

*Salomar College*



International  
Student  
Handbook

## Table of Contents

<b>About Palomar College</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Palomar College International Student Office</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Information About U.S. Education System</b>	<b>5-8</b>
<b>The Class Schedule</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Important Resources on Campus</b>	<b>10-11</b>
<b>Living in the U.S.A.</b>	<b>12-18</b>
• Housing	12
• Driving	13-14
• Social security number	14
• Banking/financing	14-15
• Taxes	15
• Medical insurance	16
• Health Maintenance	16-17
• Local information	18-19
<b>Department of Homeland Security (former INS) Information</b>	<b>19-27</b>
• important terms	19
• F-1 status information	19-20
• Traveling documents	20
• DHS Qs and As	21
• Program extension	22
• Reinstatement to status	23
• Employment information	24-27
○ On-campus employment	
○ Off-campus employment	
<b>Requirements as an International Student</b>	<b>28</b>

## About Palomar College

Palomar College is a two-year community college providing the lower-division undergraduate courses in addition to various vocational courses. The College's accreditation comes from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. In addition, Palomar College is authorized under federal law to admit non-immigrant students on an F-1 or M-1 student visas.

The College's main campus is located at 1140 West Mission Road, San Marcos, California, 92069-1487, U.S.A. The College also has education centers at the following facilities:

- Borrego Springs Education Center – 585 Palm Canyon Dr. (P.O. Box 2474), Upstairs, Borrego Springs Mall 92004 ☎ 760-767-4525
- Camp Pendleton Center – Marine Corps Base, Bldg. 1331, Camp Pendleton, CA 92055 ☎ 760-725-6626
- Escondido Center – 1951 East Valley Parkway, Escondido, CA 92027  
☎ 760-432-0624
- Fallbrook Center – Fallbrook High School, 2400 South Stagecoach Lane, Room 117, Fallbrook, CA 92028 ☎ 760-723-1058
- Mt. Carmel Center – Mt. Carmel High School, 9500 Carmel Mountain Road, San Diego, CA 92129 ☎ 858-484-3890
- Pauma Center – Pauma Reservation Road, Pauma Valley, CA 92061  
☎ 760-742-1121
- Poway Center – 15500 Espola Road, Poway 92064  
☎ 858-679-6613
- Ramona Center – Ramona High School, 1401 Hanson Lane, Ramona, CA 92065  
☎ 760-788-1371

Students have access to classes offered at any of the above centers.

Please refer to the Palomar College catalog (2008-2009) for more information about Palomar.



# Palomar College Office of International Education

**Location:** The Office of International Education is located in the new student center building (SU-103) between the Associated Student Government and Comet Center.

**Office Hours :** Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 4:00pm.

Function: The Palomar College Office of International Education is not only responsible to admit qualified international students on F and M visas, but also to monitor students' academic progress, help students have a comfortable stay in the U.S., provide related information (INS, State Department, etc.) to students and people in the community, promoting semester-length study abroad programs, and many more.

## **Who's Who in the International Student Office**

### **Herman C. Lee, Director, Enrollment Services**

In charge of all the aspect of enrollment services including Admissions, Records, Veterans Services, and International Student Office.

### **Yasué O'Neill, Coordinator, International Education**

Screens and decides on international student applications. Advises students with Department of Homeland Security and State Department policies and procedure, personal concerns, monitors students' academic progress, manages the overall operations of the Office of International education.

### **Judy Gervasio, International Admissions Assistant**

Provides college information to prospective students. Receives and reviews applications, and provides administrative services to the Office of International Education staff members.

### **Ismene Vassiliadis International Student Counselor**

Provides personal, academic and career counseling.

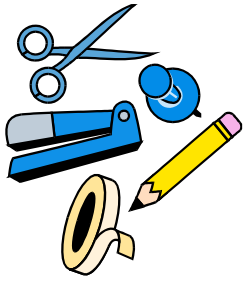
## **Phone/Fax Numbers and Email Address**

Phone: (760) 744-1150, extension 2167  
Fax: (760) 761-3592

Email Address:

[jgervasio@palomar.edu](mailto:jgervasio@palomar.edu) – for Judy Gervasio  
[yoneill@palomar.edu](mailto:yoneill@palomar.edu) - for Yasué O'Neill  
[ivassiliadis@palomar.edu](mailto:ivassiliadis@palomar.edu) for Ismene Vassiliadis

Web: [www.palomar.edu/internationalstudents](http://www.palomar.edu/internationalstudents). - please check out the International Student page.



## Information about U.S. Educational System

The majority of U.S. higher educational institutions have either **semester** or **quarter** systems. Palomar College's academic calendar is developed on the semester system, which provides Spring and Fall semesters with a summer session in the middle.

### **Credit/Unit**

At a U.S. college, you earn college credit after each semester depending on the number of units you complete that semester. For example, if you have completed 12.0 units, you've earned 12.0 college credits for that specific semester. For your information, one unit is equal to one hour per week of classroom instruction. For example, a 3 unit class will meet three hours a week (lab classes require more hours per week).

### **Full-time**

A study load of 12 or more units per semester. The normal full-time load in a Summer Session is 6 units.

### **Registration (Enrollment)**

Act of signing up for specific classes and paying fees.

### **Auditing**

To take a course without being graded or receiving credit; available to students by petition only. Must receive approvals from the instructor and the department dean. **May be** charged \$15 per unit auditing fees.

### **Major**

A major is a group of courses related to a defined area of study. All colleges and universities require students to declare and pursue a major.

### **Associate in Arts (A.A.) Degree**

Awarded upon completion of course work totaling not fewer than **60 degree applicable units** (any courses, which course number is 50 or above, i.e. English 50) in areas of: a) General Education, b) Major courses, c) Elective courses. To obtain an A.A. degree, students must apply by appropriate deadlines (February 28<sup>th</sup> for Spring, June 30<sup>th</sup> for Summer, and September 30<sup>th</sup> for Fall graduation).

### **Certificate of Achievement (CA)**

Awarded upon completion of specified course work in a vocational/occupational program.

### **B.A., B.S. -- Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science**

Baccalaureate degrees involve a minimum of 120 semester units. Although they are awarded by four-year institutions, students may complete approximately half of their degree course work at Palomar College.

### **General Education (G.E.) Requirements**

General Education requirements are patterns of courses designed to expose students to broad areas of knowledge in communication, the sciences, arts and humanities, and social sciences. Please refer to the *yellow sheet*.

### **IGETC (Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum)/CSU GE Certification**

A general education program that California community college transfer students can use to fulfill all lower-division G.E. requirements at any CSU or UC campus (see the International Student Counselor for exceptions on where the IGETC may not be used). Please refer to the *blue and/or green sheet*.

### **Grade Point Average (G.P.A.)**

Determined by dividing total grade points earned by total academic (A-F) units attempted. Students need to maintain a minimum of certain G.P.A. to become eligible to transfer to a four-year institution.

### **Transferring Foreign Credential (for AA degree at Palomar College only)**

If you have earned college credits at an accredited higher education institution back home and want to transfer some of the credits, you will first need to have your transcript evaluated by one of the following foreign credential evaluation companies. When you receive the report, make an appointment to see one of the international student counselors. The final decision on the credit transfer is made by the Palomar College Evaluations Office. Please be informed that we will not transfer credits from overseas for the purpose of GE certification for UC, CSU, or any institutions other than Palomar College.

Academic Credentials Evaluation  
Institute, Inc. (ACEI)  
P.O. Box 6908  
Beverly Hills, CA 90212  
Tel: 310.275.3530  
Fax: 310-275.3528  
[www.acei1.com](http://www.acei1.com)

World Education Services, Inc. (WES)  
P.O. Box 26879  
San Francisco, CA 94126-6879  
Tel: 415.677.9378 or 800.414.0147 (toll  
free)  
Fax: 415.677.9333  
[www.wes.org](http://www.wes.org)

American Education Research  
Corporation (AERC)  
P.O. Box 996  
West Covina, CA 91793-0996  
Tel: 626.339.4404  
Fax: 626.339.9081  
[www.aerc-eval.com](http://www.aerc-eval.com)

International Education Research  
Foundation (IERF)  
Credentials Evaluation Service  
P.O. Box 66940  
Los Angeles, CA 90066  
Tel: 310.390.6276  
Fax: 310.397.7686  
[www.ierf.org](http://www.ierf.org)

## Wait List

When the class of your choice is full, a wait list may be available. If the student eServices tells you the wait list is available, it's better to put your name on the list. To do so, enter the appropriate number as instructed by the computer when using the system.

## Crashing a Class

If a class is closed and the wait list is not available, you may want to try crashing a class. To crash a class, attend the first meeting of the course. Depending on the number of students registered for the class, the instructor may take in additional students by providing them with permission numbers. Use the permission number to add the class in student eServices.

## Adding a Class

During the first week of the semester, you can add classes if the class is still open. During the second week, however, you need to obtain a permission number from the instructor even though the class is still open. Use the permission number to add the class.

## Dropping a Class

If you are not sure whether you would succeed in the class you are enrolled, you may want to drop the class. Make sure you choose the right class drop, using student e-services. It is your responsibility to drop if you don't have the intention to keep the class. Instructors will not drop you from the class when you stop attending the class. If you forget to drop the class, you will receive an "FW" grade at the end of the semester. International students may not drop any ESL classes.

**You will also need to be aware of the drop deadline that is indicated in the class schedule. After this deadline, you will not be able to drop the class.**

## Pass/No Pass

You may request that your instructor allow you to have the registration status of "credit/non-credit". If you pass the class (at least a grade of "C"), you will receive credit for the class. You will not receive a letter grade in a class you are enrolled into as "credit/non-credit". If you are worried about the grade you may receive, it may be a good idea to ask for this status since this system will not affect your GPA. There is a deadline to apply for "credit/non-credit" status. An application form needs to be signed by the instructor and submitted to the Admissions Office by the deadline. See the class schedule for the specific date. **NOTE: You do not want to have too many classes on credit/non-credit status, if you are thinking about transferring to a four-year institution.**

## Self-Paced Classes

There are many self-paced classes that you can take. For these classes, you may go to the classroom anytime during regular operation hours and work on the assignment on your own. You need to be self-disciplined, however, to complete the class in this setting, because if you don't spend enough hours on the assignments, you may fail the class.

## Auditing a Class

Students may audit classes with the instructor and department dean's permission. The fees are \$15.00 per unit. If you are enrolled (registered) for a minimum of 10.0 units, the first three units will be free. If there are any classes you want

to take for personal enrichment, you may want to audit those classes. If you want to audit, pick up an application for audit, ask the instructor and department dean to sign it and then submit the form to the Admissions Office.

NOTE: Not every instructor will allow you to audit their class, especially if the class is full. In addition, the units from auditing status will not be counted for the required 12.0 units for international students.

### **Refund**

If you drop a class before the refund deadline (the first two weeks for the semester-length class), you are eligible to receive a refund. Once you drop the class in eServices, you will receive a refund automatically by mail. To find the status of your refund, contact the Cashier's Office at (760) 744-1150, extension 2114.



The Class Schedule

Sample (from the class schedule)

Unit Value  
(number of  
credits)

**PSYC 115 PSYC OF PERSONAL GROWTH/DEV (3.0 units)**

**SAN MARCOS/Day**

**73394 TTh 12:30-1:50pm**

**BE-5**

**PERRY C LEC**

Course  
Number

Class meeting  
information

Class room

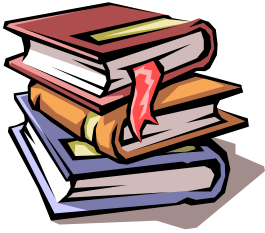
Instructor

Lecture or  
Lab

- Every class is different. Each class has a Course NUMBER. It is the 5-digit course number which identifies each class.
- In the Class Schedule, the classes that are printed in color (blue, purple, pink, etc) are nighttime classes.
- In the Class Schedule, the small printed information below the class is about the class above it.

M = Monday                      Th = Thursday  
T = Tuesday                      F = Friday  
W = Wednesday                S = Saturday





**LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER (<http://www.palomar.edu/library/>)**

Besides Books, Magazines, Encyclopedias, and other reference materials, the Library has the following:

- Typewriters - on the first floor
- Photocopiers - on the second floor
- Calculators - for use in the library
- Computer Lab - on the first floor (Lab assistants available)
- TV/VCR – for use in the library only

On the first floor of the Library is the Learning Resource Center. You may use videos, computers, audio tapes and other electronic equipment there.

The Reference Librarian can help you find materials. The Reference desk is on the second floor.

The Library is open Monday through Thursday from 7:30am to 9:00pm, Fridays from 7:30am to 4:00pm and on Saturdays from 9:00am to 1:00pm. The Library's telephone number is 744-1150, extension 2614.

**THE TUTORING CENTER (<http://www.palomar.edu/tutoring/>)**

The Tutoring Center helps all Palomar College students FREE of charge.

You may receive tutoring in all subjects taught at Palomar College including all levels of Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, Computer Science, Business and Accounting, Economics, English and ESL, Spanish, French, Electronics, etc.

All tutoring is done at the Tutoring Center on the ground floor (first floor) of the Library, Monday through Thursday, from 9:00am to 6:00pm, and Saturdays from 9:00am to 12:00pm. The telephone number is 744-1150, extensions 2448 and 2238.

To make arrangements for tutoring;

- Go to the Tutoring Center in the Library
- Complete required paperwork
- Read and sign the student agreement form
- Be interviewed by the Tutoring Center Coordinator



Most of the tutoring is done by appointment. Also available is group tutoring.



## Living in the U.S.A.

### Housing:

The Office of International Education or any other office at Palomar College does not coordinate housing for students. Because of this, you may want to think about the following option.

- Homestay
- Apartment Rental
- Apartment Rental with a roommate

Here's the list of homestay services organizations in San Diego County.

Home Placement Services: <http://www.homeplacement.com/>

Homestay Services International: <http://www.homestayservices.com/>.

San Diego Homestay: <http://www.sandiegohomestay.com/page2.html>

If you want to rent an apartment, free copies of apartment guides (which are readily available at grocery stores) give you information on apartment complexes located in the area. You may also search online using different sites:

<http://sandiego.apartments.com/>

[http://www.move.com/apartments/san-diego\\_california/](http://www.move.com/apartments/san-diego_california/)

<http://www.sandiegorenter.com/sandiegorenter.htm>

When renting an apartment, make sure that you understand the terms of rent including the rental period, expected rent increase, security deposit, termination requirements (move-out notice), house rules, etc.

Sometimes students decide to live with a roommate. It is very important to develop a written agreement to maintain a positive living experience. Do some research on what area to cover on the agreement.

[http://www.ehow.com/how\\_4331\\_draft-roommate-agreement.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_4331_draft-roommate-agreement.html)

[http://www.rentalguide.com/pdf/roommate\\_agreement.pdf](http://www.rentalguide.com/pdf/roommate_agreement.pdf)

<http://www.lawdepot.com/contracts/roommate-agreement/>

There are some families in the area offering rooms for rent. You may find some information on the housing board maintained by the Office of Student Affairs. <http://www.palomar.edu/studentactivities/Housing.htm>.

## Driving



### *Driver's License*

If you are over 18 and have a valid driver's license from your home country, you may drive without getting a California driver's license( [http://www.dmv.ca.gov/dl/dl\\_info.htm](http://www.dmv.ca.gov/dl/dl_info.htm))

However, you may need to pay higher auto insurance premium without a California driver's license.

To obtain a California driver's license, you need to take a multiple choice written test and driving test at a Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV). You can obtain the handbook (study material for the test) or make an appointment for the tests at the following DMV offices.

DMV Escondido: 725 North Escondido Blvd. (760) 741-2811

DMV Oceanside: 4005 Plaza Drive. (760) 941-9300

<https://mv.dmv.ca.gov/foAppt2/welcome.do>

Make sure to bring your passport, I-94, and I-20 form to take the test to prove your legal presence here in the U.S.

### *Automobile Insurance*

In the state of California, an automobile insurance policy is mandatory. If you are caught driving without a proper insurance policy, you could be jailed and/or fined. Look at the telephone book or use the Internet to research an auto insurance company, which best serves your needs. Following is a list of terms you need to know when purchasing an insurance policy.

- **Bodily Injury Liability (required in most states in the U.S.)**  
This coverage compensates the driver of the other car and its passengers in the event you get into an accident.
- **Property Damage Liability**  
This coverage will pay for the repair and replacement of the other driver's car or property in the event of an accident.
- **Personal Injury Protection**  
This coverage pays for the medical and funeral costs associated with an accident for you and your family regardless of whose fault it was.
- **Uninsured or Underinsured Motorists**  
This coverage pays for medical and funeral costs for you and your family in the event you get in an accident with either a hit-and run driver or a driver who doesn't have enough auto insurance.
- **Collision and Comprehensive**  
Collision reimburses you for the full cost of repairs or replacement of your car after an accident. Comprehensive covers you in the event your car falls victim to a natural disaster, vandalism or theft.

It is important to know that some people drive without any automobile insurance (which is illegal). You may want to consider purchasing a full-coverage policy to cover the damage caused by a collision with an uninsured driver.

## **Vehicle Registration**

You must register your automobile to drive in California. If you purchase the car from a dealer, the dealer will take care of the registration. However, if you purchase a car from a private party, there are certain steps you must take. You can get the information on how to register a car at DMV's website at <http://www.dmv.ca.gov/pubs/dl600.pdf>. Please note that you will not be able to register a car without an automobile insurance.

## **Public Transportation**

There are several buses that stop in front of Palomar College off Mission Road. For the maps, schedules, and other detailed information, go to <http://www.gonctd.com/breeze/breezes.html>.

To get to San Diego by train, you can take the Coaster (<http://www.gonctd.com/coaster/coaster.html>).

## **Social Security Number**

You can only apply for a social security number if you have secured a job. To buy a cell phone or apply for a credit card is not a valid reason to apply for a social security number.

If you are hired as a student employee on campus, please refer to the employment information page of the handbook for the procedure to apply for a social security number.



## **Banking**

### *Opening a Bank Account*

In the U.S., it is common for people to have a checking account. It is much safer than carrying a lot of cash all the time. Each banking institution has special checking plans, in which minimum deposits, monthly service charges, and other features and services vary. Study the booklet that lists different plans in details and choose the plan that best meets your needs.

Here's a list of some banking institutions in our area.

Wells Fargo Bank	1000 W. San Marcos Blvd., San Marcos 760-891-0061
US Bank	190 S. Rancho Santa Fe Rd., San Marcos 760-734-4140
Bank of America	601 S. Rancho Santa Fe Rd., San Marcos 760-630-3220
Washington Mutual	348 S. Twin oaks Valley Rd., San Marcos 760-744-4094
Union Bank of California	669 S. rancho Santa Fe Rd., San Marcos 760-744-2491

✿ When using checks, it is important that you balance your checkbook on regular basis to make sure the funds are still available.

## **Financing**

To transfer funds from home, you can choose one of the following.

### *Wire-transfer*

Your (your sponsor's) bank back home will electronically transfer funds to your bank here in the U.S. You'll need to provide the local bank's name, address, routing number and your account number to the bank overseas. You will need to pay a service charge; however, this should be the quickest way to transfer funds.

### *Cashier's Check*

Your family can go to the bank back home and request a cashier's check made payable to your name. Once you receive the check by mail (registered/certified mail recommended), you can deposit the check into your account here.

### *When to Receive the Funds*

It's best not to wait too long to have the funds transferred, since you will need to pay the next semester's tuition fees later this semester. Since you will be a continuing student at Palomar College, you will be eligible for priority registration. The following information tells you approximately when you will need to pay the fees to the college.

<u>Current Semester</u>	<u>Following Semester</u>	<u>Approximate Due Date for Tuition Fees</u>
Fall	Spring	Early December
Spring	Fall	Late July

## **Filing Taxes**

All the international students in the U.S. on F, J, and M visas are required by the Internal Revenue Service to file a tax return even if you did not earn any U.S. based income.

### *Students without any U.S. based income*

If you did not earn any money in the U.S. (on campus employment, receiving local scholarship, etc.) during the previous year, you only need to complete form 8843 (<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8843.pdf>).

### *Students with U.S. based income*

If you received any U.S. based income during the previous year, you will need to complete both 8843 and 1040NR-EZ (or 1040 NR if you meet the substantial presence criteria) (<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f1040nre.pdf>).

## Medical Insurance

The U.S. health care system is very expensive. Because of this, all the international students attending Palomar College on F, J, and M visas are required to have an adequate medical/accident insurance policy. Without proof of coverage, students may not be registered in any classes. Following is the summary of minimum coverage required for international students:

- medical benefits of at least \$50,000 per accident or illness
- repatriation of remains in the amount of \$7,500
- expenses associated with medical evacuation of the student to his/her country in the amount of \$10,000
- a deductible not to exceed \$500 per accident or illness

Before students can register for each semester, they will be required to submit a proof of insurance coverage unless you have purchased the policy through Palomar College.

You can purchase the policy at the Office of International Education. You will be given a temporary ID card when you purchase the policy. In addition, you will receive the official ID card in the mail in a couple of months.

### *Providers – Physicians*

If you purchase the insurance policy through Palomar College, you can find a list of physicians online at [www.myfirsthealth.com](http://www.myfirsthealth.com). At the time of sickness and/or accident, contact the physician's office to make an appointment.

### *At the Time of Appointment*

Once you arrive at the physician's office, present your ID card. If you ever encounter any problems regarding your insurance policy, have the receptionist contact **Wells Fargo of California Insurance Services, Student Insurance Division** (serving agent for the insurance plan) at **(800) 853-5899**.

## **Health Maintenance/Emergency**

- Health Services Information (760) 744-1150, ext. 2380
  - Location (SHS) adjacent to staff parking #11, across P building
  - Hours
    - Monday: 8:00am to 8:00pm
    - Tuesday: 8:00am to 8:00pm
    - Wednesday: 8:00am to 8:00pm
    - Thursday: 8:00am to 8:00pm
    - Friday: 8:00am to 3:00pm
  - Available Services
    - First Aid Care
    - Immunizations (MMR, Tetanus, Hepatitis B, Flu Shots)



- Health Screening (Blood Pressure, Hearing and Vision, TB testing, Cholesterol Testing, HIV testing)
  - Health Counseling and Education
  - Physical Exams
  - Laboratory Services (Blood, Urine Throat Cultures for Strep Throat)
  - Women's Health (Pap Smears, Pregnancy Testing, Birth Control Pills)
  - Men's Wellness (Cancer Prevention)
  - Dermatology: Acne, Wart Removal and Skin Care
  - Treatments: Wound Care, Ear Irrigation, Eye Wash
  - Non-Prescription Medications
  - Drug and Alcohol Prevention and Referral
- Appointments for:
    - Nurse Visits
    - Nurse Practitioner Visits
    - Physician Visits

- **Illness/Injury**

On-campus: visit the health services center.

Off-campus: if you are insured through Wells Fargo Student Insurance, call the nurses triage and explain your symptoms. The nurse may tell you to go see a doctor depending on your condition. If you have an insurance policy through another company, contact your nearest customer service office and find out which doctor's clinic you may visit or get the list of community clinics in San Diego county (<http://www.palomar.edu/healthservices/community/clinics.html>).

**Emergency Room: avoid going to the hospital emergency room if your condition is not life-threatening, or your insurance policy may not cover the expenses incurred.**

- **Hospitalization**

Contact the Office of International Education at 760-744-1150, extension 2167 with the following information (name of your hospital, the reason for your hospitalization, your room number, admission date, the expected release date, your doctor's name). We will contact your instructors for your absences from the classes.

For serious conditions, it's important that you have the following information readily available, so the hospital can contact the appropriate person/agencies, if necessary.

- a. insurance policy
- b. emergency contact
- c. consulate information
- d. passport information
- e. college contact

- **Automobile Accident**

Call Police at 911. Make sure to exchange the automobile insurance information with the other driver. If there are any witnesses, ask them to stay until the police arrive.

If there is any injury, they may take you to the hospital. Make sure to keep your insurance policy information with you at all time.

- Arrest

Read this information and be familiar with what to do/not to do in the event of arrest:

<http://www.aclu.org/police/gen/14528res20040730.html>

**Where in San Marcos Can You Find...**

**Post Office (U.S. Postal Service)**

**420 North Twin Oaks Valley Road  
from Palomar College:**



- east on Mission Road (towards Escondido)
- north (left) on Firebird Street
- east (right) on Richmar Avenue
- north (left) on North Twin Oaks Valley Road



*Grocery Stores (food & other items) and Drug Stores (medication)*

Longs Drug Stores:	320 S. Twin Oaks Valley Road
	191 Woodland Parkway
Albertsons	1330 East Mission Road
	1929 West San Marcos Blvd
	151 Woodland Parkway
Rite Aid Pharmacies:	121 South Rancho Santa Fe Road
Sav-On Drugs:	734 South Rancho Santa Fe Road
Vons:	671 South Rancho Santa Fe Road

*Shopping Center*

Grand Plaza 101-197 S. Las Posas Road

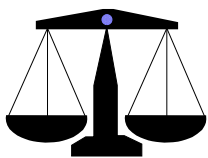
*Movie Theater*

Edwards San Marcos Stadium 1180 W. San Marcos Road

There are so many restaurants and fast food places in San Marcos. The following is a place that has variety of restaurants in one location.

Old California Restaurant Row: 1020 San Marcos Blvd  
18 restaurants offering a variety of foods including Mexican, Italian, Indian, Chinese, Sea Food, Indian, Japanese, and Thai .

There are many other restaurants, also, located throughout the city of San Marcos such as Vietnamese, Filipino, and Greek.



# DHS (Dept. of Homeland Security) Information

## Terms you need to know

### **PASSPORT**

This is a traveling document issued by your home government. You are required to keep your passport valid all times. If your passport is to expire, you are required to contact your embassy (consulate) and find out the procedure for passport renewal.

### **VISA**

Visa is a stamp issued by the American Embassy (Consulate) for the purpose of entering the United States of America. Each visa indicates the purpose of the entry to the U.S., i.e. F-1 is for studying purposes, while B-2 is for visiting (for pleasure). The majority of F-1 visas are given for multiple entry purposes, which means that you could travel in and out of the U.S. as many times as you wish as long as your visa is valid. However, people sometimes receive F-1 visas with single entry purpose - check your visa to see which type of entry it indicates. Since the visa is required only to enter the U.S., it is legal to remain in the U.S. with an expired visa as long as you meet other requirements (valid passport & I-20, I-94 with a D/S notation, maintenance of status, etc.) F-1 visa renewal is done at the American Embassy/Consulate only. You **cannot** do so at the Department of Homeland Security.

### **STATUS**

Once you enter the U.S., you will be given a **status** according to the type of visa you hold. Students with an F-1 visa will receive an F-1 status, and those with an M-1 visa an M-1 status. You are legally permitted to remain in the U.S. while maintaining your "status."

### **I-94**

You received an I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record) card during your flight to the U.S. I-94 indicates your nonimmigrant status, date and port of entry, and the INS admission number. If you entered the U.S. on an F-1 visa, your I-94 card should have an inspector's note as "F1- D/S." D/S means "Duration of Status" - you are permitted to stay in the U.S. as long as you maintain your F-1 status.

### **Form I-20**

Form I-20 is a DHS document you need to apply for an F-1 visa. In addition, Form I-20 allows you to study at the institution which issued the form to you. It is important that you keep your I-20 valid all the time just as with your passport. When you transfer to another academic institution, you need to receive a new I-20 from that school. In addition, if your I-20 is to expire, you need to request a "program extension" at least 30 days prior to the expiration date of your I-20 to maintain your F-1 status.

## Maintenance of F-1 Status

Maintenance of F-1 status allows you to stay legally in the U.S. INS requires persons with F-1 status to:

- enroll in and complete the minimum of 12.0 units each semester (**please note that the number of units with FW grades does not count toward the required number of units**).
- keep their I-20 valid - only attend the school which issued them the I-20, unless they have a special permission from the school to concurrently enroll at another DHS approved school
- refrain from unauthorized employment
- make adequate academic progress (maintain an overall GPA of 2.0 or higher)

## Falling Out of F-1 Status

An F-1 student would fall out of status (becomes "illegal") on the following occasions:

- not completing the **required** 12.0 units per semester (ex. FW grades)
  - staying at the school with an expired I-20
  - having an expired passport
  - studying at a school without an appropriate I-20
  - staying in the U.S. for longer than the allowed period (past the 60 day grace period\*)
  - engaging in an unauthorized employment
- \* grace period: a "60-day" period given to prepare your departure from the U.S. upon completion of your program (graduation and/or completion of practical training)

## Retrieving the F-1 Status

To get your F-1 status back, you need to apply for "**reinstatement to status**." If you fall out of status, you will lose eligibility to certain opportunities that are available to F-1 students such as on-campus employment and curricular/optional practical training. To apply for "reinstatement to status," make an appointment with the Coordinator, International Education. Please be advised that depending on the reason of your falling out of status, you may be advised to start a brand new F-1 status by travel (leaving the U.S. for a short period of time and returning with a brand new I-20 form).

\*\* You will be allowed to continue your studies at Palomar College only if the DHS officer approves your request for reinstatement to status. If your request is denied, you will no longer be allowed to study at Palomar College, and you will be required to return home by the date set by the Department of Homeland Security.

## Traveling Documents

If you are traveling outside the U.S. during the breaks, there are certain documents you need to have: a valid passport, valid visa and the form I-20 that is endorsed for re-entry purposes. Although you **may** travel to contiguous territory such as Mexico and Canada with an expired visa, you will still need to have a valid passport, I-94 (do not give this to the airline counter representative if you are flying to any of the contiguous territory) and an endorsed I-20 form.

## DHS Qs and A

Q: My passport expires in a couple of months. How can I renew it?

A: You need to contact your embassy (consulate) and find out the procedure. Come in to the Office of International Education for the location of the nearest embassy or go to <http://www.embassy.org/embassies/>.

Q: My visa expires in a month. How and when can I renew it?

A: As already mentioned, you can legally remain in the U.S. while your visa is expired. However, once you leave the U.S. (except for a short trip to Canada or Mexico), you will need to have a new F-1 visa to re-enter the U.S. You should renew your visa while you go back to your home country during the breaks. Please contact the Office of International Education to receive proper documents for visa renewal purpose.

Q: My visa is still good for three more years, and I want to go back home during the break. What do I need to do to re-enter the U.S. to continue my studies at Palomar College?

A: As long as you have maintained your F-1 status, all you need is an endorsement on the back of your I-20. Please come in to the Office of International Education at least 3 days prior to your departure to get the re-entry endorsement.

Q: My visa expired last month. Can I still go to Mexico?

A: Yes, you may (**except students from certain countries**). With an expired F-1 visa, you may visit either Mexico or Canada as long as the visit won't exceed 30 days. When you cross the U.S. side of the border, do not let go of your I-94 card. Also make sure to obtain the re-entry endorsement on the I-20.

Q: My I-20 expires at the end of this semester, but I still need a couple of more semesters at Palomar before I complete my studies. What do I need to do?

A: You need to request a "program extension." Come in to the Office of International Education to see if you are eligible for it, and if you are, the Coordinator, International Education will take care of the necessary procedure.

Q: Can I work in the U.S. while maintaining my status?

A: Refer to the "Employment Opportunity" section of this book.

## **Program Extension**

### Eligibility

An F-1 student is eligible for program extension if:

- He or she has “continually maintained status;”
- The delay in completion is “caused by compelling academic or medical reasons, such as changes of major or research topics, unexpected research programs, or documented illness;” and
- Delays caused by academic probation or suspension are not acceptable reasons for program extension.”  
(8CFR §214.2(f)(7)(iii))

### Procedure

To process a program extension, the student must:

- Get a copy of the Program Extension packet from the Office of International Education
- See the International Student Counselor to develop an updated educational plan indicating how many more semesters you need to complete your program
- Write a letter explaining the reason for a program extension (why you could not complete the program within the given time) and how much longer you need to complete the program
- Submit the letter, an updated educational plan signed by the counselor, and a current copy of a financial statement (with the statement of financial support if the bank statement is from your sponsor/parents) to the Office of International Education
- When the Coordinator of International Education determines the student is eligible for program extension, a new I-20 indicating a new completion date will be issued.
- Once the new I-20 is issued, come in to the Office of International Education to sign the forms.

### Deadline to Apply for Program Extension

The DHS regulations require students to apply for a program extension before the current I-20 form expires. In addition, a new, extended I-20 must be issued before or on the expiration date of the current I-20 form. Because of this policy, students at Palomar College must apply for a program extension with all the required documents at least one week prior to the expiration date.

## **TO REQUEST REINSTATEMENT TO STATUS:**

If you have “F-1, D/S” immigration status but are not currently attending your assigned school or you were not attending full-time last term, you must apply to the United States Immigration and Citizenship Services for **REINSTATEMENT TO STATUS** if you want to attend (or keep attending) Palomar College. Here’s the process to apply for reinstatement to status.

1. Obtain t a current copy of your (or your sponsor’s) bank statement with a minimum deposit of \$16,100.
2. Write a letter addressed to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service with the following information:
  - a. Chronological dates of entry to and departure from the U.S., reason for the entry/departure, the kind of visa status for each entry
  - b. List of all schools attended anywhere in the U.S. (chronological order) with attendance dates and the outcome of each attendance
  - c. Explanation of the reason that you failed to maintain student status
  - d. Detailed explanation of why your falling out of status was beyond your control
  - e. Specific, detailed explanation of your hardship you may face if you were not reinstated
  - f. List of courses you are taking/intend to take with explanation of goal you are pursuing
  - g. Statement that you were not engaged in unlawful employment
  - h. Statement that you have not committed any immigration violations that would make you deportable
3. Make an appointment to see the Coordinator of International Education, for the appointment. Bring your passport, I-94 card, all the I-20 forms you ever received, your letter addressed to USCIS, official copies of transcripts and the bank statement. Depending on the situation that caused you to fall out of F-1 status, you will receive a support letter to mail with your application for reinstatement to status.
4. When the support letter is ready, mail the application for reinstatement with all the documents listed in item #3 to the appropriate U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service Center. Contact the Office of International Education for the current USCIS Service Center address.

# Employment Opportunity

Employment opportunities for international students are very limited. Please see the following options.

## On-Campus Employment

International students maintaining status (12.0+ units) are eligible to work on campus up to 20 hours a week during the semester, and 40 hours a week during summer. You may contact the Mail Room, Cashier's Office, Custodial Office, Bookstore, and Cafeteria to see if there are any open positions. You also want to keep checking the available student employment positions at [http://www.palomar.edu/studentemploymentpaperprocessing/job\\_postings.htm](http://www.palomar.edu/studentemploymentpaperprocessing/job_postings.htm).

## When You are Hired as a Student Employee here on campus

Once you obtain a position, ask your supervisor to write a letter of employment addressed to the Social Security Administration indicating the terms of your employment which include the following:

1. Your name
2. Department of employment
3. Employment schedule (hours)
4. Starting wage
5. Proposed starting date
6. Supervisor's contact information

Bring the letter and student employment form (complete with all the required signature) to the Office of International Education, so we can issue you the letter for status and employment eligibility verification purpose. Once you receive the letter from us, take the two letters, I-20, I-94 and your passport to the Social Security Administration office to apply for a social security number.

Local SSA office in San Marcos:

367 Via Vera Cruz, San Marcos, CA 92078  
Office Hours: M-F, 9AM-4PM (except  
Federal holidays)



## **Off-Campus Employment**

*Curricular Practical Training (CPT): your major requires you to take CE 100/150 for you to be eligible for CPT.*

In order to request Curricular Practical Training, please read the following procedure:

1. Register in the appropriate CE 100/150 course.
2. Find an employer where you will be working to satisfy the cooperative education requirement.
3. Bring the employer's information (name, address and telephone number) with your I-20 form to the Office of International Education.
4. **Only after the Coordinator of International Education recommends your CPT application and processes the recommendation in SEVIS (Student/Exchange Visitor Information System), you can start working for the employer indicated on the back of your I-20 form.**

## ***Optional Practical Training***

After you maintain your F-1 status for two consecutive semesters, you will become eligible for "Optional Practical Training," in which you are allowed to work off-campus in the field of your major. However, this is a limited opportunity, you are encouraged to wait till you complete your studies here in the U.S. If your major is "General Studies" or "Liberal Arts & Sciences," the Immigration and Naturalization Service may not approve your request for practical training.

## ***Off-Campus Employment under Economic Hardship***

This is available to students who face unforeseen financial hardship, such as sudden change in exchange rate (as it happened in some Asian countries in December 1997), sponsor's losing his/her job, or sponsor's death. To be eligible, you have to be in F-1 status for two consecutive semesters and able to provide documentation to prove your hardship.

## **\*\* IMPORTANT**

Unauthorized employment will violate your nonimmigrant status. Please refrain from any such activities.

## OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT) PROCEDURE

Practical Training program allows F-1 students to work in the field of your major (no Practical Training is recommended for General Education/Liberal Arts & Sciences major) full-time for one year after the completion of your study, or part-time (20 hours a week) for two years during your studies.

In order to request Practical Training, please read the following procedure:

1. Receive a copy of OPT packet from the Office of International Education
2. Fill out the forms I-765 & I-538, signature form (sign in **black ink** within the frame).
3. Bring the following items to the Office of International Education for recommendation.
  - Form I-765
  - Form I-538
  - Original I-20 forms (all the I-20 forms you ever received)
  - Passport
  - Signature Card
  - 2 photographs
  - Application fee of \$340.00 (personal check, made payable to **Department of Homeland Security**)
4. **Pick up all the documents at the Office of International Education** once the recommendation process is completed. Mail the following documents **with Return Receipt Request** to the appropriate U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service Center:
  - **Forms I-765**
  - **Signature card**
  - **Photocopies of your I-20 form(s), I-94, and I-538 (all the photocopies should be both front and back)**
  - **A fee of US\$340.00 (personal check, no cash) made payable to Department of Homeland Security**
  - **Two (2) photographs taken by a professional, according to the regulation**

Please remember that you are not advised to leave the United States until your request has been approved (receive an EAD - Employment Authorization Document).

You **must not start working** before the start date stated on the EAD.

When you receive your EAD, please bring it to the Office of International Education, so we can make a photocopy of the document.

If you have any questions, contact the Office of International Education at (760) 744-1150, extension 2167.

## **Off-Campus Employment Request Under Economic Hardship**

### **Eligibility: Unforeseeable Economic Hardship**

#### **Examples**

- Your sponsor lost his/her job
- Your sponsor deceased
- Drastic changes in exchange rate

#### **Procedure to Apply for Off-Campus Employment Under Economic Hardship**

1. Complete the Financial Needs Worksheet
2. Complete the forms I-765 & I-538
3. Have two photographs taken according to the instruction
4. Sign on the Signature Card (within the frame in **black ink**)
5. Gather documentation to prove your hardship
6. Write a statement explaining your hardship (including the reason that on-campus employment is not an option to meet your financial needs)
7. Bring all the above documents to the Office of International Education (OIE)
8. Return to the OIE in two days to pick up the packet

#### **Mailing Instruction**

Mail the following documents the appropriate U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service Center:

- photocopies of I-20 (front and back) and I-94 (front and back)
- forms I-765 & I-538
- signature card
- two photos
- fee (\$340.00 check made payable to Dept of Homeland Security) – **do not send any cash.**

Make sure to mail the packet with Return Receipt Request (you have to go to a local post office for this service). This is very important because the receipt you will receive is the proof that you mailed the request.

NOTE: The employment authorization application process at the service center currently is taking approximately 90 days.



## Your Requirements as an International Student at Palomar College



As an international student with F-1 visa status, there are certain requirements you must meet throughout your stay here at Palomar College.

- **Maintenance of valid accident/sickness insurance policy** – without the proof of valid policy filed in your student holder at the Office of International Education, you will not be allowed to enroll each semester.
- **Address Change Notification** – you are required to notify your new address to the Office of International Education immediately after you move.
- **Major Change Notification** – you are required to notify the Office of International Education if you decide to change your major. A new I-20 form indicating the new major will be issued within a couple of days.
- **Maintenance of Status** – you are required to maintain your F-1 visa status (please see the information on how you can maintain your status under INS Information)
- **Updating Educational Plan** – it is your responsibility to develop and update your educational plan with the assistance from the International Student Counselor.
- **Providing your email address to the International Student Office** – when you set up an email account, please inform the Office of International Education of your email address. Occasionally, Yasué sends some important information (such as DHS policy change, etc.) via email. Without your email address placed on the distribution list, you will not be informed of such notices.
- **Reading the International Student Newsletter** – please make sure that you read the International Student Newsletter which is published and mailed out twice a semester. This is another way you stay informed of upcoming deadlines, events, policy changes, etc.