



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Student and Exchange Visitor Program

SEVP Policy Guidance for Adjudicators 1408-01: Academic Year

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Purpose/Background: This document gives the definition of an “academic year” used by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) as it applies to the various types of school sessions.

Attachments: None.

Definitions: None.

Policy: F-1 student eligibility for annual vacation,¹ off-campus employment,² and practical training³ is dependent upon the student having completed at least one academic year enrolled in an SEVP-certified school. SEVP defines an academic year⁴ as follows:

- An F-1 program of study must include a minimum duration of:
 - Thirty weeks of instructional time for a program offered in credit hours
 - Twenty-six weeks of instructional time for a program offered in clock hours
 - Thirty weeks of instructional time for a program offered in a combination of credit and clock hours
- For an F-1 undergraduate educational program, an amount of instructional time whereby a full-time student is expected to complete at least:

¹ 8 *CFR* 214.2(f)(5)(iii); for more information, see SEVP Policy Guidance 1306-02: F-1 Annual Vacation.

² 8 *CFR* 214.2(f)(9)(ii); for more information, see SEVP Policy Guidance 1307-02: F-1 Off-campus Employment.

³ 8 *CFR* 214(f)(10) and (11)(i)(B)(1); for more information, see SEVP Policy Guidance 1307-05: F-1 Optional Practical Training and 1310-04: F-1 Curricular Practical Training.

⁴ SEVP’s definition is consistent with the Department of Education definition found in [34 *CFR* 668.3\(a\)](#).

- Twenty-four semester or trimester credit hours or 36 quarter credit hours for a program measured in credit hours; or
- Nine hundred clock hours for a program measured in clock hours.

The chart below indicates the time generally required to meet the academic year requirement as it corresponds to academic sessions of differing length:

	Semester ⁵	Trimester ⁶	Quarter ⁷	Other
Required time	Two semesters	Two trimesters	Three quarters	As defined above

Adjudicator responsibilities: An SEVP adjudicator must use this guidance in all pertinent adjudications.

References:

8 CFR 214.2(f)(5)(iii)

8 CFR 214.2(f)(9)(ii)

8 CFR 214(f)(10)

8 CFR 214(f)(11)(i)(B)(1)

34 CFR 668.3(a)

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Signed by Rachel Canty on October 10, 2014
Deputy Director, External Operations
Student and Exchange Visitor Program
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

⁵ [About 15 weeks of instruction per the National Center for Education Statistics \(NCES\) Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System \(IPEDS\) definition.](#)

⁶ [About 15 weeks of instruction per the NCES IPEDS definition.](#)

⁷ [About 12 weeks of instruction per the NCES IPEDS definition.](#)