

Maintaining Your F-1 Student Status

Under U.S. law, you are fully responsible for abiding by the rules governing your F-1 student status. As Designated School Officials (DSO's), we will try to help you understand these rules but you are required to follow the ***Requirements and Responsibilities*** of F-1 Student Status as explained below.

REQUIREMENTS OF F-1 STATUS:

Designated School Officials (DSO's) are required to report to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in SEVIS when an F-1 student is not maintaining status.

1. Always be a full time student.

Enroll for and complete a full course of study (***12 credits for undergraduate students, 9-12 credits for graduate students depending on the course of study***) every Fall and Spring term.

2. Maintain the minimum “in class” course load.

There is no maximum of online courses F-1 students can take. There is a minimum of “in class” credits an F-1 student must take. F-1 undergraduate students must take at least 9 credits per semester that is not fully online. F-1 graduate students must take at least 6 credits per semester that is not fully online.

COVID-19 Update- Students with F-1 status can be maintain their status as long as they are full time. New incoming F-1 students from their home country must have one hybrid or in person course in order to qualify for the F-1 visa. You must have at least on hybrid or in-person class in order to maintain your status.

3. Obtain permission to be less than full time before you drop, withdraw or stop attending.

If you do not believe you will be able to be full time for any reason, contact the DSO ***before*** you drop, withdraw or stop attending class. There are a few limited exceptions to the full time requirement for which you might qualify if you obtain permission from a DSO in advance.

4. Only work as authorized.

F-1 students may work on-campus at any campus with CUNY up to 20 hours per week when school is in session and more than 20 hours a week during official school breaks. In order to work off campus, you must get permission from the DSO and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). ***Never work without authorization.***

5. Make sure your program’s completion date and your major on your Form I-20 is accurate.

Your program completion date on your Form I-20 must always be correct. If you do not think you will be able to complete your program by the completion date on your Form I-20, you must apply for a program extension ***before the completion date expires*** and get an updated Form I-20.

If you expect to complete your program earlier than the I-20's program completion date, you must get an updated Form I-20 with the correct program completion date ***before you complete your program.***

If you declare or change your major, please contact ISS. Your I-20 will only reflect the major on

CUNYFirst.

6. Obtain a SEVIS transfer to attend another U.S. school.

If you plan to attend another U.S. school, college or university, you must notify the DSO and be “Transferred Out” in SEVIS before the end date on your I-20.

7. Obtain a change of education level I-20 to begin a new program of study.

If you have been admitted to a new program of study at Brooklyn College, you must obtain a new Form I-20 for your new program **before you complete your current program of study**. You will be required to complete the I-20 application and provide new financial documentation.

8. Depart the U.S. within 60 days of your program completion date or Optional Practical Training end date.

If you have completed your program of study, you must depart the U.S. within 60 days. Likewise, if you have completed your Optional Practical Training after completion of your studies and have no further plans to study, you must depart the U.S. within 60 days of your EAD’s (Employment Authorization Document) end date.

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES OF F-1 STUDENTS

1. Keep your passport valid at all times.

You must have a valid passport at all times. If your passport will expire, contact your country’s embassy or consulate in the United States to renew it.

2. Report any address or name change to the DSO within 10 days of making the change.

3. Get an updated Form I-20 when any of its information changes.

Notify the DSO if there are any changes in the information on your Form I-20 such as name, citizenship, degree level, major, or funding, and get an updated Form I-20.

4. Get a travel endorsement on your Form I-20 every semester to return to the U.S.

When you want to travel outside the U.S., you need a travel endorsement from the DSO for the current term to reenter. Be sure to submit your request at least two weeks in advance of your trip.

5. Meet with a DSO at least once per semester.

It is recommended that you meet with a DSO at least once per semester in order to review your current status and provide you with any helpful information as an F-1 student.

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F-1 International Student Web Site
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