International Admissions Information for Graduate Students
http://graduatecollege.unlv.edu/prospective/international/become_a_student/

International Admissions (through the UNLV Graduate College) handles the entire admission process for international graduate students from the point of application through to the student’s arrival on campus. Accordingly, International Admissions advises international graduate students on gathering and submitting the required documentation for admission, including those pertaining to English Language and financial requirements. International Admissions also issues international graduate students the initial I-20 for a visa and travel into the United States.

Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS)
http://www.unlv.edu/iss/students
SSC-A Suite A-201
702-895-0218
Scholar@unlv.edu

Once an international graduate student arrives on campus, the Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS) takes over the student’s immigration and enrollment oversight from International Admissions, and handles these from this point onward for the student.

Accordingly, international graduate students’ first point of contacts on the UNLV campus must be with:

1) the Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS); and,
2) the student’s academic department/advisor.

Enrollment Services
International Students Window
SSC-C

Enrollment services advisors at this window can answer enrollment questions specific to international graduate students.

Processes Overview

1. Gather all documentation needed for Online Admission (the same as any other student); documentation must be translated into English; academic records must be “credited evaluated” from students’ home educational institutions (high school/college)

2. Complete the “Apply Yourself” Online Application

3. Once accepted, students must provide documentation of financial support (electronic process) to International Admissions
   - Students without assistantships must provide evidence (usually through a bank statement) of funding for one year of tuition, living expenses, etc.; approximately $39,000
   - Students with assistantships must provide evidence (usually through a bank statement) of $2000 cash on hand
4. Students who successfully provide evidence of financial support are issued certification for admission eligibility (electronic process) from International Admissions.

5. Students deemed admission eligible are then issued an “initial” I-20 through SIVES (Student Information Verification Exchange System—federal government database).

- Students must pay a $200 Service Fee to have this document sent in a paper format to them (via some form of snail mail; should be made into an electronic process by 2015).

- Students must take the “initial” I-20 to a U.S. Embassy in their home country and apply for an F-1 Visa; Note: acceptance to UNLV and issuance of “initial” I-20 does not guarantee that students will be approved for an F-1 Visa; if students are not F-1 Visa approved, they cannot attend and there are no refund for expenses incurred to this point in the application process.

6. Students obtain F-1 Visa from U.S. Embassy in their home country.

7. Students can enter the United States on the F-1 Visa no more than 30 days before the semester begins; students must enter the country on this F-1 Visa in order to complete the rest of the paperwork required for enrollment and/or employment (e.g., they cannot come ahead of time on a tourist or other type of Visa to take care of these administrative details; once a student enters the country on any non-F-1 Visa, they either have to leave and re-enter on the F-1, or they have to apply for a Change of Visa Status which has additional costs associated with it, can take a long time, and may not be approved).

- Students are responsible for “making their own way” into the country (e.g., with the help of local family or friends, etc., UNLV does not provide support or assistance).

8. Upon entering the United States, students will be issued an electronic “full” I-20 through SIVES (usually done at the airport through the immigration process), and given an I-94 Arrival Document.

9. Students must attend the OISS Orientation, held at the beginning of each semester.

- Students should bring their “initial I-20,” passport, and I-94 to the orientation so that OISS can “check them in,” again through SIVES, to verify that they are “at” UNLV (e.g., registered, enrolled, and attending classes, etc.)

- Students with assistantships must also have their assistantships verified.

  - Once the assistantship is verified, students will be issued an on-campus work permit and instructions for how to obtain a Social Security Number (SSN).
    - Students must apply for the SSN in person, on their own, at a local Social Security Administration (SSA) office (the closest SSA office to the UNLV campus (there are other offices at various other locations around Las Vegas) is located at:
      10416 S. Eastern Avenue
      Henderson, NV 89052
      1-800-772-1213
    - Students should take their “initial” I-20, passport, I-94, and on-campus work permit to the SSA office when they go to apply for the SSN.
• Typically it takes 10 working days for a SSN to be issued; it will be mailed directly to the student, at whatever address they provide to the SSA

• Once the SSN is received, students should take their “initial” I-20, passport, I-94, on-campus work permit, and SSN to the UNLV Graduate College to sign their assistantship paperwork allowing them to get on payroll and formally begin employment

• Every semester, students must re-check in with OISS to ensure their attendance status is updated in SIVES as “attending”

• Every semester, students with assistantships must obtain also obtain an updated on-campus work permit from OISS, and then take it to the UNLV Graduate College to ensure their assistantship paperwork is kept current relative to their enrollment status

• Students must continuously maintain their enrollment status (called “status maintenance”); they must be enrolled fulltime every semester and show that they are making progress toward degree completion
  
  o Undergraduates must carry 12 credits minimum
  
  o Graduate students must carry 9 credits minimum without an assistantship, and 6 credits minimum with an assistantship
  
  o Students cannot take more than 3 credits online per semester, so that they can establish and maintain an “on-campus academic presence”

  o Students who fall below minimum enrollment requirements immediately jeopardize their F-1 Visa (status maintenance must be reported (through SIVES), which leads to an immediate violation, subsequently to F-1 Visa termination)

   ▪ One time only (typically in their first semester), and in advance of the problem manifesting on the academic record (at the first sign of a likely insurmountable challenge), students can apply for a Medical Leave Authorization (e.g. for actual health problems, and/or difficulty adjusting to the U.S. educational system/English, etc.)

• Students whose academic programs of study (not assistantships) require formal internships (paid or unpaid, on or off campus) must complete a Curriculum Practicum Training (CPT) authorization from OISS; internships that involve no more than 2-3 class observations, and/or 2-3 days at an academic conference, and/or only a writing assignment, do not require the CPT authorization, anything more substantive does

• Upon graduation, students can apply, through OISS, for Optional Practicum Training (OPT) allowing them to stay in the United States for a 12-month paid employment program in their major area of study; once approved, students receive a one year “employment card” allowing them to work in this capacity