



## Office of International Student Services

### Compliance Form: Maintaining Your F-1 Student Status

Helpful website about your status: ***StudyintheStates.dhs.gov*** (Search “Students”)

Please read the following carefully and sign at the end.

It is critical that international students in F-1 status understand how to maintain their legal status in the United State. While we are a resource, **you are ultimately responsible for maintaining your status as a student studying in the U.S.**

Students must be aware of and comply fully with the following requirements set forth by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the U. S. Department of State (DOS.)

- **You must maintain a valid passport at all times.**
- **You must have a valid U.S. visa stamp in order to re-enter the United States.** There is an exception if you are using the automatic revalidation of visa benefit for travel to Canada, Mexico, and/or adjacent islands for less than 30 days. Not all students are eligible for this benefit.
- **You must have a valid I-94 record when in the U.S.** Print a copy of this after you enter the U.S. each time. Send a copy of it to [international@ncwu.edu](mailto:international@ncwu.edu) for your file.  
You can access your most recent I-94 record at [www.cbp.gov/i94](http://www.cbp.gov/i94) (or Google I-94 official website. Click on “Most Recent.” Add your passport information EXACTLY as it is listed.)
- **You must have a valid travel signature from a Designated School Official (DSO) to re-enter the U.S.**
  - o The travel signature is located on page 2 on the Form I-20.
  - o A travel signature is valid for ONE YEAR from the original signature date. We recommend you get a signature if it will expire over your break— regardless of whether you plan to leave the USA or not.
  - o Travel signature requests are processed by the department of International Student Services (ISS.) There are designated days for I-20 signing each semester.
- **You must attend the college DHS has authorized you to attend.**

This is the school that is listed on your current Form I-20. You must complete an official SEVIS record transfer whenever you change educational institutions. This must be coordinated between your current and your new educational institution. There is a transfer process.

- **You must obtain a new Form I-20 for changes to your academic program.**
  - o Changing Your Primary Major – ISS will create your new Form I-20 upon program change when you notify them. All updates should be reported to the Dept of ISS within 10 days of any changes.
  - o Changing Your Degree Level. You must receive a new I-20 prior to starting a new degree level.
- **You must complete a full course of study during normal enrollment periods.** Full time is defined as:
  - o 12 credits per semester for undergraduate students.
  - o You may only apply three credits of “distance learning” (entirely online) courses toward full time enrollment.
  - o There are a few exceptions for full time enrollment, but you must receive ISS authorization in advance. (Reduced Course Load or Medical.)
- **You must be making normal progress toward completing your degree.** (What your major says on your I-20 should be what type of classes you are taking.) Normal progress = attending class, completing assignments, passing grades, etc.
- **If you are unable to graduate on time or on the date that is stated on your I-20, you must apply for an extension of your program prior to the end date on your Form I-20.**

Extension requests should be submitted 30 to 60 days prior to the expiration date of the Form I-20 and will only be approved if you cannot complete your program by the program end date. Extension request form is on F-1 Team Files.
- **Your 60-day grace period begins at the end of your academic program.**

If you complete your program before the end date of your Form I-20, ISS will shorten your end date.

  - o F-1 students have a 60-day maximum amount of stay in the U.S. (after your graduation date if you are not participating in OPT or graduate school.)
  - o No work is allowed during this time unless you have employment authorization; this time should be spent preparing to depart the United States if you are not applying for an immigration benefit such as Optional Practical Training (OPT) or earning another degree—such as Graduate School.
  - o If you academically withdraw or fail to maintain status, you need to schedule an appointment with the NCWU Dept of ISS as soon as possible. ISS can give you guidance on your consequences for failing to maintain your status and possibly refer you to an immigration specialist who can best serve you.
- **On-Campus Employment**
  - o F-1 students are allowed to work on-campus up to 20 hours per week (depending on the department’s allotted hours) when school is in session. There is a limit to the number of hours students may work on-campus

during official academic school breaks. Discuss this with the department that hires you.

- On-campus employment eligibility ends if you complete or withdraw from your academic program.

- **You are NOT allowed to work off-campus in the United States without authorization.**

Off-campus employment requires permission in advance and must meet certain conditions in order to be authorized. (For example: CPT, OPT, and Economic Hardship)

- **You must report any change of address and/or any change of name within 10 days of the change.**

- Change of address is done by ISS.
  - Change of name is done through the Registrar's Office. ISS will then electronically notify DHS of the changes and print a new form I-20 document.
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I have read the information above about maintaining my legal status in the United States and understand that I must comply fully with these regulations in order to remain in legal status.

I understand I will need to meet with an International Student Services DSO for international advising to further understand regulations for F-1 students.

Name: (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please scan a photo copy of both pages of your visa and your Most Recent I-94. Send them to [international@ncwu.edu](mailto:international@ncwu.edu).