

Maintaining Valid F-1 Status



Role & Responsibilities of International Students

Status is the purpose for which you entered the United States. In the case of F-1 students, the purpose is to pursue a full-time program in a given discipline. As such, international students are required by federal regulations to comply with certain rules. Due to recent changes in immigration regulations, it has become critical for students under the F-1 status to remain lawful in the U.S. Failure to do so could jeopardize your ability to successfully complete your studies and attain your academic goals. All international students must comply with the following:

- **MAINTAIN FULL-TIME ENROLLMENT:** International students are required to register and complete full-time study every required semester. Graduate students must check with their academic advisor/registrar for full-time requirements in their program. Undergraduate students are required to enroll for at least 12 credits. Students who will not be enrolled full-time during a particular semester must obtain authorization from International Services in advance. **You must complete the form "Deviation from the Full-Time Study Requirements" prior to registering for less than full-time or prior to dropping a course.**
- **KEEP THE FORM I-20 VALID:** It is the students' responsibility to make sure that the I-20 is valid for the duration of the program. If you are unable to complete your studies by the expiration date indicated on your form I-20, you are required to apply for the extension of program **prior** to its expiration date. You should submit your application at least 30 days before the I-20 expires so that the process can be completed in a timely manner.
- **KEEP YOUR PASSPORT VALID:** It is your responsibility to make sure that your passport is kept current. If you need to extend your passport, you must contact your country's [consulate](#) in New York.
- **NOTIFY INTERNATIONAL SERVICES OF ANY CHANGES TO THE FORM I-20:** You are required by USCIS regulations to inform International Services of any changes to your I-20 **prior** to the changes taking effect. These changes include: change in major, change in degree level and legal change in name. You will need to apply for a new SEVIS I-20 form at the time these changes take effect.
- **NOTIFY INTERNATIONAL SERVICES OF CHANGES IN NAME AND ADDRESS:** Students are required to notify International Services of any legal changes in name and address **within 10 days of the change taking place**. The address provided must be the physical location where the student resides. If the student is unable to receive mail at the physical location, the student must provide both a mailing address and a physical address.
- **ALWAYS INFORM INTERNATIONAL SERVICES OF ANY TRAVEL PLANS:** If you plan on traveling outside the U.S. you will need a travel endorsement on your I-20 form in order to re-enter the country under the F-1 status. If you have an expired visa, you will have to apply for a new one at the U.S. consulate/embassy in the country you will be visiting. For a listing of [consulates](#) abroad.
- **NEVER ACCEPT EMPLOYMENT WITHOUT CONSULTING INTERNATIONAL SERVICES:** Before you can accept employment in the U.S. you are required to first obtain authorization from International Services or the USCIS. Working without authorization from the DHS is a deportable offense.
- **TRANSFER STUDENTS MUST PROCESS THEIR FORM I-20 WITHIN 15 DAYS FROM THE BEGINNING OF CLASSES:** If you are coming to UMDNJ from another U.S. institution you must notify International Services immediately so that we can process your I-20 correctly.

- **YOU HAVE 60 DAYS FROM YOUR TIME OF COMPLETION TO NOTIFY THE USCIS OF YOUR PLANS:** The USCIS allows you a 60 day grace period from the time you complete your studies to be admitted into a new program, change your non-immigrant status or depart the U.S.

- **ALWAYS TALK TO INTERNATIONAL SERVICES FIRST ABOUT YOUR IMMIGRATION STATUS:** During your stay in the U.S. you will hear a lot of rumors concerning immigration from your peers. Before making any assumptions regarding your immigration status, you should always visit International Services first. The best way is to call and make an appointment in advance so that we can serve you better.