Am I allowed to use stocks, bonds and/or mutual funds as financial support?

OIE will count stocks, bonds and/or mutual funds at 50% of the current value. Submit an original statement dated less than six months from the date of submission clearly indicating the name of the account holder and the current value.

A sponsor may offer their salary at 50% of the annual salary. Submit an original letter on official company letterhead, addressed to Carnegie Mellon University, clearly indicating the name of the employee and the annual salary.

Retirement accounts, life insurance policies, and Chartered Accountant statements are not acceptable. Real estate or personal property, or the intended sale of real estate or personal property, are not acceptable.

My wife/child(ren) will come a while after I start school. Should I request the I-20/DS-2019 for them now?

This is your personal decision. If you choose to request the I-20/DS-2019 now, you will simply include: 1) their data on the ISI form, 2) copy of picture page of passport, 3) supporting financial documentation. You would receive the I-20/DS-2019 along with your I-20/DS-2019 and apply for the visa as a family.

If you choose to wait until you arrive to request the I-20/DS-2019, you will simply come to OIE, complete a request form and furnish: 1) copy of picture page of passport and 2) supporting financial documentation. You would then send the I-20/DS-2019 to your family member and they will apply for the visa independently.

NOTE: You cannot add dependents once your I-20/DS-2019 has been processed but you have not entered the U.S.

My name on my passport is not the name I used on my application. Is that a problem? The I-20/DS-2019 will be issued using your name as it appears on your passport, not the application.

The Department of Homeland Security requires that the name on the I-20/DS-2019 must match the name on the passport. Therefore, OIE will issue the I-20DS-2019 to match the name exactly as it is noted on the passport.

Most Americans have (and U.S. databases assume) a first name (given) and a last name (family name.) Because of naming traditions in the U.S., it is convenient for international students to have names which follow this same pattern, i.e. John Smith where John is the first/given name and the last name/family name is Smith. OIE is aware, however, that naming traditions vary around the world.

Some students make the choice to update the passport name to a more American/Western format, i.e. first/given name and last/family name. This decision belongs with the student and his/her family. However, changing the name in the passport now will alleviate complications after arriving in the U.S. Most government and state agencies require a surname and given name

when applying benefits such as a Social Security Number (SSN) or Pennsylvania driver's license.

If the passport name is updated, a copy should be sent to OIE to support the I-20/DS-2019 issuance or re-issuance.

The start date on my I-20/DS-2019 is July 30, 2012. When can I arrive?

A student in F-1 or J-1 visa status is permitted to enter the U.S. thirty (30) days prior to the start date on the I-20/DS-2019. If you will not be able to arrive by the start date on your I-20/DS/2019 you should contact both, your department as well as OIE.

I am currently a flex-time student but I want to change to full time and F status. How do I do this? Am I eligible for off-campus work?

To make the change from flex time to full time, you first have to have the permission of the Tepper School. OIE can help you file a change of status to F-1. You should call OIE at 412.268.5231 to schedule a phone appointment with an OIE advisor (**or we could put my name) to discuss the steps to get an I-20 Certificate of Eligibility and how to use this I-20 to either file a change of status with immigration or travel and reenter after getting an F-1 visa stamp abroad. Note: filing a change of status with immigration will not result in the issuance of an F-1 visa – that would have to be obtained after the next trip abroad. Change of status information can be found on the OIE website at:

http://www.studentaffairs.cmu.edu/oie/forstu/pdf/change-status.pdf

Students who change from flex to full time may be eligible for off-campus work after completing 2 full semesters of full-time studies.

I am in the process of adjusting to permanent resident. Do I need an I-20?

Probably not – changing to F-1 status could have a negative impact on the permanent resident application. OIE would strongly advise you to consult with the immigration attorney who filed the adjustment of status to get good counsel on the matter.

I attended another institution in the US and applied for OPT at the Master's level. Can I use OPT after completing the MBA/MSCF at Tepper in this case?

No. Per the F-1 regulations (8 C.F.R. § 214.2 (f)(10)): "A student may be authorized 12 months of practical training, and becomes eligible for another 12 months of practical training when he or she changes to a higher educational level." Therefore, if you already used OPT at the same educational level or higher, you would not be eligible for another period of OPT. It is important to note that if you applied for 12 months of OPT at the Master's level but only "used" 6 months because of a change to a different immigration status, immigration considers you to have used all 12 months.

I applied for my F-1 visa at a US Embassy and the consular officer told me my application is undergoing "administrative processing." Can CMU help speed this up?

No. Administrative processing – or a security clearance – is a delay that CMU cannot help expedite. The processing is considered to be an issue of US national security. OIE encourages you to contact our office and inform us of the delay so we can be aware of your situation. The consulate will inform you when the visa is ready.

I haven't received my I-20 yet. Can I make my visa appointment and book my flight?

No. Because of visa delays and circumstances that may be beyond anyone's control, OIE strongly recommends that you wait until you have your I-20 before you make a visa appointment and travel plans.