use Traveler's Checks (however, these are sometimes inconvenient).

There are several types of accounts available through the local banks listed below. Check with them for specific information regarding your money

TRAVELERS CHECKS

If you plan to travel, do not carry large sums of cash. You can purchase Travelers Checks at any bank for a nominal fee. These are important to carry to protect yourself against loss or theft of your money. Travelers checks can be replaced if lost or stolen.

LOCAL BANKS

Chase Bank

*3775 Riverdale Avenue (at 238th St)

Phone Number: (718) 796-8411

or

*5581 Broadway (at 231st St.)

Phone Number: (718) 549-0602

or

5656 Riverdale Avenue

Phone Number: (718) 601-0063

Citibank

*5671 Riverdale Avenue

Phone Number: (718) 884-8172

or

24 hour ATM

5660 Broadway (at 223rd St)

ATMs on campus

Citibank

ATMs located in the lobby of Thomas Hall and in basement of Leo Engineering Building .

PAYMENTS AND PURCHASES

Whether paying for your tuition or a piece of clothing purchased in a local store, always request a receipt of your payment to ensure yourself of protection in case there are any problems with the item purchased or with your school tuition bill.

At all times be careful with your personal belongings. DO NOT leave your wallets, handbags, or knapsacks lying around, and do not carry money openly. You should enjoy New York City, but being cautious does not take any time. GOOD LUCK!!

HEALTH ISSUES

HEALTH INSURANCE

The cost of health care in the United States is extremely high; therefore, it is strongly recommended that you obtain health insurance when you arrive at Manhattan College. The college has a health insurance plan which is administered through the office of the Vice President for Business and Finance. It is offered to both American and international students. You can obtain information on this policy from the Vice President/Chief Financial Officer or from the International Student Advisor.

There are also several policies which are specifically created for international students studying in the United States. These policies have been recommended by NAFSA: Association of International Educators as offering the basic coverage required by United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. If you would like information on any of these policies, please contact the Office of the International Student Advisor.

Whatever policy you obtain, make sure you obtain an insurance policy number, card and a telephone number where you can call when you have questions.

HEALTH SERVICES/MEDICAL INFORMATION

Manhattan College maintains a health service for the purpose of promoting the general health of students and enlisting their cooperation in safeguarding themselves from preventable illness, accidents, and maladjustments that might lead to absence from classes or interruption of their program of study. The principal component of the health service is the infirmary under the direction of the college physicians and a full-time nurse practitioner. The infirmary is available for emergency use by all students, faculty, and staff. It is located in Alumni Hall, Room 104 and is open **Monday through Friday from 9 am until 4:30 pm**. Check the schedule in the fall for evening hours and physician's hours. The infirmary provides treatment for minor illnesses or injuries; for serious or prolonged illness, removal to a local hospital is arranged by the college physician.

PREVENTIVE MEDICINE

"It's always wise to have contact with a medical doctor before you need one." This advice from the International Student Programs Newsletter of the University of Missouri/Columbia is intended to help international students choose the doctor that best suits their needs.

Finding a Physician

1. Find your new doctor before you need him/her.
2. Ask neighbors and friends their opinions; learn from their experience.
3. If you know someone in the medical field - a nurse, a medical social worker, or another physician - ask that person's recommendation.
4. Check the Yellow Pages of the phone book under "Physicians' and Surgeons' Information Referral Service".
5. Check the American Medical Association Professional Directory. This directory will provide the physician's age, year licensed to practice, school from which he/she graduated, year certified in specialty, and primary and secondary specialties.

6. Set up an orientation appointment to meet your doctor before you get sick. Observe the environment and prevailing attitude at the office.

Questions You May Want To Ask Your Doctor

1. Who covers for him/her on weekends, or when he/she is on vacation?
2. Are patients seen on a first-come-first-served basis or by appointment?
3. How much time is allotted for a patient's visit?
4. What are the fees? What are his/her charges for office, urinalysis, X-rays, blood tests, etc.?
5. Does he/she take questions by phone or must you make an appointment to talk to him/her?
6. Does he/she bill at the end of the month or insist upon cash paid at the time of treatment?

IMMIGRATION INFORMATION

Length of Study Programs

Duration of Status

You have been admitted to the United States for "duration of status," which is defined as:

1. The time during which you are pursuing a full course of study and making normal progress toward completing that course, plus
2. The time you may be working in authorized "practical training" after you complete studies (if you qualify and are so authorized), plus
3. 60 days to depart the country.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) grants duration of status to F-1 students by entering the notation "D/S" in the upper right corners of the "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status" (*SEVIS Form I-20*) and the "Departure Record" (*USCIS Form I-94*).

Limitations on Duration of Status

The "completion of studies" date in item #5 on the most recent *SEVIS Form I-20* you were issued is the date by which ICE expects you to complete requirements for your current program. If you are unable to complete your program of study by that date, consult with your international student advisor **prior** to reaching the *I-20* completion date. If you are eligible for an extension of your time limit, your advisor will assist you to comply with extension requirements.

Eligibility Requirements for Program Extension

You may apply for an extension of your study program if:

1. By the program end date in Item #5 on your *I-20* you have not yet exceeded the time limitation placed upon your study, and
2. You have continuously maintained lawful F-1 status, and
3. The delay in completing program requirements has been caused by compelling academic reasons (such as change of major field or research topic, or unexpected research problems), or compelling and documented medical reasons. Delays in completing program requirements that are caused by academic probation or suspension are not acceptable reasons for an extension of stay.

If your program end date has expired or if you do not meet the eligibility requirements to apply for program extension, you may need to apply for "reinstatement" to lawful F-1 status. In this case, immediate consultation with your international student advisor is necessary.

Application Deadline for Extension of a Study Program

You must request and be granted an extension prior to the program end date on your *I-20*. You should contact your international student advisor **more than** 30 days before your *I-20* program end date so that you will have sufficient time to prepare the necessary documents. If your program end date has already passed, please contact your international student advisor immediately.

Application Procedures

1. **Memorandum or letter from your academic advisor/department chairperson.** Your international student advisor may request that you obtain a memorandum or letter from your academic advisor/department chairperson. If one is needed, it should normally (a) certify that you have been continuously enrolled for a course of study, (b) recommend an extension of your study program, (c) provide a new date when you are expected to complete your studies, and/or (d) verify that reason(s) for a delay in your completion of program requirements.

2. **SEVIS Form I-20.** Your international student advisor may grant you a program extension only by updating SEVIS and issuing you a new *SEVIS Form I-20* reflecting the current program end date.

Failure to Comply with Program Extension Regulations

It is your responsibility to comply with all immigration regulations which apply to F-1 students, including the extension of study program regulations discussed in this section. Your international student advisor will assist you in this. If the program end date on your *I-20* will soon expire or if it has expired, contact your international student advisor immediately. If you fail to comply with your responsibilities, you may lose the benefits provided to F-1 students. For example, you may not be eligible to continue any employment (even on-campus employment through a scholarship, fellowship or assistantship) or to apply for school transfer, practical training, or other F-1 benefits.

On-Campus Employment for Students in F-1 Status

Eligibility Requirements

General. You may work on campus provided (1) you are maintaining F-1 status, (2) you do not work more than a total of 20 hours per week while school is in session, and (3) you do not displace a U.S. resident. You may be employed full time during holidays and vacation periods, including summer vacations, provided you are eligible and intend to register for the next school term. The 20-hour-per-week limit on your employment while school is in session applies to all types of on-campus employment discussed in this section. A 20-hour-per-week graduate assistantship, for example, would exhaust your on-campus (and off-campus) work eligibility for the academic year.

Authorization of Eligibility. If a particular on-campus job meets certain requirements which are explained in this section, work in that job is permissible and is automatically authorized by BCIS regulations. However, you should contact your international student advisor before beginning any on-campus employment.

Jobs That Qualify as "On-Campus Employment"

Employment by Your School. On-campus work performed for your school is usually acceptable, whether it is employment in the library, the computer center or the residence life office, or work required by scholarship, fellowship or assistantship.

Other Employment on Your School's Premises. Work performed on your school's grounds is "on-campus employment" as long as the employer provides direct services to students. Employment in your school bookstore or cafeteria, both of which provide direct services to students, is acceptable even if the bookstore or cafeteria is operated by a private, commercial firm. Work for a construction company which is erecting a campus building is not acceptable since the construction company does not provide direct student services.

Work Off Campus Which Qualified as On-Campus Employment. Immigration regulations allow you to work at an off-campus location provided (1) the location is educationally affiliated with the school, (2) the educational affiliation is associated with your school's established curriculum or is related to a graduate level research project which your school has contracted to perform, and (3) the work is an integral or important part of your program of study. For example, if your field of study is marine biology and your school has an off-campus marine biology facility, you may work there and that employment will be defined as "on-campus."

Note: You should contact your international student advisor before any "on-campus" employment. While employment with your school is clear enough, the other two types of "on-campus" jobs described here are more difficult to define.

On-Campus Employment, School Transfer and Initial Entry

In the case of a transfer in SEVIS, the student may only engage in on-campus work at the school having jurisdiction over the student's SEVIS record. Upon initial entry to begin a new course of study, an F-1 student may not begin on-campus employment more than 30 days prior to the actual start of classes.

Optional Practical Training for Students in F-1 Status

Definition of "Optional Practical Training"

Optional practical training is designed to provide you with an opportunity to gain actual employment experience in your chosen profession for a maximum of one year. Its purpose is to complement your academic work. Optional practical training falls into four categories: (1) full- or part-time employment during your annual vacation if you are enrolled and intend to register for the next session; (2) part-time employment (20 hours per week or less) while school is in session; (3) full- or part-time employment after you have completed your course requirements but before you have finished your thesis (doctoral candidates only); or (4) full-time employment after you have completed your degree.

Eligibility Requirements

The work must be directly related to your major field of study and it must be appropriate for someone with your level of education. You need not have a specific job offer to apply for optional practical training but be aware that you cannot recover portions of the optional practical training period that you may have spent searching for employment. The work may be full time or part time, and may occur anywhere in the United States. To be eligible to apply for optional practical training, you must have been in lawful student status for at least one academic year.

New Filing Deadlines for Initial OPT Applications

As of April 8, 2008, a student will be able to file the OPT application up to 90 days before the degree completion date, and up to 60 days after the degree completion date. However, the application for OPT must be submitted to the USCIS Processing Center within 30 days of the date the school enters the recommendation for OPT into the SEVIS record.

Importance of the Actual Date You Complete Your Program of Study

USCIS regulations refer to the date you complete all requirements for a program of study, not the date you participate in graduation ceremonies and receive a certificate or diploma. The bureau recognizes that many students, especially graduate students in thesis or dissertation programs, may complete requirements for a degree any day during the year. This means that the last day of an academic term may not be the date you complete degree requirements, and you are expected to leave the country by that date unless you file a timely application for practical training or make other arrangements to lawfully remain in the United States.

Part-Time vs. Full-Time Optional Practical Training

Both part-time and full-time optional practical training count towards the twelve-month total you have. Part-time training (20 hours per week or less) counts as one-half the full-time rate. For example, if you work for 10 hours per week for two months, you will have used one month of optional practical training. It does not matter how few hours you actually work - any amount less than 20 counts as part-time and will be deducted at that rate.

Application and Authorization Procedures in SEVIS

In making a recommendation for optional practical training under SEVIS, the designated school official (usually the international student advisor) will update the student's record in SEVIS as having been recommended for optional practical training. A designated school official (DSO) who recommends a student for optional practical training is responsible for maintaining the record of the student for the duration of the time that training is authorized. The DSO will indicate in SEVIS whether the employment is to be full-time or part-time, and note in SEVIS the start and end date of employment. The DSO will then print the employment page of the student's *SEVIS Form I-20*, and sign and date the form to indicate the optional practical training has been recommended. The F-1 student files with the service center for an Employment Authorization Document, on *Form I-765*, with fee and the *SEVIS Form I-20* employment page indicating that optional practical training has been recommended by the DSO.

An F-1 student authorized by the bureau to engage in practical training is required to report any change of name or address, or disruption of such employment to the DSO for the duration of the authorized training. A DSO who recommends a student for optional practical training is responsible for updating the student's record to reflect these reported changes for the duration of the time that training is authorized.

Actual Date Practical Training Employment May Begin

You may not begin work until both of the following requirements are satisfied: (1) you have obtained an EAD from the USCIS and (2) the date is reached when the EAD authorized employment to begin.

Change of Employer After Post-Completion Practical Training Has Been Authorized

You may change employers after you have begun authorized employment provided the new job is (1) directly related to your major field of study and (2) appropriate for someone having your level of education.

Travel Outside the United States

If you have applied for Practical Training, you may travel outside the United States while the OPT application is pending, provided that you can present the USCIS Processing Center Receipt, proving that the OPT application has been filed. However, once the EAD card for OPT is issued to you, and you decide to travel abroad, you can only re-enter the United States to resume employment. Thus, you must carry with you written documentation from the employer verifying your employment or a job offer, as well as the EAD card. DHS has clarified that the F-1 student does not need to have already begun actual employment before leaving, as long as the student has a job offer to which to return.

You must have your USCIS Processing Center Receipt (if the OPT application is still pending) or your Employment Authorization Document (EAD) and written proof of employment with you, as well as your SEVIS I-20 endorsed for practical training, in order to re-enter the United States. The travel signature on Page 3 of the SEVIS OPT I-20 must be less than six months old. If you are on Practical Training and will need to obtain a new F-1 visa before returning to the United States, you are advised that visa issuance for individuals on practical training can be highly problematic, since you may have a hard time proving that you do not intend to immigrate to the United States. Such students are urged to discuss their situation with the International Student Advisor before they travel.

New Optional Practical Training (OPT) Rules for F-1 Students

On April 3, 2008, The Department of Homeland Security announced the publication of an Interim Final Rule that makes significant changes to Post-Completion Optional Practical Training for F-1 students.

This rule took effect upon publication of the rule in the U.S. Government's Federal Register of April 8, 2008.

Highlights of the New Rule:

The current 12-month limit on OPT will be extended by 17 months, for a total of 29 months for certain STEM degree holders ONLY

The H-1B "Cap Gap" is eliminated by extending OPT employment and status for those who are beneficiaries of an H-1B petition with an October 1 start date (available to ALL OPT participants)

The filing deadline for initial OPT applications is changed (applies to all OPT participants)

There are new reporting requirements for students and employers (applies to all OPT participants)

Post-Completion OPT will now be dependent on employment. Only limited periods of unemployment will be permitted (applies to all OPT participants)

What is STEM?

S = Science

T = Technology

E = Engineering

M = Mathematics

STEM Fields include

Actuarial Science
Computer Science Applications
Engineering
Engineering Technologies
Biological and Biomedical Sciences
Mathematics and Statistics
Military Technologies
Physical Sciences
Science Technologies
Medical Scientist (MS, PhD)

Certain fields that many would regard as being part of science or engineering are not included in the STEM list, but the Department of Homeland Security is inviting individuals to submit the titles of additional fields.

Additional Requirements for 17-Month Extension of OPT

Besides having to be enrolled in a “STEM” field of study, there are many additional requirements for the 17-Month Extension of OPT:

The student must be currently authorized for a 12-month period of OPT and working for a US employer in a job directly related to the student’s field of study

The student must have successfully completed a bachelor’s, master’s or doctoral degree in a field on the DHS STEM Designated Degree Program list, from a SEVIS-certified US college or university

At the time of application for the 17-month extension, the student must have a job-offer or be employed by an employer registered with the “E-Verify” federal employment verification system. For more information on “E-Verify,” see the next section

The student must not have previously received a 17-month OPT extension after earning a STEM degree.

The student must apply for the 17-month extension through their former school’s international student office. The school’s Designated School official must recommend the extension and issue a new I-20 with the recommendation noted

The student applies for the extension using form I-765 with fee (currently \$340.00) to the US Citizenship and Immigration Services Processing Center having jurisdiction over the student’s current place of residence

The student must file the extension application in a timely manner, before the current period of OPT expires.

A student who files the application timely may continue employment while the extension application is pending, until a final decision is made, or for 180 days, whichever comes first

The employer must agree to report the termination or departure of the student to the International Student Office of the student’s former school, or through any other process chosen by the Department of Homeland Security

The student must agree to report the following information to the International Student Office of his former school:

Change of name
Change of residential or mailing address
Name and address of employer
Change in the name or address of employer
When employment changes or terminates

The student must also agree to provide a report every six months to the International Student Office of his former school to verify the above information

What Is E-Verify?

E-Verify was formerly known as the Basic Pilot/Employment Eligibility Verification Program. E-Verify is an Internet-based system operated by the Department of Homeland Security in partnership with the Social Security Administration.

E-Verify allows participating employers to electronically verify the employment eligibility of their newly hired employees. E-Verify is free and voluntary. However, there are concerns whether employers will want to join E-Verify. Currently, less than one percent of all US employers are enrolled in E-Verify. If an employer joins, the employer will have to verify ALL new employees, including US citizens, in E-Verify.

There have been reports of significant discrepancies in the databases currently being used that result in verification errors, indicating that a worker is ineligible for employment when that is not accurate. Participating employers must permit visits by Homeland Security and the Social Security Administration to review their employment records and interview employees.

Remember that a F-1 student seeking to extend his or her OPT by 17 months can only do so if at the time of filing, the student is employed by, or has a job offer with, an E-Verify participating employer.

There is not enough information known at this writing to determine if the E-Verify requirement will have a negative impact on employer participation, and thus prevent many students on OPT in STEM fields from seeking the 17-month extension.

For more information on E-Verify, visit:

http://www.dhs.gov/ximgtn/programs/gc_1185221678150.shtm

Elimination of the H-1B “Cap-Gap”

The H-1B “cap-gap” occurs when a F-1 student’s status and OPT work authorization expires during the current fiscal year before the student can start approved H-1B employment during the next fiscal year that begins on October 1. For example, a student whose OPT ending date is July 16, 2008, and whose employer successfully files an H-1B petition for a job that is subject to the H-1B “cap” and starts October 1 currently needs to stop employment as of July 16, and depart the United States on September 15 (the last day of the 60-day grace period following OPT). While outside the United States, the student must then obtain an H-1B visa, and cannot re-enter the United States any sooner than 10 days prior to the H-1B start date.

Under the new rule, a student currently on OPT who is the beneficiary of a timely-filed H-1B petition that requests an employment start date of October 1 of the following fiscal year will have his or her duration of status and OPT employment authorization extended to that date.

Should the pending H-1B petition ultimately be denied, the student will have a sixty day grace period from the notification date of the denial to depart the United States, obtain admission to a new F-1 SEVIS-approved school, or file an application for a change of status.

Duration of OPT

The starting date for the OPT Employment Authorization Document (EAD) will be the date requested by the student or the date OPT is approved at the USCIS Service Center, whichever is later. But, there is an exception: the authorization period for the 17-month OPT extension begins the day after the expiration of the initial post-completion OPT employment authorization, and ends 17 months later, regardless of the date the extension is approved.

Reporting Requirements for Students and Employers While on OPT

All students on OPT must report to the international student office at their former school:

- Any change in name or address
- The name and address of their employer
- Any change to the name and address of the employer
- Any interruption of such employment

In addition, students with an approved 17 month extension must report to the international student office at their former school within ten days:

Any change in name or residential/ mailing address

The name and address of their employer

Any change to the name and address of the employer

Any interruption of such employment

Students with an approved 17 month extension must also make a validation report to the international student office at their former school every six months starting on the date the extension begins and ending when the OPT ends. The validation is a confirmation that the student's name and address, employer name and address, and /or loss of employment is current and accurate.

The employer of a student with an approved 17-month OPT extension must agree to report the termination or departure of the student to the International Student Office of the student's former school or through "any other means or process identified by the Department of Homeland Security."

Post-Completion OPT is Now Dependent on Employment

Students on post-completion OPT may not accrue an aggregate of more than 90 days of unemployment under the initial 12-month period of OPT. Students granted a 17-month OPT extension may not accrue an aggregate of more than 120 days of unemployment during the total 29-month OPT period

What Happens Next?

There are some very essential procedural steps that need to be implemented before schools can begin accepting applications for an extension of OPT under these new rules. Those steps include:

SEVIS needs to be re-programmed to allow schools to recommend extending authorized OPT for an additional 17 months for qualified students

SEVIS needs to publish interim instructions to schools so that schools will be able to implement the new procedure

Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, must be updated to add new fields for field of study, name of employer, and the employer's E-Verify number

Schools need to update their processes, procedures, and informational materials to accommodate all the new requirements.

Web Resources

There are some excellent web resources available on the new OPT rule:

Department of Homeland Security Announcement

http://www.dhs.gov/xnews/releases/pr_1207334008610.shtm

US Citizenship and Immigration Services Q and A

http://www.uscis.gov/files/article/OPT_4Apr08.pdf

NAFSA: Association of International Educators Resource on the Interim Final Rule

http://nafsa.org/regulatory_information.sec/29_month_opt_rule_updates

Text of Interim Final Rule

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/E8-7427.htm> (text format, 27 pages)

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/pdf/E8-7427.pdf> (pdf file, 13 pages)

Economic Hardship Employment for Students in F-1 Status

Definition of Severe Economic Hardship

United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) considers severe economic hardship to be situations that are unforeseen and beyond your control. These may include loss of financial aid or on-campus employment that is not your fault, a substantial fluctuation in value or currency or exchange rate, inordinate increases in tuition, or unexpected changes in the financial condition of your main source of support, medical bills, or other substantial and unexpected expenses.

Student Eligibility Requirements

You are eligible for employment based on severe economic hardship if: (1) you are in good academic standing and are taking a full course load; (2) you can demonstrate unforeseen severe economic hardship; (3) employment on campus is not available or is insufficient; (4) you have been in F-1 status for one full academic year; and (5) employment will not interfere with your studies. You should consult with your international student advisor to make sure that there are no employment opportunities available on campus.

Application and Authorization Procedures in SEVIS

The student must request a recommendation from the DSO for off-campus employment. The DSO must complete such a certification in SEVIS. The DSO may recommend the student work off-campus for one year intervals by certifying that:

- (1) The student has been in F-1 status for one full academic year;
- (2) The student is in good standing as a student and is carrying a full course of study;
- (3) The student has demonstrated that acceptance of employment will not interfere with the student's carrying a full course of study; and
- (4) The student has demonstrated that the employment is necessary to avoid severe economic hardship due to unforeseen circumstances beyond the student's control and has demonstrated that on-campus employment is unavailable or otherwise insufficient to meet the needs that have arisen as a result of the unforeseen circumstances.

The applicant should submit the application for employment authorization on *Form I-765*, with the fee required by 8 CFR 103.7(b)(1), to the service center having jurisdiction over his or her place of residence. In addition, the student should submit the *SEVIS Form I-20* with the employment page demonstrating the DSO's comments and certification and any additional supporting documentation.

The USCIS shall adjudicate the application for work authorization based upon severe economic hardship on the basis of the *SEVIS Form I-20*, *Form I-765* and any additional supporting materials. If employment is authorized, the adjudicating officer shall issue an EAD. The USCIS shall notify the student of the decision, and, if the application is denied, of the reason or reasons for the denial. No appeal shall lie from a decision to deny a request for employment authorization under this section. The employment authorization may be granted in one year intervals up to the expected date of completion of the student's current course of study. A student has permission to engage in off-campus employment only if the student receives the EAD endorsed to that effect. Off-campus employment authorization may be renewed by the USCIS only if the student is maintaining status and good academic standing. The employment authorization is automatically terminated whenever the student fails to maintain status.

Employment Eligibility Verification for Students in F-1 Status

Every employer in the United States is required to determine the work eligibility of each new employee. This is done with a document called the "Employment Eligibility Verification" form, *Form I-9*. The purpose of this form is to verify the worker's identity and to evaluate the employee's eligibility to work. The *I-9* must be completed within three business days of the date you begin employment. Your employer will supply you with a copy of this form.

Suggestions on How to Complete Form I-9

Section 1: Employee Information and Verification. Section 1 is at the top of the form and asks for factual information about you, the new employee. The suggestions which follow assume that you are an F-1 student and that you can produce documents which F-1 students normally have or can obtain. If you have other documents which meet eligibility verification requirements, you are not required to use your F-1 documents and you need not complete the form in the manner described below.

- a. Complete this section in full.
- b. In the part of this section, which asks for your status in this country, you may place a check mark or an "X" in the small square beside "An alien authorized to work until..."
- c. In the blanks beside that small square, you may enter numbers representing the month, day and year until you are authorized to work. In order to determine this date, you may refer to one of the following documents:

Employment Authorization Document (EAD). If you have this picture identification card issued by USCIS specifically for work authorization, you may enter the expiration date of that authorization.

SEVIS Form I-20 without Work Authorization. If your *SEVIS Form I-20* does not have work authorization printed on the employment page, you may accept only "on-campus" employment and only then if you meet certain eligibility requirements. If you are completing the *I-9* for on-campus work, you may enter the date of expected completion of studies found in Item #5 or your most recent *I-20*. You are authorized to work on campus until that date, provided you maintain lawful F-1 status.

- d. Be sure to sign and date the form in the spaces provided.

Section 2. Employer Review and Verification. Your employer is required to complete this section of the *I-9* but you must provide certain original documents (not photocopies) in order for it to be properly completed. On the back of the *I-9* you will find a list of acceptable documents. Your employer cannot require that you provide any particular documents on the list; you may produce any documents which meet eligibility requirements.

While you cannot be required to provide any particular documents, since you are an F-1 student you may, if you wish, present to your employer, the same document you used to determine the expiration date of your employment permission in Section 1. If this document was your *Form I-20*, you could also present your driver's license or student ID card as identification. Your employer may make photocopies of any documents you present for employment eligibility verification.

Updating Form I-9

If your current permission to work has an expiration date and if you wish to continue being employed beyond that date, you must apply for an extension of your work permission. Your international student advisor can assist you with this process if you are eligible for an extension. You and your employer must then update your original *I-9* form. This must be accomplished on or before the date your current employment authorization expires.

Employment for F-2 Dependents

Immigration regulations prohibit all employment for F-2 dependents (spouses and children of F-1 students).

Tax Concerns

In general, F-1 students who have been in the United States less than five years are exempt from Social Security (F.I.C.A.) taxes. However, the earnings of F-1 students are subject to applicable federal, state, and local taxes, and these amounts may be withheld from paychecks. **(N.B. If you work on campus during the regular academic year, taxes are not deducted from you paycheck. They are deducted from student paychecks during the summer months.)** Students must file a tax return on or before April 15th of each year. Students may be entitled to a refund of taxes withheld from their wages if the amount of tax owed is less than the amount withheld.

A Note of Caution

While USCIS regulations provide a variety of opportunities for you to be employed during your time in F-1 status, working improperly or without authorization is a serious violation of your status. You should therefore consult with your international student advisor before taking up any employment.

Reporting Requirements in SEVIS

The SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) regulations took effect on January 1, 2003. Below, is a summary of the information which international student offices will now be required to report to the Department of Homeland Security.

Schools have been required to collect certain information on international students for many years, but only report it to the INS when the INS requested it. What is new is the requirement that schools now report this information in "real" time via SEVIS, which is an internet-based system, as well as an expanded list of information to be reported.

For the vast majority of F-1 students, such reporting will have no negative impact, since such a high percentage of Manhattan College students maintain their status each semester and do not violate F-1 regulations. Only a very small portion of Manhattan's F-1 student population find themselves in immigration difficulty each semester. The regulations provide a time period during which certain information must be reported in SEVIS. The ISA office plans to use this time period to notify any students who appear to be in violation of SEVIS regulations based on registration issues, which will allow time for students and their department chairs or academic advisors to make any possible administrative corrections or updates that might eliminate the need for a negative report. When such actions are not possible, some students may have the option of applying for reinstatement.

New Information Schools Are Required to Report

- **Taking less than a full-time course load with the authorization of the International Student Advisor.** School reports within 21 days of the authorization.
- **Change in legal name:** must be reported to the International Student Advisor within 10 days of change. School reports in SEVIS within 21 days of notification.
- **Change in address:** must be reported to the International Student Advisor within 10 days of change. School reports in SEVIS within 21 days of notification.
- **Individual enters the United States on a Manhattan College I-20 but fails to register or report:** School reports in SEVIS no later than 30 days following the deadline to register or report.
- **Failure of student to maintain status or complete program:** School reports in SEVIS within 21 days of occurrence. (Note: Examples of failure to maintain status or complete program include dismissal, severance, suspension, or termination by the college, withdrawal, cancellation of registration, not applying for an extension prior to end date on I-20, failure to maintain a full-time course load, and unauthorized employment.)
- **Student graduates early or prior to the program end date listed on I-20.** School reports in SEVIS within 21 days of occurrence.
- **Any disciplinary action taken by the school against a student as a result of a student being convicted of a crime.** School reports in SEVIS within 21 days of occurrence.
- **Whether the student has enrolled, dropped below a full course of study without prior ISA authorization, or failed to enroll.** School reports in SEVIS each term or session, and no later than 30 days after the deadline for registering for classes.
- **The current address of each enrolled student.** Each term or session, and no later than 30 days after the deadline for registering for classes.

- **The start date of the student's next session, term or semester.** Each term or session, and no later than 30 days after the deadline for registering for classes.
- **Any other notification request made by SEVIS with respect to the current status of a student.** School reports within 21 days of occurrence.

In addition to the items listed above, schools are required to report the following information in SEVIS, which previously was reported to the INS or Department of State by sending a paper copy.

- **Recommendations for Optional Practical Training**
- **Recommendations for Off-Campus Employment Based on Economic Hardship**
- **Extension of I-20s**
- **Transfer I-20s**
- **Change in field of study (major/minor)**
- **Change in level of study (bachelors > masters)**
- **Change in financial support to update an I-20**
- **Replacement I-20**
- **I-20 for dependents**

SOCIAL LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES

Identity Crisis

The question of identity becomes acute when an international student comes to America. For some, of course, there is no problem. The international students who stay in the U.S. just long enough to get a degree, for instance, may never care to question themselves in relation to American society. But those who come for an indefinite stay, or who plan to remain here for several years, will have to come to terms with it.

Usually, students who come to America to study are fortunate: they are well-educated, capable people with established person identities. International students have a choice: they can become primarily "Americanized," retaining only vestiges of their home culture; they can remain nationals to the core, staying in their own national group without ever making an effort to relate to the culture of the U.S.; or they can fit somewhere in between these two extremes. People choose the alternative which suits them.

Still, there is another way to view the question of identity that is, in some ways, more satisfactory than any of these. It really isn't necessary to identify oneself solely with one nation or another. To say that you are a national of some country does not say everything about you. Part of your personality transcends your country of birth and owes nothing to it. Most people find that traveling and living in foreign lands reduces their self-identity with their country without necessarily reducing their affection for it. It is a truism that people never see their homeland more clearly than from a distance. Foreign experience gives you insight and helps you understand things you took for granted before. Inevitably, this leads to questioning of some earlier beliefs and practices as you build up your own personal body of opinion. In short, if handled constructively, the identity crisis need not be a crisis at all, but rather a step toward greater self-awareness and a new identity.

It is not always easy to make the adjustment so smoothly, however; a number of factors can get in the way. For example, in your own home country there may be more ways to achieve high status apart from personal achievement than there are in the U.S. This is true for Americans in their home country, too, but it is even more significant for students who come to the U.S. They lose not only the "borrowed status" (from family political power, money, or a family name illustrious in the intellectual community) they enjoyed at home, but also most of the eminence they attained through their own efforts. In the U.S. they become just another member of the hurrying multitude. You may have been featured in the local papers many times back home, and your surname may be very well known; but in the U.S., chances are most people won't even pronounce it right.

This can be very frustrating, but it is important to realize that most U.S. students coming to college also must "start over" in an unknown, previously untested environment. Because Americans value a democratic concept of merit based on accomplishment, they judge by personality traits, work habits, achievement, and self-respect. The best advice we can offer is to be secure in your sense of who and what you are without regard to impressing others. In your desire to assimilate, don't reject the many good qualities of your own culture. Your presence on this campus is very special to us, as you bring your own individual personality, your knowledge, and your cultural heritage to our land. WELCOME!!

Some Notable Characteristics of Americans

Like any other society, the United States has people who are friendly and people who are not, ones who are intelligent, and ones who are not. American culture is very fluid and complex with many sub-cultural groups whose values differ. Even with this diversity, it is possible to mention certain characteristics which, in general, describe attitudes and practices common among Americans which tend to distinguish them from people who have grown up in other cultures. Keep in mind that the following remarks are GENERALIZATIONS. You will find individuals who are exceptions to all of them.

Individualism. Americans generally believe that the ideal person is an autonomous, self-reliant individual. Most Americans see themselves as separate individuals, not as representatives of a family, community, or other group. They dislike being dependent on other people or having others dependent on them. Some people from other countries view this attitude as "selfishness." Others view it as a healthy freedom from the constraints of ties to family, clan, or social class.

Informality. Americans are taught that all people are created equal. Although they continually violate that idea in some aspects of life, in others they adhere to it. They treat each other in very informal ways, for example, even in the presence of great differences in age or social standing. From the point of view of some people from other cultures, this kind of behavior reflects "lack of respect." From the point of view of others, it reflects a happy lack of concern for the social ritual. Americans, as a rule, usually think nothing of starting a casual conversation with complete strangers; this is usually meant as a sign of friendliness. Should strangers smile at you, it is a sign of welcome and acknowledgment of your presence. It is not necessarily an invitation to speak, nor is it a sign of insincerity when they do not acknowledge your presence.

Limited Friendship. Friendships among Americans tend to be shorter and less intensive than those among people from many other cultures. Because they are taught to be self-reliant, because they live in a very mobile society, and for many other reasons, Americans tend to compartmentalize their friendships, having their friends at work, friends at school, and so on. The result of all this is sometimes viewed by foreigners as an inability to be friends. Other times it is seen as a normal way to retain personal happiness in a mobile, ever-changing society. These remarks are not intended to discourage you from attempting to establish friendly relationships with Americans. They are intended to point out that some Americans' ideas about friendships might be different from yours. Basically your honesty about what you feel about any one friend promotes an open communication between the two of you, leading to a better understanding of your respective positions.

Time Consciousness. Americans place considerable value on punctuality. They tend to organize their activities by means of schedules. As a result, they may seem harried, always running from one thing to the next, and not able to relax and enjoy themselves. Since Americans are so time conscious, the pace of life may at first seem very rushed. Being on time is regarded as very important by people on a schedule, and in the United States people make a great effort to arrive on time. It is often considered impolite to arrive even a few minutes late. If you are unable to keep an appointment, it is expected that you call the person to advise him you will be late or unable to meet.

One should arrive at the exact time specified for dinner, lunch, or appointments with professors, doctors, and other professionals. You can arrive any time between the hours specified for teas, receptions, and cocktail parties. Plan to arrive a few minutes before the specified time for public meetings, plays, concerts, movies, sports events, classes, church service, and weddings.

Materialism. "Success" in American society is often marked by the amount of money or the quantity of material goods a person is able to accumulate through hard work, cleverness, and persistence. Some foreigners see all this as a "lack of appreciation for the spiritual or human things in life." Others recognize it as a way of assuring a comparatively high standard of living in this country.

A Word of Advice: To become more aware of Americans and their culture, do not be hesitant to ask questions about customs, practices, or values. Not only will queries help to reduce confusion or prevent misunderstandings, but they also help us to learn from you about your culture. In the United States, people respect someone who expresses concern. Asking for assistance or an explanation is not considered a sign of weakness.

Invitations

"Drop in anytime" and "come see me soon" are idioms often used in social settings but seldom meant to be taken literally. It is wise to telephone ahead of time before visiting someone at home. If you receive a written invitation to an event that says RSVP, you should respond by writing a note or telephoning to let the person who sent the invitation know whether you plan to attend.

Never accept an invitation unless you really plan to go. To refuse, it is enough to say, "Thank you for inviting me, but I will not be able to come." If, after accepting, you are unable to attend, be certain to tell those expecting you as far in advance as possible before the time you are expected to arrive.

When you are invited to a meal and there are foods you cannot eat, explain this to your prospective hosts. Cultural preferences and religious restrictions on diet are understood and respected. Your host will appreciate knowing in advance what foods and beverages to prepare that everyone will enjoy.

Dating

American social customs may seem strange to you at first. Visitors often are surprised at the informality between men and women in the United States. Couples go out for an evening, un-chaperoned, to a bar, movie, play, concert, speech, party, or even the library for a "study date."

In the past, traditionally, men took the initiative in asking a woman out and paid the expenses incurred during the evening. This is changing, however, as women assert their rights as individuals by asking out a man they would like to be with or get to know. Whether a man or woman makes the invitation, each may pay his or her own way or one may pay for both.

Relationships between men and women in the United States may be platonic friendships or strong emotional and physical commitments, or something between the two extremes. Whatever the nature of the relationship, the most important thing is to be open and honest about your feelings and intentions, to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings or discomfort.

Dating does not presume sexual involvement or a long-term emotional commitment; in practical terms, a date implies nothing more than an agreement to meet at a specified time and place for a specified purpose.

Language

Americans are taught to speak and write clearly and simply, but they do not always practice what they preach. On college campuses, where experts spend a great deal of time talking to other experts, technical words, or jargon, slip into their vocabulary. With a little practice, you will be able to detect "academese" when you hear it. A few examples: "prioritize," "interface," "input," "feedback." Abbreviations such as "Bio" for biology are also commonplace.

Like other peoples in the world, Americans have developed certain peculiarities in their everyday language. As a university student, you are sure to encounter certain colloquialisms and "slang" terms which could not have been predicted by an English language textbook or teacher. Such words are often unique to a certain group of people and are forever changing.

The Unspoken Language

Misunderstandings between persons of different cultures is often a result of lack of comprehension of non-verbal signs and symbols, such as facial expressions, gestures, postures, and vocalizations that accompany most verbal interactions. These are seldom, if ever, taught in language classes and are so automatic that we forget how they might mean different things in different cultures.

It would never occur to an American, for instance, that handing someone something in his/her right hand may be more acceptable than in his/her left, yet in some cultures it is offensive to hand someone something with the left hand. Nor would it occur to the American woman that looking directly at a man could be interpreted as bold, flirtatious, or disrespectful. To her it signals directness and honest. The actual distance maintained between people while they talk varies from culture to culture, but it is not consciously thought about. In the American culture when a person arrives late for class, for example, it is expected that the student would come in quietly, take a seat, and join in at whatever point the discussion has evolved to. In many other cultures, it is necessary to obtain permission from the instructor even to enter and be part of the class.

To avoid misunderstandings, keep in mind the possibility that the unspoken language which you exchange with people from other cultures may not say what it says in your culture. If the words and gestures of the Americans with whom you are conversing seem to disagree, you might minimize your confusion listening only to the words, or by telling the individual you are confused or getting a mixed message. Be honest about your feelings - it's a sign of respect for your own opinions.

APPENDICES

PERSONS AND PLACES

Vice President for Student Life	Br. Robert Berger, FSC Memorial Hall, Room 201	862-7352
Dean of Students	Dr. Colette Geary, PhD. Thomas Hall, fifth floor	862-7999
Director of Residence Life	Br. Ralph Bucci, FSC Thomas Hall, fifth floor	862-7944
Director of Student Development	Ms. Elaine T. White Thomas Hall, Room 501	862-7246
Director of Campus Events	Mr. Andrew Goodman Thomas Hall, fifth floor	862-7245
International Student Advisor	Ms. Debbi Damico Miguel Hall, Room 207A	862-7213
Student Government	Thomas Hall, lobby	862-7358
Career Development	Ms. Marjorie Apel, Director Miguel Hall, Room 500	862-7308
Campus Ministry/ Social Action	Ms. Lois Harr, Director Cornerstone - Miguel Hall, Room 209	862-7142
Counseling Center/ Health Services	Dr. Michael Carey, Director (Miguel Hall, Room 501) Alumni Hall, Room 104	862-7975 862-7217
Security Office (Parking Permits)	Mr. Juan Cerezo, Director Jasper Hall, basement	862-7240
Athletic Office	Mr. Robert Byrnes, Director Draddy Gymnasium	862-7227
Enrollment Management/ Admissions	Mr. William Bisset, Jr., Vice-President O'Malley Library, 6 th floor	862-7199
Registrar's Office (Transcripts)	Ms. Luz Torres, Registrar Memorial Hall, Room 100	862-7313
Scheduling Office	Ms. Carla Fraser, Master Scheduler Memorial Hall, Room 100	862-7311
<u>Student Financial Services</u>		
Financial Aid (On-campus employment)	Counselors Miguel Hall, Student Financial Services	862-7100
Bursar's Office	Ms. Lisa Juncaj, Associate Director Miguel Hall, Student Financial Services	862-7363, 7364
Controller's Office	Mr. Dennis Lonergan, Controller Miguel Hall, Room 106	862-7314, 7315

WHOM TO SEE OR WHERE TO GO ABOUT...

Academic Matters	Academic Advisor
Activity Advisor	Student Activities, Thomas Hall, fifth floor
Address, change of	Academic Dean
Admissions Center	O'Malley Library, sixth floor
Alumni Matters	Memorial Hall, first floor
Authorization to: change a major transfer credits drop a course withdraw from a course make up an exam	Academic Advisor
Campus Ministry (Cornerstone)	Miguel Hall, Room 209
Catalogue	Registrar, Memorial Hall, Room 101
Class schedule	Registrar, Memorial Hall, Room 101
Computer Services	Research and Learning Center
Contracts	Student Activities, Thomas Hall, fifth floor
Cooperative Education Program	Miguel Hall, Room 500
Counseling	Miguel Hall, Room 501
Employment (Off-campus) F-1 Students	Career Development, Miguel Hall, Room 500 International Student Advisor, Miguel Hall, Room 207A
Employment (On-campus)	Student Financial Services, Miguel Hall, first floor
Eligibility for Student Activities	Student Activities, Thomas Hall, fifth floor
Excessive Absences	Academic Advisor
Fees and Tuition (Payment Plan)	Student Financial Services, Miguel Hall, first floor
Financial Aid (not available to F-1 students)	Student Financial Services, Miguel Hall, first floor
Food Service (Sodexo)	Thomas Hall, behind Dante's Den
Fraternities	Student Activities, Thomas Hall, fifth floor
Fund Raising	College Advancement, Memorial Hall, first floor
Funds for Clubs	Student Government, Thomas Hall, lobby
Gym and Recreational Facilities	Draddy Gymnasium
Health Insurance	V.P. for Business and Finance, Memorial Hall, Room 301
Health Services	Alumni Hall, Room 104

I.D. Cards	I.D. Office, outside Plato's Cave, Thomas Hall
Immunization Records	Health Services, Alumni Hall, Room 104
International Students	Miguel Hall, Room 207A
Intramural Sports	Draddy Gymnasium
Loans	Student Financial Services, Miguel Hall, first floor
Lost and Found	Security Office, Jasper Hall basement
Maintenance	Paulian Hall
Media Relations (external)	College Relations Office, De La Salle Hall, Room 102
Parents Association	Student Activities, Thomas Hall, fifth floor
Parking	Security Office, Jasper Hall basement
Poster Preparation	Publications Office, De La Salle Hall, Room 102
Poster Regulations	Student Activities, Thomas Hall, fifth floor
Publications (internal)	De La Salle Hall, Room 102
Registration Matters	Memorial Hall, Room 101
Residence Life	Director, Thomas Hall, fifth floor
Room Reservations	Director of Campus Events, Thomas Hall, fifth floor
Rules and Regulations - Conduct	Residence Life, Thomas Hall, fifth floor
Schedules (Class)	Memorial Hall, Room 101
Scholarships	Student Financial Services, Miguel Hall, first floor
Security	Jasper Hall basement
Social Calendar	Student Activities, Thomas Hall, fifth floor
Sororities	Student Activities, Thomas Hall, fifth floor
Starting a Club	Student Activities, Thomas Hall, fifth floor
Student Handbook	Dean of Students, Thomas Hall, fifth floor
Student Publications	Student Activities, Thomas Hall, fifth floor
Study Abroad	Miguel Hall, Room 423
Textbooks	Bookstore, Leo Engineering, basement
Tickets, Athletic Theatre	Athletic Office, Draddy Gymnasium Thomas Hall, fifth floor

INFORMATION PAGE

International Student Advisor's Office Hours: Miguel Hall, Room 207A
Monday through Thursday - 8 am until 4:30 pm (Class: MTWF 2:30 - 3:25 pm)
Friday - 8 am until 3:30 pm

Draddy Gymnasium Hours of Operation:
Monday through Thursday - 10 am until 3 pm; 7 pm until 11 pm
Friday - 10 am until 3 pm; 7 pm until 10 pm
Saturday - 1 pm until 5 pm
Sunday - 5 pm until 10 pm

Student Financial Services Office Hours of Operation: Miguel Hall, 1st floor
Monday through Friday - 9:00 am until 4:00 pm

Hours of Operation for most on-campus offices:
Monday through Friday - 9 am until 4:30 pm

College Bookstore Hours of Operation: Leo Engineering Building, basement
Monday through Thursday - 8 am until 4 pm
Friday - 8 am until 3 pm

O'Malley Library Hours of Operation:

Academic Year		Summer	
Monday through Friday	open 24 hours	Monday through Thursday	8:30 am until 8 pm
Saturday and Sunday	open 24 hours	Friday	8:30 am until 4 pm
		Saturday	CLOSED
		Sunday	CLOSED

United States Post Office Hours of Operation: West 238th Street; near Overlook Apts.
Monday through Saturday - 9 am until 4 pm

Social Security Administration Hours of Operation: 20 South Broadway, 10th floor, Yonkers, NY
Monday through Friday - 9 am until 4 pm

Bank Hours of Operation:
Monday through Friday - 9 am until 3 pm

Staples Office Superstore: Broadway at 231st St.
Monday through Friday - 7 am until 9 pm
Saturday - 9 am until 9 pm
Sunday - 10 am until 7 pm

