Maintaining Student Status for F-1 Visa Holders

International Students are accountable for maintaining their ‘student status’ and knowing their responsibilities. Students who fail to do so may be subject to immediate deportation and may have difficulty getting a visa to enter the U.S. in the future. Students are encouraged to read page 2 of their I-20.

STUDENTS MAY FALL OUT OF STATUS BY:

- Failure to report to the International Student Advisors within the first 15 days of each semester, so that records in SEVIS can be updated to show enrollment
- When first entering the U.S. with a new I-20, attending a school other than the one named on the I-20 and visa
- Taking less than a full course load without prior authorization (12 units minimum for undergraduates and 8 units minimum for graduates)
- Not making normal progress towards program completion/graduation
- Failure to apply for an extension before the program end date on the I-20 (item # 5), if the program is not completed
- Failure to apply for change of level or transfer of schools
- Exceeding the grace periods for presence in the United States: arriving more than 30 days before the program start date, or staying longer than 60 days after program completion or completion of OPT, or 15 days after authorized early withdrawal
- Failure to report a change of address to the International Student Advisors within 10 days
- Conviction for certain criminal activities
- Failure to follow any special Department of Homeland Security requirements such as Special Registration
- Working on campus for more than 20 hours a week during the school term
- Working off campus for more hours than authorized
- Failure to report company name and address, or any periods of unemployment to the International Student Advisors during OPT
- Exceeding 90 days, in total, of unemployment during OPT (or 120 days if granted a STEM extension)
- Working without authorization

REGAINING STUDENT STATUS

There are two options for regaining student status: applying for reinstatement or entering the U.S. with a new I-20. It is essential to discuss the requirements and consequences of these two options with an International Student Advisor as soon as possible.

Updated: 10/25/11