CONTENTS

WELCOME .................................................................................................................................................. 3
WHAT IS AN “F-1 STUDENT”? ................................................................................................................... 3
CHECKLIST FOR ENTERING THE UNITED STATES AS AN F-1 STUDENT EXCHANGE VISITOR .......... 3
CHECKLIST FOR MAINTAINING F-1 STATUS ............................................................................................. 3
IMMIGRATION MATTERS ............................................................................................................................ 5
ADDRESS CHANGE ..................................................................................................................................... 6
SEVIS REGISTRATION ................................................................................................................................ 6
LENGTH OF STAY ......................................................................................................................................... 6
EXTENSION OF STATUS ............................................................................................................................... 6
ACCEPTABLE REASONS FOR REDUCED COURSE LOAD ........................................................................... 6
CHANGE OF DEGREE PROGRAM ................................................................................................................ 7
TRANSFER TO/FROM ANOTHER U.S. INSTITUTION ..................................................................................... 7
DEPARTURES FROM THE U.S. ...................................................................................................................... 8
  Leaving the USA Permanently .................................................................................................................. 8
  Leaving the USA Temporarily .................................................................................................................. 8
PREACHING IN F-1 STATUS ....................................................................................................................... 9
EMPLOYMENT IN F-1 STATUS .................................................................................................................... 9
PRACTICAL TRAINING ............................................................................................................................... 10
EMPLOYMENT IN F-2 STATUS .................................................................................................................... 11
STUDY IN F-2 STATUS ............................................................................................................................... 11
INCOME TAX REQUIREMENTS .................................................................................................................. 11
HOUSING .................................................................................................................................................... 12
HEALTH SERVICES: MEDICAL HELP .......................................................................................................... 13
HEALTH INSURANCE .................................................................................................................................. 13
BECOMING A PUBLIC CHARGE ................................................................................................................ 14
IMMUNIZATION POLICY ............................................................................................................................ 14
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (SSN) ............................................................................................................. 14
CONTACT INFORMATION ............................................................................................................................ 15
WELCOME

Welcome to Grand Rapids! We are pleased you have chosen to learn, grow and contribute to life here at Calvin Seminary. The presence of international students on our campus enriches our communal life. We value the opportunity to get to know one another, work together, and support each other in our studies. We trust that your time here will prepare you well for your future service for our Lord Jesus Christ. Be assured of our willingness to help you in any way that we can.

We have put together this packet of materials for your information. Please read it carefully. If there is something that is unclear, do not hesitate to ask any questions you may have about what’s written here—or not written here!

WHAT IS AN F-1 STUDENT?

According to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), “an F-1 student is a nonimmigrant who is pursuing a ‘full course of study’ to achieve a specific educational or professional objective, at an academic institution in the United States that has been designated by the DHS to offer courses of study to such students, and has been enrolled in SEVIS (the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System). Once the educational or professional objectives have been attained, the F-1 student is expected by the U.S. government to return to his or her residence abroad”.

CHECKLIST FOR ENTERING THE UNITED STATES AS AN F-1 STUDENT EXCHANGE VISITOR

To enter the United States as an F-1 student you need:

1. A valid (unexpired) passport with at least 6 months left before expiration.
2. Form I-20 issued by the school (Canadians must show Form I-20 at the port of entry to obtain F-1 status).
2. An F-1 visa issued by a U.S. Consulate (except for Canadians who do not need visa stamps to enter the United States).
2. Receipt that you have paid the $350 SEVIS fee.

CHECKLIST FOR MAINTAINING F-1 STATUS

To maintain status and thus be eligible for Practical Training, On-Campus Work, Off-Campus Work Permission, Program Extensions on your Form I-20, Change of Status such as F-1 to H-1, and any other benefits for F-1 status students, you must:

1. Attend the school authorized to attend on your Form I-20.
2. Follow Department of Homeland Security – Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (not only the school’s) transfer procedures to attend a new school. You can check transfer procedures at their website at www.ice.gov/sevis/f_1_transfers.htm
3. Follow extension procedures if you must remain in the U.S. past your Form I-20 completion date.

4. Follow certain Department of Homeland Security – Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services procedures to continue from one degree program to another at the same school.

5. Have a valid, unexpired passport, six months before the expiration date.

6. Have a permanent address abroad.

7. Limit authorized employment to 20 hours per week except during summer and other vacations.

8. Maintain a full-course of study:
   **M.Div., MTS, MA:** 9 credit hours per semester (except for your final semester at which time you may take only the amount of credit hours that are required for you to complete your degree.)

   **Distance M.Div.:** 7 credit hours per semester (except for your final semester at which time you may take only the amount of credit hours that are required for you to complete your degree.)

   **Th.M. for Canadian Students - 1 year program:** 21 credit hours
   **Th.M for International Students – 2 year program:** 9 credit hours in 1st year 12 credit hours in 2nd year

   **Ph.D.:** 9 credit hours per semester (3 courses per semester)
   If you are taking a class off campus at another school we need a transcript from that school for your file.

   **NOTE:** These credit hours are NOT the same as those required by the Financial Aid Office. For financial aid purposes you can spread your required hours over the two semesters and have a different number of hours each semester. For our office the Department of Homeland Security requires that you must be registered for the minimum number of hours every semester except the last semester in your program.

9. Notify Department of Homeland Security – Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (and the DSO) by completing the Form AR-11 of any change in residence or mailing address within 10 days of the change.

10. Refrain from off-campus work without authorization.

11. Have the PDSO (Principal Designated School Official) endorse the page of your I-20 before you leave the United States and re-enter. (To be absolutely sure the endorsement is recent enough, make certain it will be no more than 5 months old when you re-enter the USA.)

12. Show proof of health insurance for yourself and all members of your family for the entire time you are in the United States. **See page 13 of this resource guide for health insurance coverage requirements.**
Upon your arrival in the United States you should have received the following materials:

1. Copy of the **Form I-20**. Please keep all copies of I-20s.

2. Students (and dependents) entering the U.S. are given proof of legal non-immigrant status at the Port of Entry by a Customs and Border Protection Officer.
   - For students entering through an airport, you will be provided with a CBP (Customs and Border Protection) admission stamp on your travel document. Print a paper copy of your I-94 by going on [www.cbp.gov/I94](http://www.cbp.gov/I94) and provide a copy to the International Student Office.
   - For students entering via land border, you will be provided with a small white I-94 card stapled to your passport.

**These are important documents!** Keep them in a safe place. If you should lose them, contact the International Student Office immediately. It will be necessary to file for replacement with the Department of Homeland Security – Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (Form I-102). There is a $320 fee to replace a Form I-94.

**Within one week of your arrival, bring your I-20, I-94, passport, and visa to the International Student Office.** We will make a photocopy of your I-20, I-94, passport, and visa. We also need your address and telephone number in the Grand Rapids area for our records.

We trust that you took careful note of the statements on the Form I-20 when you signed it. Remember at all times that you agreed to comply with the terms and conditions of your admission when you entered the U.S. Some of the most important matters are:

1. You are **not permitted to work off-campus** or to engage in business unless you have received permission to do so from school officials or the Department of Homeland Security – Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services.

2. You must **maintain a passport** which is valid for a period of no less than 6 months at all times for you and all your dependents, unless you are exempt from passport requirements. To renew your passport, contact your home country **embassy**. (Note: Canadian students and their dependents are now required to have a passport.)

3. You must be a **full-time** student in the educational program to which you were admitted at Calvin Seminary - 9 credit hours per semester for M.Div., M.A., and M.T.S. students, at least 3 credit hours for Th.M. students (normally 6), and 9 credit hours per semester for Ph.D. students (audit hours are not applicable).

4. If your status changes because of reduction of course load, health, loss of financial support, or employment, report these changes immediately to the International Student Office. These changes must be entered into SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System).
ADDRESS CHANGE

You must fill out and submit an AR-11 form within ten days every time you have a change of address. You may complete this form on line at http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis under Forms or pick up a paper copy in the International Student Office.

SEVIS REGISTRATION

The International Student Office must register every international student in SEVIS every semester. Our deadline for registering you is 30 days after the program start date on your I-20 for new students and 30 days after the next session start date entered into SEVIS (the date the semester begins) for continuing students.

LENGTH OF STAY

As you will note on your Form I-94 Arrival/Departure Record and on the Forms I-20, you were not admitted for a specified length of time but for duration of status (D/S). This is the period of time it will take you as a full-time student to complete the degree program to which you were admitted. Usually, this will be the amount of time indicated on your Form I-20.

To remain “in status” during that duration of status period, a student must register and complete the number of hours of credit each semester required by the seminary catalog for your degree program. Any exceptions for students in the Th.M. program must have the Th.M. Program Adviser’s approval. Any exceptions for student in the Ph.D. program must have the Director of Doctoral Studies’ approval. Students in other master degree programs must have the approval of the Academic Program Advisor.

EXTENSION OF STATUS

If work is not completed within the designated duration of status, application may be made for “extension of status” (http://semlink.calvinseminary.edu/student-life/international-students/international-student-forms/). If application is made and approved before the expiration date, on your I-20 the extension can be granted by Calvin Seminary. If application is made after the expiration date, re-instatement by the Department of Homeland Security – Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services is required. A fee of $370 for F students is charged, several weeks or months of waiting are required, and much inconvenience is experienced. Forms are available from the International Student Office.

ACCEPTABLE REASONS FOR REDUCED COURSE LOAD

The following are acceptable reasons for reduced course load:

1. Academic reasons – course load may be reduced by the Principal Designated School Official (PDSO) up to 50% for no more than one term.
   - Initial difficulty with the English language
• Difficulty with reading requirements
• Unfamiliarity with American teaching methods
• Improper course level placement

2. Medical reasons – course load may be reduced by the PDSO with a doctor’s letter only for a maximum of 12 aggregate months per academic level program.

3. Final semester of program
Note: Reduced Course Load can be found on the website (http://semlink.calvinseminary.edu/student-life/international-students/international-student-forms).

CHANGE OF DEGREE PROGRAM

You must apply for a new Form I-20 if you continue at our school in a different academic program, for example, if you have been accepted to pursue graduate studies (Th.M. or Ph.D.) after completing the M.Div. or M.T.S. program. You will need to complete a new Declaration of Finances form and show proof of those finances. This form plus the estimated costs form is available on our website under (http://semlink.calvinseminary.edu/student-life/international-students/international-student-forms/).

Please note that the above applies to you even if the F-1 visa stamp in your passport placed there by a U.S. consular officer has a limit of, say, one year. This stamp need not be renewed because it covers entry into the U.S., not the legality of your present status. The only time this visa stamp must be re-issued is when it has expired, you leave the U.S. for a temporary absence, and you wish to re-enter to complete your studies.

TRANSFER TO/FROM ANOTHER U.S. INSTITUTION

If you have transferred to Calvin Seminary from another U.S. school, for example, another college (including Calvin College) or seminary, you must bring your current Form I-20 to the International Student Office within 15 days of your program start date in order to have the transfer registered properly in SEVIS. This is absolutely critical to ensure that everything is in order with your immigration documentation.

If you were not in full-time status at your previous college or seminary immediately prior to your registering at Calvin Seminary (ignoring the vacation period), or if you are no longer in F-1 or J-1 status for some other reason you must apply to the Department of Homeland Security – Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services for reinstatement. Form I-539 and information for this procedure are available on the USCIS web page at http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis or in the International Student Office. There is a fee of $370 involved for F students, and the school cannot guarantee that reinstatement will indeed be granted.
If at some point in the future, you wish to transfer to another U.S. school, whether that be for the same educational program you are pursuing here or for an additional program, you should consult with the International Student Office as soon as your decision is made. Please go to our website (http://semlink.calvinseminary.edu/student-life/international-students/international-student-forms/) and complete the Transfer Release Form. A release date must be entered into SEVIS in order for your SEVIS record to be transferred to your new school so they can issue you a new I-20. Before the transfer takes place we will contact your new school to make sure they are ready to receive your SEVIS record. When transferring as an F-1 student to another school, you must enroll within 5 months of “transfer out” date or end date on your current Form I-20, whichever is earlier.

**DEPARTURES FROM THE U.S.**

The termination date established by the Department of Homeland Security – Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services is the date of completion of program (which in most cases is graduation), or the expiration date on the Form I-20, whichever comes first. After the completion of program date, the student (and his/her dependents) are granted 60 days for preparation to leave the United States, or transfer to another school, or enter a new program with a new Form I-20 if you are here on an F-1. You may not leave the U.S. during this period to visit another country e.g. Canada. If you do, you will not be able to return to the USA.

### Leaving the USA Permanently

1. **Via Land**
   
   When you **leave the U.S. permanently after the completion of your studies**, students leaving via land border must surrender your I-94 card to the immigration officer.

2. **Via Airplane**
   
   Our office is required to “complete” your program in SEVIS after you have completed your studies.

### Leaving the USA Temporarily

All students (including Canadians) planning a temporary absence must present the Form I-20 to the International Student Office for endorsing signature by the PDSO (principal designated school official) in case of F-1 students before leaving the U.S. It must be endorsed to verify that you have not completed your program and will be returning. This endorsement must be done every 6 months. Non-Canadian international students from some countries who visit Canada are required to obtain a Canadian visa.

If you are leaving the U.S. by way of ground transportation for a temporary absence, (i.e. less than three weeks) **do not under any circumstances surrender your Form I-20 or Form I-94. You will need it to re-enter.** If you are entering Canada or Mexico or islands adjacent to the U.S. (except for Cuba) for a temporary stay, you need not surrender your Form I-94 Arrival/Departure Record.
If you are flying to another country, for example Korea or Nigeria, you need to take with you your I-20. To re-enter, present your I-20. You will need to provide us with a new I-94 which can be obtained from www.cbp.gov/I94.

Please note that a vacation period or a summer assignment in Canada not exceeding five months is considered a temporary absence. On the other hand, a year’s internship in Canada is not considered a temporary absence and in order to return to the U.S. to complete your program, you must request and receive a new Form I-20 from the International Student Office.

**PREACHING IN F-1 STATUS**

All preaching by Canadian and international students in CRC churches is, for legal purposes, treated as on-campus employment.

Preaching in a non-CRC church is treated as off-campus employment (and therefore not permitted without special government authorization) unless that church has a contract with the Vocational Formation Office for mandatory preaching by CTS students. Preaching in a non-CRC church with such a contract is treated as on-campus employment.

Students in F-1 status do not need authorization for preaching which is treated as on-campus employment.

Note: All preaching for which no honorarium is received is permissible.

**EMPLOYMENT IN F-1 STATUS**

Students in the U.S. on an F-1 visa are permitted to engage in the following business or official employment:

- on-campus employment – limited to 20 hours per week while school is in session;
- practical training required for the attainment of the degree, also called Curricular Practical Training (CPT) (see below);
- Optional Practical Training (OPT) directly related to the major area of study during or after the course of study authorized by the Department of Homeland Security – Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (see below);

On-campus employment for F-1 students does not need authorization. Initial entry students may begin on-campus employment no sooner than 30 days prior to start of classes. Students transferring from another school must wait until after the transfer release date and after they have reported to Calvin Seminary before beginning on-campus employment.

The economic hardship permit is only granted after an unexpected financial calamity of some kind. Application for these permits may only be made after one full academic year of studies. The appropriate forms for application are available from the International Student Office.

Note: Volunteer Work – a volunteer position must be a legitimate, advertised volunteer position.
A student on an F-1 visa may be eligible to engage in temporary employment for practical training in his or her field of study, both before and after completion of studies. To be eligible for practical training, a student must have been in F-1 status for at least one academic year. Exceptions to the nine-month requirement can be granted to students assigned to concurrent internships which require immediate participation in Curricular Practical Training (CPT).

At this time, all employers (including churches) are required by law to certify that a particular employee is eligible for employment. This means that the intern or summer student must have a Social Security card, which is valid for employment purposes. The Social Security administration will not issue such a card until it is satisfied that authorization for employment has been granted. We need to do a new I-20 showing your CPT plus a letter from our office for the Social Security office. In addition, interns and summer students need to keep an eye on tax regulations and comply with them (you may check with our Financial Services office). Failure to take note of these regulations and secure proper authorization places the churches in an awkward position.

Department of Homeland Security – Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services traditionally makes a distinction between Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and Optional Practical Training (OPT).

- **Curricular Practical Training (CPT)** is an integral part of the curriculum and is supervised training under the auspices of Calvin Seminary, which it requires of the students in order to grant the desired degree. Our internships and summer assignments (M.Div. and M.A. programs) fall into that category. CPT requests must be approved by the Vocational Formation Director and authorized by the PDSO (http://semlink.calvinseminary.edu/student-life/international-students/international-student-forms/), who prints a new Form I-20 with the authorization noted on page 3.

- **Optional Practical Training (OPT)** is chosen by the student but not required for the attainment of the degree. An example is a graduate student here for a two-year Th.M. program who decides that six months of church internship might be helpful for his own purposes and makes the appropriate arrangements to that end, either during or after the program. Since the seminary does not require such training in the Th.M. program, the Department of Homeland Security – Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services regards it as optional training for which specific authorization must be obtained from them.

Students desiring to apply for OPT must apply to the Department of Homeland Security – Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services for an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) by completing Form I-765. There is a fee of $410. Contact the International Student Office. You will need to make application at least three months before your intended start date if your OPT will be during your summer vacation, if it is part-time while school is in session, or after completion of graduate course requirements, excluding a thesis or dissertation. Only full-time OPT is allowed after completion of your course of study. You may complete and send in your application any time 90 days or less before your program end date and up to 60 days after your program end date. We recommend that you apply at the beginning of the semester in which you will complete your program.
Students may not start working until after they have received their EAD card and may only have a job that is related to their degree program.

**New regulation regarding unemployment while on OPT**
While students are on OPT they may have up to 90 days of unemployment. As soon as the student finds a job or changes jobs, the name and address of their employer must be entered into SEVIS. As long as the name of the employer remains blank in SEVIS the 90 days of unemployment keep adding up. If a student exceeds the 90 days of unemployment they are considered to have violated their status and must return to their home country.

While on OPT students are also responsible for reporting name and address changes to the PDSO. They must complete and send in an AR-11 form with their new information. This information must also be entered into SEVIS.

Authorization to engage in OPT employment is automatically terminated when the student transfers to another school or begins study at another educational level. The maximum OPT authorization is 12 months for each educational level.

### EMPLOYMENT IN F-2 STATUS

Student dependents (spouses, children) on an F-2 visa are **not** allowed to engage in business or accept official employment of any kind.

### STUDY IN F-2 STATUS

Student dependents on an F-2 visa are permitted to enroll in less than a full course of study (i.e., part-time) at an SEVP – certified school in any course of study.

### INCOME TAX REQUIREMENTS

If you have questions in this complicated area, you should seek the assistance of the Seminary Financial Services Office.

1. **All students here on a visa must file Form 8843 with the IRS for each calendar year.** Students who do not have U.S. income must file by June 15th. Students who have U.S. income (this includes taxable scholarships) must file this form with their income tax return by April 15th.

2. **Know if your country has a tax treaty with the U.S. Ask Financial Services or look online.** Some countries have tax treaties with the U.S. which exempt either a limited amount of income or income for a certain period of time. You should determine whether you have exempt income before you start receiving pay.

3. **Even if your income is exempt, you must still file a tax return (Form 1040NR).**
Students who either earn income (WORK) or have income from scholarships may have an obligation to pay tax in the U.S. Ask Financial Services for assistance before you complete any tax forms. If you are working on campus, or doing practical training or optional practical training, your employer will have to withhold tax from your pay as you receive it. There are several taxing entities and types of tax. Tax may be due to the federal, state, and local governments on income. Financial Services will assist you in completing the required forms. In general, international students who have been in the United States 5 years or less are exempt from public insurance (Social Security and MediCare or FICA) tax, but not from income tax.

4. **You must have either a Social Security Number (SSN) or a Federal Taxpayer Identification number (TIN) if you either work or receive a scholarship.** Each of your family members will need this, too, if you are from Canada, India, Japan, Korea, or Mexico and you plan to claim them on your United States tax return. (You may file for TIN's with your tax return.) Students who receive income from scholarship grants during a school year are subject to taxation on the amount of the scholarship which exceeds what the student paid for tuition and textbooks in that tax (calendar) year unless exempted by tax treaty. The Financial Services Office is required by law to withhold tax from the scholarship funds disbursed and your account will be reduced by an amount estimated to be the tax liability for the taxable amount of the scholarship. Students receiving scholarships for more than the amount of tuition and books might recover some or all of the amount which the Financial Services Office has withheld for tax.

5. **For those with scholarships, be certain to keep a record of your book purchases and charitable contributions made by cash or check—especially those made to our Idema Food Pantry.** It is, of course, necessary to file an income tax return to receive a refund of tax withheld. For students from a country that does not have a tax treaty exempting scholarships, it is very important that you keep sales receipts for the textbooks and supplies which you purchased for the school year as the Seminary will not have a record of your purchases and they are deductible and will reduce your potential tax obligation.

6. **It is essential that people who receive scholarships file an income tax return in the U.S.** The Financial Services Office will have an accurate record of your tuition payments and will issue a form (Form 1042S) to you in the Spring showing the amount of scholarship over tuition for the previous calendar year, which is the taxable amount.

7. **The Government Documents section of the library (or online) has forms.** All income tax forms, copies of the rules and policies pertaining to international students, as well as copies of relevant income tax treaties with other countries, are available in the Government Documents section.

---

### HOUSING

Housing is the responsibility of the student. At present Calvin Seminary has 104 student apartments available, 42 on the East Campus and the remainder approximately three miles from campus. All inquiries and applications for seminary apartments are made through the manager for student housing, Tim Bruinsma’s email address at semhousing@calvinseminary.edu. The housing application deadline is April 1.
Grand Rapids offers a wide variety of reasonably priced housing that is readily available. Our manager for student housing has a current list of possible accommodations and is quite willing to help you find a suitable place off-campus. The email address for your reference is semhousing@calvinseminary.edu, and the phone number is (616)957-8618.

### HEALTH SERVICES: MEDICAL HELP

For “regular” medical attention, which is not in the nature of an emergency, students are encouraged to find a local general practitioner who can be their family doctor. Check the “Student Guide to Grand Rapids”, for a list of doctors.

In case of emergencies while in Grand Rapids, avoid the use of hospital emergency facilities if at all possible. There are a number of medical centers in the city which are normally open from 8 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. One such center is the American Family Care Urgent Care (see [https://www.afcurgentcare.com/](https://www.afcurgentcare.com/)) east of Kalamazoo Ave. and 28th St. SE, located at 1740 28th St. SE, Grand Rapids MI 49508. These centers offer efficient emergency service at a much lower cost than hospital service. Of course, if this option is not available to you for some reason, you may have to make use of hospitals anyway. Canadian students covered by OHIP or another similar provincially regulated health plan may also find that certain hospitals combine billing for hospital and doctor’s fees, so that it becomes financially advantageous to use a hospital emergency room.

In cases of extreme emergency you may call the following numbers:

- On Campus: 33333 from one of the campus phones;
- Off Campus: 911 from any telephone, including pay phones

Be sure to give your exact location and the nature of the emergency. In an emergency, try to have someone stand outside the building to assist the emergency services staff to find the exact location.

### HEALTH INSURANCE

Calvin Theological Seminary requires all residential international students with an F-1 visa to have proof of adequate health insurance coverage for themselves and their dependents. For a distance (non-residential) student with an F-1 visa, while there is no requirement for US health insurance while in the US, it is strongly encouraged.

At a minimum, your insurance coverage should include:

- 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 exchange visitor to his or her home country in the amount of $10,000; and
- a deductible not to exceed $500 per accident or illness

International Student Insurance (ISI) is providing us a group plan. Information on the plan can be found [here](#). We especially encourage you to watch the “US Healthcare System Video” on the information page. This will be a hard waiver plan, which means that all international students will be enrolled in this
plan, with the insurance cost included in your student account, unless you have proof of insurance that satisfies the requirements noted above. **If you choose not to use the ISI insurance plan, we must have proof of your alternate insurance plan.**

**Note: Students are responsible for all medical expenses incurred while a student at Calvin Seminary.**

### BECOMING A PUBLIC CHARGE

For students with F-1 nonimmigrant status public health benefits such as Medicaid, Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), or the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) do not qualify as primary insurance coverage. A requirement for obtaining and maintaining F-1 status is that the students are able to provide shelter, food, clothing, and health care for themselves and their dependents. The acceptance of public health benefits can be interpreted as a declaration that the student is not able to meet his or her financial obligations (becomes a public charge) and therefore can jeopardize his or her status as a nonimmigrant student.

### IMMUNIZATION POLICY

The following immunizations are strongly recommended for all Calvin Seminary students and their dependents:

- Infant Series DPT (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus)
- Tetanus booster (within the last 10 years)
- Polio Series
- 2 MMR’s (measles, mumps, rubella)
- Hepatitis B Series (series of 3 shots)
- Chicken pox (anyone older than 12 who has not had chicken pox needs 2 doses of varicella vaccine; anyone younger than 12 who has not had chicken pox needs 1 dose)
- TB Skin Test
- Not as urgent, but also recommended are:
  - Meningitis Vaccine
  - Flu Shot

Students or dependents who have immunization deficiencies should get the needed immunizations preferably before they come to Calvin Seminary, and if that is not possible, as soon as possible after they arrive. Please check the Kent County Health Department website for information: [https://www.accesskent.com/Health/Immunizations/default.htm](https://www.accesskent.com/Health/Immunizations/default.htm).

### SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (SSN)

In order to apply for a Social Security Number (SSN) you must have a job on campus and be registered in SEVIS. (Please check the Social Security website [http://www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber/](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber/))

**We cannot register you in SEVIS until you are officially registered as a student at Calvin Seminary.** You can then in person to the Office of the Social Security Administration, 3045 Knapp St. NE Grand Rapids MI 49525, phone 877-319-5710. You will need to bring the following documents with you when you apply at 3045 Knapp Street location:
A completed Form SS-5, Application for a Social Security Card (you can download this form on line from the Social Security web site at http://www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber/ss5.htm

Your SEVIS Form I-20 showing your entry stamp

Form I-94

At least two documents that establish your age and identity including a passport and one additional document establishing identity (please check the web site for other forms of identity that are acceptable)

Proof of on-campus employment authorization which includes a letter on Calvin Theological Seminary letterhead (please ask Jim Lakin, Plant Director and Sarah Chun, Dean of International Student and Scholar Services) to include the following:
  o identity of student employee
  o nature of job the student is, or will be, engaged in
  o anticipated or actual employment start date
  o number of hours the student is expected to work
  o employer identification number (EIN)
  o employer contact information, including the telephone number and the name of the student’s immediate supervisor
  o original signature and signatory’s title
  o date
  o a student who will receive or who is receiving a fellowship or assistantship in exchange for teaching or other services may present his or her letter of award or acceptance, if it outlines the stipulations of the work portion of the fellowship or assistantship.

This letter must be signed by Sarah Chun and your employer here at Calvin Seminary.

Note: You may only apply for a SSN during the 30 days before the employment start date on your letter.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Again, please feel free to speak to anyone in the Dean of Students and the International Student Office, or anyone else in our community about any matters you do not understand, feel uneasy about, or are not happy with. We are here to help you as much as we possibly can.

It is very important that you communicate your situation to someone so that the Body of Christ might function and serve as it should. Please do not suffer in silence.

If you have questions or concerns about visas and legal matters, housing, scholarships and financial matters, travel, arrival and airport pickup, employment, “host” family arrangements, social events or adjustment problems, you should contact those listed below.
• Recruitment/ Initial Contact/Admission Process
  Aaron Einfeld, Admissions Director

• Registration Process/Academic Counseling
  Joan Beelen, Registrar

• Immigration Matters/I-20s
  Ms. Sarah Chun, Dean of International Student and Scholar Services

• Applications for Optional & Curricular Practical Training/Work Permits
  Ms. Sarah Chun, Dean of International Student and Scholar Services

• Practical Training (Internships, Formation Groups)
  Rev. Geoff Vandermolen, Director of Vocational Formation
  Chris Wright, Administrative Coordinator of Vocational Formation

• Health Insurance and Immunization
  Rev. Jeff Sajdak, Dean of Students

• Personal Support, Counseling
  Rev. Jeff Sajdak, Dean of Students
  Ms. Sarah Chun, Dean of International Student and Scholar Services
  Joan Beelen, Associate Dean of Academic Services

• Scholarship Funding and International Student Funding
  Jennifer Settergren, Director of Financial Aid