

## SCHOOL TRANSFER DEFINED

According to the United States Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS), "school transfer" is the process by which an international student leaves one U.S. institution (before or after program completion) to begin attendance at another U.S. institution. School transfer, with regard to immigration, does not refer to the transfer of academic credits or records between institutions.

## TRANSFER ELIGIBILITY

Students in F-1 or J-1 status are eligible to transfer to or from Vanderbilt University if they are:

- Admitted and otherwise eligible for a SEVIS document (I-20 or DS-2019, for F-1 or J-1 non-immigrant status, respectively)
- Maintaining current non-immigrant status
- Currently enrolled full-time, between terms, or participating in approved practical/academic training

## TRANSFER PROCEDURES

### TRANSFER TO VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

1. Student is admitted to Vanderbilt and receives the following from Vanderbilt's International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS)
  - a. Transfer Clearance Form **AND**
  - b. International Student Financial Statement
2. Student informs current International Student Adviser of intent to transfer to Vanderbilt University
3. International Adviser at the "transfer out" school enters the transfer request into SEVIS database and sets the SEVIS Release Date
  - a. SEVIS Release Date is the date on which Vanderbilt University will obtain access to the student's SEVIS record. On that date, the "transfer out" school will no longer have access to the student's SEVIS record.
  - b. SEVIS Release Date is usually the end of the current term or the end of student's last term at that school, but the date should be determined according to the student's circumstances and needs
4. Vanderbilt issues a new I-20 (F-1) or DS-2019 (J-1)

### TRANSFER FROM VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

1. Student should receive information from the new school's International Student Adviser; typically includes transfer form
2. Student informs Vanderbilt International Student Adviser of
  - a. Intent to transfer **AND**
  - b. Name of school to which s/he will transfer ("transfer in" school)
3. Vanderbilt International Student Adviser determines transfer eligibility, completes transfer form, enters transfer request into SEVIS database, and sets the SEVIS Release Date
4. "Transfer in" school issues a new I-20 (F-1) or DS-2019 (J-1)

## TRANSITION TO VANDERBILT

### TRANSFER STUDENTS WHO REMAIN IN THE U.S. BETWEEN INSTITUTIONS:

- Must enroll at Vanderbilt in the term immediately following previous school's last term, summer vacation, or practical training
- Will receive the Vanderbilt SEVIS form upon campus arrival; it will not be mailed in advance

### TRANSFER STUDENTS WHO WILL TRAVEL ABROAD AND REENTER U.S. BEFORE VANDERBILT STUDIES BEGIN:

- Request the new SEVIS form before departure from the U.S. If not possible, SEVIS form will be sent to the foreign address
- If the current visa (F-1/J-1) is valid (unexpired), a new visa is not required even if the visa carries the name of the previous school
- U.S. reentry is possible with the Vanderbilt-issued SEVIS form, valid passport, and valid visa
- If a new visa is needed for reentry, the transfer student must apply using the Vanderbilt SEVIS form and financial documentation

## TRANSFER TIMELINE

Transfers must be done within the deadlines established by USCIS, otherwise the student will be "out of status"

- F-1 60-Day Grace Period or J-1 30-Day Grace Period: Transfer must be initiated within the grace period following completion a course of study or practical/academic training; the student is eligible for transfer through the end of the grace period
- 5-Month Start-Date Limit: Student must start new school within 5 months of SEVIS Release Date or program completion date

## SPECIAL TRANSFER TOPICS

- Vanderbilt University requires international students to report to ISSS and be registered in SEVIS before initiating subsequent transfer request, subject to approval by ISSS and Vanderbilt academic department
- Students who enter the U.S. on I-20s for Vanderbilt English Language Center must attend at least one term of that program