

Navigating Your F-1/J-1 Status

As a TC student,

you are probably working towards your dreams of building a fulfilling career that makes lasting change in the world. At OISS, we commend you, and we want to support you in achieving those goals by helping you understand how to maintain your F-1/J-1 status. Let's dive into some quick tips on how to maintain status like a pro:

1. **Keep Those Documents Shining:** Your passport should have at least six months of validity left. If you need to renew it, reach out to your country's embassy or consulate. Also, keep an eye on your I-20/DS-2019 and I-94 to make sure they're accurate and up to date.

2. **Ace Your Course Load:** To maintain status, you need a course load every fall and spring semester, which at TC is defined as 9 credits. Only one online course can count toward full-time enrollment.

If you're in your final semester and have fewer than 9 credits to take, head to TC-Compass to apply for Reduced Course Load.

3. **Climb That Academic Ladder:** Make sure you're making steady progress on your degree and meeting your department's academic standards. Your degree is your treasure map – follow it wisely.

4. **Want to Work? Seek Guidance First:** If you're thinking of entering the job pool, hit the pause button before you dive head-in. Consult the employment guides on our website to determine if you're eligible; after that, the next step is to attend the corresponding employment workshop, which we offer several times each semester.

5. **Name or Address Change? Notify Us!:** Tell us if your name or other information has changed. Moving? Update your address on myTC Portal. If you're on

post-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT), remember to report changes via TC-Compass.

6. **Keep Us in the Loop about Your Travel Plans:** Before jet-setting, ensure you've got your documents ready. Visit the F-1/J-1 travel sections of our website to be the master of your reentry plan. It's a different story, though, if you plan to take a break for longer than 5 months – in that case, connect with us directly.

Following these steps should keep your status worries at bay. And remember, OISS is here for any questions or magical assistance you need. You've got this! We wish you a successful Fall 2023!

--The OISS Team



Get in the Know

Expert On Building Community

**Lema
Moliga**

**Director of
Student
Support &
Advocacy**



Transitioning to a new environment can be tough, if you find yourself struggling, ask for help! A great place to start is by reaching out to the Office of Student Support & Advocacy (SSA). You can connect with SSA by requesting support on their [website](#) and someone will reach out to meet with you individually to connect you with resources and support.



Kai Santiago

**Assistant Director of Graduate
Student Life & Development**

Tip #1: Attend GSLD's Involvement Fair at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters. This is your chance to meet student organization leaders who offer many programs throughout the year. It's also an opportunity to learn about what the orgs do for the TC community, and get free swag!

Tip #2: Read the weekly GSLD Newsletter to know what's going on around TC, Columbia University, and New York City so students could stay connected to every community they wish to immerse themselves in.

Tip #3: Join a Student Life Ambassador (SLA) Cohort! GSLD hires 6 SLAs every year who oversee a cohort of 40-60 graduate students who help them feel more connected to the campus community. The SLAs hold fun events, host cohort hangouts to get to know one another, and are keeping students up to date with a bi-weekly newsletter!

Get in the Know

Expert Advice On Academic Success



Nancy Bobblet

**Assistant Professor
of Applied Linguistics**

1. Be proactive about asking relevant questions in class, it's normal to question and propose new ideas. If it's difficult for you to do this in the class setting, sign up for office hours and ask your questions there, one-on-one with the professor.
2. Introduce yourself to the person sitting next to you on the first day of class. Exchange emails so you have a contact that you can text in case you see you're going to be late to class, if you get ill and need notes, etc. You need a 'buddy' in every class you take, and you will probably end up having several.
3. Start a study group for each class - maybe starting with your 'class buddy' - to help each other understand and cover all the readings. Many courses have long reading lists.
4. We can't assume that professors are free right after class, so it's best not to run up to them and ask questions when class ends. Use office hours or class time to ask your questions. Office hours are set aside for working with students - use them! You're not 'bothering' the professor, it's one of our job responsibilities.

Get in the Know

International Education Week

Calling all TC scholars, faculty, students, and staff! Teachers College is about to launch International Education Week!

What is International Education Week?

International Education Week (IEW) is an annual joint initiative between the U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of State to celebrate diverse cultures and global education exchange. During this week, college and university campuses across the country and beyond host a variety of events to fulfill the mission of preparing future international leaders and global citizens, and facilitating cross-cultural exchange and understanding.



What's IEW like at Teachers College?

At TC, community members – students, faculty, staff, departments, and offices – are welcome to work with OISS to put on an event. Some people like to present their research; some share an aspect of a particular culture; others develop an event centered around a hobby or interest, or a professional skill. In the past, students and departments have hosted:



- An international recipe sharing event
- A panel discussion on language teaching in international contexts
- A brown bag discussion on teaching around the world
- An international film screening
- A mindfulness workshop with a focus on cross-cultural communication
- A photography exhibition about identity

Presentations, workshops, art exhibitions, musical performances – the possibilities are endless. We are here to provide you with the support you need to turn your idea into reality.

Get in the Know

International Education Week

Why participate in IEW?



IEW is a chance to showcase something you really care about – whether that’s a style of dance from a particular region of the world, or ways of coping with culture shock, or the state of elementary school language education. Personal, professional, academic – the sky’s the limit, as long as it relates to international education. With help from OISS, you learn how to create an organization-wide event. It doesn’t look too shabby on a resume, either.

How can I participate in IEW?

If you are interested in working with OISS to host an event, keep an eye on your email for a Call for Proposals form. In the meantime, think about what interests you and how it can be presented in or experienced through an international lens.



Inspired? Check out these posters from a few of last year's sessions:

AROUND THE WORLD RECIPE SHARING
TUESDAY, 11/15
3PM-4PM
HORACE MANN
ROOM 234

REGISTER: [HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/MRAE3T4B](https://tinyurl.com/MRAE3T4B)

Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to contact OASID at oaaid@ic.edu, (212) 670-3880, (212) 670-3854 video phone, to the extent possible to request reasonable accommodations, such as ASL interpreters, alternate format materials, and a campus map of accessible features.

Making an Impact in the Classroom
The Role of the Chinese Language Teacher

Join CIFLTE, Dr. Adrienne Lew, and the Columbia Chinese Calligraphy Club for a panel discussion and calligraphy demonstration.

In collaboration with
the Office of International Students & Scholars
Thursday, November 17, 5pm-7pm
in Thompson 323A
Register for in-person: <https://tinyurl.com/3u45x6a5>
Register for virtual: <https://tinyurl.com/2s88aceh>

Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to request OASID at oaaid@ic.edu, (212) 670-3880, (212) 670-3854 video phone, to the extent possible to request reasonable accommodations, such as ASL interpreters, alternate format materials, and a campus map of accessible features.

International Education Week

DO MY PARENTS BELIEVE I'LL GRADUATE?

Longitudinal Multicohort Analysis of Parental Expectations Based on Chilean Census Data (2004 – 2019)

Research Presentation by Joaquin Farina
in collaboration with
the Office of International Students & Scholars
Tuesday, November 15th at 12pm
Grace Dodge Hall, Room 361

Register: <https://tinyurl.com/mr47z2dk>

Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to contact OASID at oaaid@ic.edu, (212) 670-3880, (212) 670-3854 video phone, to the extent possible to request reasonable accommodations, such as ASL interpreters, alternate format materials, and a campus map of accessible features.

International Education Week

Get Famous

How can you have a great first semester at TC? What's something you wish you'd known before you started at TC? We asked our spectacular student volunteers for advice!

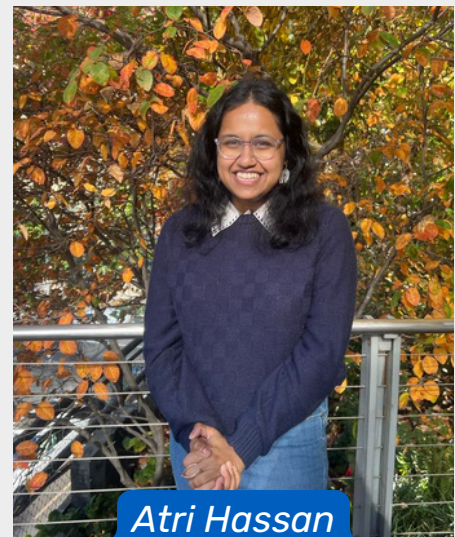


***Sharon Qian
International &
Comparative Education***

I think you'll find TC's journey exciting and transformative. Embrace connections - engage with peers, professors, and interdisciplinary discussions. Community involvement amplifies the experience. In hindsight, I'd underline the value of networking for diverse perspectives. Explore workshops for essential skills. As you embark on this TC adventure, armed with insights, a richer, more rewarding journey awaits.



Something I wish I had known before starting was that if I was nervous, so were my fellow students. Do not be afraid to talk to people, especially from other programs and departments. In my experience, everyone has been really kind and friendly and genuinely wants to get to know you. Similarly, approaching professors might be a little daunting but I have met some of the most caring people who really root for your success.

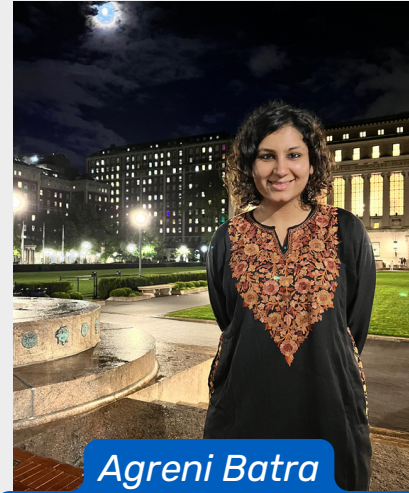


***Atri Hassan
Mental Health Counseling***

Get Famous



1. It is okay to not know some things, because nobody is expecting perfection from you. All you need to have is a willingness to learn.
2. Your unique, lived experiences are immensely valuable, however small or big they may be. Talk about them whenever and wherever you get the chance.
3. The degree is only one aspect of your life. Remember the other aspects too- health, relationships, leisure, and creative enrichment, and feed them as much as you would your academics. Don't postpone fun!



Agreni Batra
Curriculum & Teaching



Sara Michelle Pan Algarra
International & Comparative
Education



Be excited about your present and future. Being at TC is a wonderful opportunity to challenge yourself to learn and engage with different ideas, and expand your horizons. Opportunities will become available if you ask for them, be proactive in asking for what you dream of doing at TC.

Get Famous



Meru Madaan
Social-Organizational
Psychology

Coming to teacher's college is a wonderful chance, and I believe you've made it a reality. I believe that everyone starting this semester should remember to trust themselves and all of their accomplishments up to this point in order to integrate into this diverse area. Something I wish I had known before coming to TC is that every problem can be solved if you surround yourself with the right friends, professors, and company. Just knowing that there are a lot of activities going on in this city and at college at the same time and that you don't have to be everywhere. There will always be more opportunities to look forward to if you miss something.

TC has one of the most inclusive and diverse environments! Don't be afraid to speak up and offer your own opinion. Everyone here has an open heart and is willing to offer their most genuine advice.



Xi Tao
Anthropology & Education

Get Informed

Scan the QR code or click here to submit your results to compete for a small prize! Winners will be announced in the next newsletter.

New Students



Continuing Students



***Thank you for those who took the last quiz!
Please see the next page for answers.***



Get Informed

Check your answers from the last quiz: F-1

1. How long can work authorization under standard post-completion OPT (not including STEM Extension) be approved for?

Answer: 12 months per degree level, unless pre-completion OPT was used or if OPT is authorized for part-time work

2. When should you submit I-765 to USCIS (with the fee)?

Answer: Only after I obtain an I-20 with OPT recommendation from OISS

3. Where do you need to be physically in order to apply for OPT with USCIS?

Answer: Physically in the U.S.

4. When is the earliest and the latest I can apply for post-completion OPT?

Answer: The earliest is 90 days before the completion of my program; the latest is 60 days after completion of studies.

5. When can you start working under OPT?

Answer: After you receive your EAD card in the mail AND starting from the date of employment authorization as written on your card.

Get Informed

Check your answers from the last quiz: J-1

1. What is the maximum amount of time Academic Training can last?

Answer: 18 for non-stem master's students, 36 months for doctoral or STEM students

2. True or False: Academic Training may be authorized for paid or unpaid positions.

Answer: True

3. While school is in session, _____ hours or less of pre-completion Academic Training may be authorized.

Answer: 20

4. An offer of employment is required in order to apply for Academic Training.

Answer: True

5. J-1 students in the STEM programs may request for AT STEM extension for up to 36 months until 12/31/2024.

Answer: True

Get Social

Time to get out and socialize. Here's what's happening in NYC/Columbia/TC in February and March! Click the event title and host site for more info.

Yoga in McCarren Park

Sept 7, 6:30 - 7:30pm
776 Lorimer Street, Brooklyn, NY
\$20

Join One to World for a rejuvenating hour-long yoga class with a professional instructor. It's a perfect chance to unwind and loosen your muscles in the outdoors.

Casino Night in the One to World Office

307 7th Avenue
\$10
Hosted by [One to World](#)

Learn to play poker, blackjack and craps with other international students from the NYC area. Winners will get prizes - perhaps even on One to World's cruise! Light refreshments will be served.

Mid-Century Modern Walk Along 53rd Street

Sept 10, 10am - 12:30pm
Free - \$16
Hosted by [One to World](#)

Midtown Manhattan is filled with iconic modernist architecture. Guiding you through it all will be a zoning specialist for the city of New York. By the end, you'll have a new appreciation for Manhattan's buildings.

New York Mets Baseball Game

Sept 12, 7 - 9:30pm
Citi Field, 41 Seaver Wy, Queens, NY
\$25
Hosted by [One to World](#)

Baseball is one of America's favorite pastimes. One to World is bringing international students from across NYC to see the New York Mets in their home field.

Community Service: Kitchen Projects to Feed Those in Need

Sept 24, 1:30 - 4:30pm
God's Love We Deliver 166 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY
\$7

Want to give back to the local community? Volunteer in a kitchen with One to World to prepare high-quality meals for those in need.

Day Trip to Six Flags

Sept 30, 8am - 6pm

New Jersey

\$99

Hosted by [One to World](#)

Dare to ride what was voted the #1 rollercoaster in the USA in 2022? One to World is bringing international students to Six Flags, an amusement park that's perfect for thrill-seekers.

One to World Welcome Cruise

Oct 13, 6-10pm

\$35

Hosted by [One to World](#)

Welcome (back) to NYC! Start off the school year with stunning views of the city and danceable beats, organized by One to World.

Virtual Mock Interviews & Career Advice

Oct 17, 3 - 4:30pm

Zoom

Free

Hosted by [One to World](#)

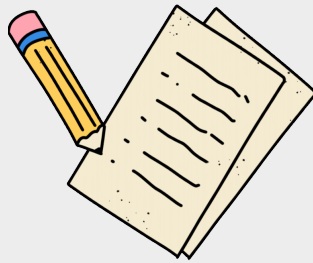
Practice your interviewing skills and ask questions to experienced professionals at Fitch Ratings, one of the big three credit rating agencies in New York & London. It's never too early to think about your career development – this event, organized by One to World, can help you get you closer to your goals.

Want to learn about more things to do?

You might want to consider checking out what's new with TC's Graduate Student Life & Development office (GSLD), One to World, and your academic department. When attending events in the NYC area, always exercise caution: pay attention to your surroundings, meet people in crowded, public places only, and be wary about giving out personal information.

Get Involved

If you have any thoughts or suggestions about what you'd like to see in this newsletter, we're all ears. Just send us an email at tcintl@tc.columbia.edu.



Nominate a classmate to Get Famous!

Know an international or internationally-minded classmate/student with an inspiring story, a great attitude, and a passion for learning and helping the world? Scan the QR code to nominate them:



Help us pick a name!

Do you have any ideas for what we should call this newsletter? Email them to tcintl@tc.columbia.edu. To show our appreciation, the winner will get a prize!

Penny for your thoughts?

What's on your mind? Share your thoughts on being a TC student by [taking our survey](#).