

## **Extension of I-20 Program**

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Office of International Programs, 1908 Avenue J, Box 2150, Huntsville, TX 77341-2150

Fax: (936) 294-4620 – Email: oip@shsu.edu

*Nonimmigrant F-1 students are permitted to remain in the United State for the time necessary to complete their educational objective(s). The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) imposes certain limits on the length of time you may be enrolled in a program of study. You have been admitted to the United States for "duration of status." DHS grants duration of status to F-1 students by entering the notation "D/S" on both the "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status" (Form I-20) and on the "Admission/Departure Record" (Form I-94).*

Duration of status (D/S) is defined as:

- The time during which you are pursuing a full course of study and making normal progress toward completing that course.
- The time you may be working in authorized "practical training" after you complete studies (if you qualify and are so authorized).
- 60 days to depart the country.

The "completion of studies" date in Item #5 on the most recent Form I-20 you were issued is the date by which the DHS expects you to complete requirements for your current program. If you are unable to complete your program of study by that date, you must apply for an extension. F-1 students advancing to a new degree program at another academic level are also required to apply for an extension of stay. You may apply for an extension of your study program if:

- You have not yet exceeded the expected completion of studies date in Item #5 on your I-20 (expiration date).
- You have continuously maintained lawful F-1 status.
- The delay in completing program requirements has been caused by compelling academic reasons such as change in major field or research topic. Unexpected requirements that are caused by academic probation or suspension are not acceptable reasons for extension of a program of study.

**To apply for an extension, you must submit a completed "Academic Advisor's Recommendation Form for F-1 or J-1 Student Program Extension" (next page) at the time of your appointment.**

It should include the following:

- (a) a recommendation for an extension of your study program.
- (b) the new date when you are expected to complete your studies.
- (c) the reasons for the delay in completion of your program requirements.

A new Form I-20 will be prepared for you with a new, extended completion date. You will need to sign this form. You must keep this new document and all previous I-20's you have been issued and submit them to (a) an immigration officer when you travel outside the United States or apply for any future immigration benefits or (b) your International Office advisor when you apply for benefits which involve processing by that advisor.

It is your responsibility to comply with all regulations applying to F-1 students, including the extension of study program regulations discussed in this handout. If the completion of studies date on your I-20 will soon expire or if it has expired, contract an International Office Advisor immediately. If you fail to comply with your responsibilities, you may lose the benefits provided to F-1 students. For example, you may not be eligible to continue any type of employment (even on campus employment through a scholarship, fellowship, or assistantship) or to apply for school transfer, practical training, or other F-1 benefits. If your completion of studies date has expired or if you do not meet the eligibility requirements to apply for program extension, you may need to apply for "reinstatement" to lawful F-1 status or exit the country.

