Understanding the U.S. Education System, FERPA, and SEVIS

Welcome!

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International Academic Advisor in the College of Biological Sciences

Sharon Ericsson
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Jeff Davis
International Academic Advisor
College of Biological Sciences--Biology Academic Success Center
1023 Sciences Lab Bldg., behind BioBrew

Jeff assists international CBS students with:
- exploration of curriculum, graduation requirements, UC Davis policies and procedures, etc. to assist in making timely degree progress
- development of realistic goals and educational plans
- information about and strategies for utilizing university resources and services
- administrative processes, such as submission of petitions

Sharon Ericsson
International Student Advisor
Global Affairs - Services for International Students and Scholars (SISS)
International Center 3rd Floor – California Ave at Russell Blvd.

Sharon assists international students with:
- initial entry documents, transfer, change educational level
- accessing Practical Training/work authorization
- helping students maintain SEVIS compliance for enrollment and status
- providing referrals to resources on campus and in the community
Today we will discuss:

• The U.S. Education System
• Academic Success
• Resources
• Advising Roles
• FERPA
• SEVIS
• SEVIS & FERPA
U.S. Educational System

• Most universities give undergraduate students a liberal education

• Most Bachelor's degree programs in the United States do not require students to write a final thesis.

• Classroom is participatory/small groups

• Informality

• Critical Thinking

• Fast-paced quarter system/time management
Academic Success at UC Davis

Participation

Attendance

Grades

Office Hours

Resources
Attendance

Lecture
Discussion Section
Lab

All Required (Not Optional)
Arrive on time
Necessary to do well on exams
What is Participation?

Non-Verbal
- Take notes during discussions and lectures
- Complete in-class writing assignments
- Actively listen to in-class discussions and lectures

Verbal
- Speak up during large group discussions
- Ask questions when you have them
- Speak up during small group discussions
Be Prepared for Office Hours

- Confirm Time/Location
- Syllabus, Homework & Reading
- List your questions
- Don’t wait until you are struggling
- Further the discussion
- Make a connection
Understanding the US Grading System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>GPA</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The grading system uses a 4.00 scale, where A is excellent, B is above average, C is average, D is the minimum passing grade, and F is fail.

Calculate your GPA: https://registrar.ucdavis.edu/records/transcripts/calculate-gpa
Academic Expectations

- **Minimum Progress**: 12 units per quarter
- **Expected Progress**
  Avg 15 units per quarter
- **GPA--Grade Point Average**
  2.00 overall - (C Average)
  2.00 per quarter - (C Average)
Academic Success Recommendations

See professor or TA during Office Hours
Tutoring—AATC/ major departments/ Residence Halls

International Academic Advisors
• Why it is important to see us and not wait
  • P/NP, PTDs, Other options

Student Health and Counseling Services—stress management
Choosing a Major

Passionate about their major!

Explore!

About 80 percent of students in the United States end up changing their major at least once, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

On average, college students change their major at least three times over the course of their college career.
Advising Network

Network of support

- Faculty Advising
- Dean's Office Advising
- SISS Services
- Peer Advising
- Major Advising
- Friends
What is FERPA?

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act

- Protects the privacy of student records.

- Students have rights over their records once they are at a university.

- Schools must have written permission from the student to release information from a student’s record that is not considered “directory” information.
Student Consent

COLLEGE OF LETTERS AND SCIENCE DEANS’ OFFICE
UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION AND ADVISING
200 SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES BUILDING
UC DAVIS CAMPUS

Release of Student Confidential Information and FERPA Acknowledgement

Name: ____________________________

SID: ____________________________

Phone Number: ____________________________

I am aware of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and I understand I have the right to discuss my academic information in private.

I authorize release of my academic records and information maintained in Undergraduate Education and Advising, College of Letters & Science Deans’ Office to:

Name: ____________________________

Relationship: ____________________________

Phone Number: ____________________________

Email Address: ____________________________

The information disclosed to this party is done so on the condition that the information will not be further disclosed without my written consent. Disclosure may occur in person, via phone or email. I understand that I, the student, need not be present. They may have access to my records:

- [ ] Today only
- [ ] One quarter only (Fall___/Winter___/Spring___)
- [ ] Permanently
- [ ] Other (__________________________)

I am aware that I may revoke this consent at any time.

__________________________
Signature

__________________________
Date

This waiver applies only to information in Undergraduate Education and Advising, College of Letters & Science Deans’ Office. Other offices on campus may require a separate form or process to release private information to a third party and/or may need a separate form at the time of each request to release information.
Directory Information

The school can release students’ information without prior approval* about the student’s:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone number
- Date and place of birth
- Honors and awards
- Dates of attendance

*Unless the student requests that no directory information is released.
Examples of non-directory information

- Class attendance
- Grades
- Dismissal
- Disciplinary action taken by the school
- Financial information
Types of questions we can answer

unless the student requests that directory information is not released

Where does my son/daughter live?

What is his/her phone number?

When did he/she start classes?
Types of questions we cannot answer without written consent

.Has my son/daughter been attending class?
.
.What are/were my son’s/daughter’s grades this/last quarter?
.
.Is my son/daughter in good or bad academic standing?
.
.Has my son/daughter paid their tuition?
Services for International Students and Scholars

Supports students with immigration issues, benefits, travel, etc.
SEVIS

SEVIS = Student & Exchange Visitor Information System.

Overseen by the Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) branch of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

Requires that schools keep records & submit periodic reports about international students.
Record keeping & reporting

Record Keeping
• Name (all changes must be reported immediately)
• Date of Birth
• Country of Birth
• Country of Citizenship
• Address in Home Country (“Foreign Address”)
• Mailing Address (Local address in US)
• Criminal Convictions (if academically related)
• Length of Study (number of months)
• Program Start Date
• Program End Date
• English proficiency
• Financial Information
• …And more…
SEVIS & FERPA

SEVIS data is exempt from FERPA

- FERPA does not apply to international student records if information is requested by the

  under the SEVIS exemption.
SEVIS Exemption

- Pre-Arrival/Arrival
- Coursework
- Student Immigration Status
Reporting Timeframes

A DHS officer may request any or all of this data on any individual student or class of students upon notice.
Visa vs. Status

**Visa**
- Entry document
- Can stay in U.S. after visa expiration
- Must be valid for re-entry in U.S.

**Status**
- Begins with entry in U.S.
- Is designated by the stamp in your passport
- Always check your stamp at the POE before leaving CBP and entering the airport

What is D/S?
Duration of Status

The document that allows you to ENTER

The stamp/document that gives you status

The document that allows you to STAY
Requesting a tourist visa support letter

- Students typically write their own letters
- For graduation, students can request a letter from commencement services
Questions?