



Studying aboard The Scholar Ship if you have an F-1 visa issued by the United States government

If you are an F-1 visa holder and wish to study aboard The Scholar Ship for an academic semester, please remember that U.S. immigration regulations around study abroad are open to interpretation by individual institutions. You should check with your home institution's International Student Advisor about your specific requirements. Below are general guidelines that are followed by many universities.

1. F-1 regulations state that if you are absent from the United States for more than five continuous months, you may be required to re-apply for a new Form I-20 before you return to the U.S. to continue your studies. Since The Scholar Ship program is 16 weeks, participation in the program will not cause you to exceed the five-month period. However, if you choose to extend your travel before or after your voyage, you will need to carefully plan your return to the U.S. so that you return within the approved five-month period;
2. If your F-1 entry visa will expire while you are on our program, you will need to apply for a new F-1 visa at the closest American Embassy before the visa expires. Be sure to review the expiration dates on all of your documents and meet with your International Student Advisor for advice on how to maintain your status while traveling and studying aboard The Scholar Ship;
3. If you are registered full-time (usually at least 12 credit hours) at your home institution, your F-1 Student status will continue uninterrupted. If your home institution accepts academic credit from Macquarie University, (The Scholar Ship's institution of record) then you will be considered to be continuing your studies at your institution and your current F-1 status will not change. If your institution does not accept all of your academic credits earned upon successful completion of The Scholar Ship program, you should speak with your Study Abroad Advisor and/or your Academic Advisor to see if you can complete an independent study project to maintain full-time status. Please refer to http://www.thescholarship.com/students/transfer_credits.aspx for further information on Transfer of Credits;
4. You may be eligible to apply for employment authorization when you return to your home institution if you were in valid F-1 status in the U.S. for **at least one year prior** to your participation in a study abroad program. As you are deciding which semester to study aboard The Scholar Ship, be sure to speak with your International Student Advisor about protecting your employment eligibility; and
5. To re-enter the U.S. after your semester aboard The Scholar Ship, you will need a valid passport, a valid F-1 visa, and your Form I-20 must have a valid travel signature. Check with your home institution's International Student Advisor at least two months prior to leaving campus to understand what the implications will be for your immigration status.