

Maintaining F-1 Status

As an F-1 student you were admitted to the U.S. for 'duration-status' (D/S is found on the white I-94 card in your passport). This means you are permitted to stay in the U.S for as long as you maintain your status by fulfilling the requirements of being an F-1 Student. Keep in mind that there is an important difference between an F-1 visa and F-1 status. The visa is a stamp or sticker placed in your passport by a U.S. embassy or consulate and is granted for *entry purposes only*. F-1 status is granted when you enter the U.S. and is regulated by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). **Even if your visa is valid, you can lose your legal F-1 student status if you do not continue to comply with immigration laws regulating your stay in the U.S.** Keeping the following regulations is extremely important. Penalties for voiding student regulations vary from (1) applying for reinstatement, (2) voluntarily leaving the U.S., (3) deportation.

Overview of Government Regulations You Must Follow in Order to Maintain Your Legal Status

1. Maintain a valid passport at all times, unless exempt from passport requirements.
Do you understand this rule? Yes____ No____
2. Attend the university that the USCIS has authorized you to attend.
Do you understand this rule? Yes____ No____
3. Complete an official Immigration transfer whenever you change educational institutions. An immigration transfer must be completed within 30 days of the beginning of classes of your first semester at the new school. Please note: An immigration transfer is a totally separate process from transferring academic credit from another school. An immigration transfer is not complete until a Designated School Official (DSO or International Student Advisor) endorses your I-20.
Do you understand this rule? Yes____ No____
4. Complete a full course of study during the fall and spring semesters (12 hours per semester for undergraduates; 9 hours for all graduate students). You are not required by USCIS to enroll in classes during the summer session, unless summer is the first semester in the U.S.; however, check with your department to see if they have any requirements for the summer. If you believe that you need to drop a course, make an appointment with an International Student Advisor **BEFORE you drop the course.**
Do you understand this rule? Yes____ No____
5. Apply for an extension if you cannot complete your degree by the ending date indicated on your I-20.
Do you understand this rule? Yes____ No____

6. Obtain a new I-20 whenever you make a change in degree levels. This would include changing from language studies to a bachelor's degree, from a bachelor's to a master's, from master's to a doctorate, from Optional Practical Training Program to a new degree, from one level of degree to one on the same level (master's to a second master's), etc.
Do you understand this rule? Yes_____ No_____
7. Work off-campus only if you have first received authorization from an International Student Advisor or USCIS. On-campus work does not require authorization, but you must maintain your full-time student status, or your work on-campus will become illegal. *Please note: If you work illegally, you must leave the country or face deportation. You cannot be reinstated. On campus work is limited to part-time (20 hours or less per week) during the fall and spring semesters. It may be full-time (more than 20 hours) during the summer and official school breaks.*
Do you understand this rule? Yes_____ No_____
8. Request travel endorsement on the back of your I-20 from the Office of International Student Services 2 weeks prior to scheduled departure from the U.S. if you wish to re-enter the U.S.
Do you understand this rule? Yes_____ No_____
9. Report a change of address to the Office of International Student Services within 7 days of the change.
Do you understand this rule? Yes_____ No_____

"I have read the above statements about maintaining my F-1 status in the U.S. and realize that it is my responsibility to understand and follow the regulations pertaining to my legal status in the U.S."

Name [print please] _____

Signature_____ Date_____

Local Address_____

