

## Extension of F-1 Student Status

### Overview

U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) requires that you finish your program of study by the completion date on your I-20. The end date on the I-20 (Item #5) is established by the admissions office to reflect the average length of time it should take a student to complete the degree requirements. If, during the course of your studies it becomes necessary to extend your I-20, the International Center can provide I-20 extensions to those who are eligible and apply in a timely fashion.

### Eligibility Criteria

In order to obtain a program extension, you must show that you have continually maintained status and that the extension is needed for compelling academic or medical reasons, such as a change of major or research topic, unexpected research problems, or a documented illness. Delays in completing your program caused by academic probation or suspension are not acceptable reasons for program extension approval [**8 CFR § 214.2 (f) (7) (iii)**].

Extension of stay can be granted only for documented academic or medical reasons. You may be eligible for an I-20 extension if the following criteria are met:

1. The delay was caused by documented academic or medical circumstances,
2. You have sufficient financial resources to fund your studies and living expenses, and
3. The extension is requested in a timely manner, with sufficient time for processing before the current expiration

**If your program end date (I-20, section #5) has expired or you do not meet the eligibility requirements to apply for a program extension, it will be necessary to file for reinstatement to F-1 status with USCIS, for which you will have to pay a substantial fee.** In addition, failure to apply for an extension of stay in a timely manner is a violation of F-1 regulations, which can carry heavy penalties.

The following are not valid reasons for I-20 extensions:

- To enroll in extra courses or repeat the same course for personal interest or to improve one's GPA
- To engage in research on or off-campus
- To finish pending coursework for an incomplete grade
- To engage in non-required Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

- To enroll in course work delayed by participation in non-required CPT

An I-20 which has already passed the program end date cannot be extended.

## Documentation Needed

The following documents must be completed and submitted to an International Center Advisor:

[I-20 Request Form for Extension to Complete Program Requirements](#) [1], [Academic/Faculty Advisor Recommendation Form for I-20 Extensions](#) [2], and [Financial Resources Statement for Issuance of Form I-20 with supporting financial documents](#) [3].

## How to Request an Extension

First, meet with your academic advisor or graduate program coordinator to obtain his/her recommendation. Once you have prepared all of the extension request materials, you must submit them in person to an international student advisor during our walk-in advising hours, Monday through Friday, 1pm to 4pm, no appointment is required. Or, you may call 734-647-0658 to schedule a morning appointment. We strongly recommend that you submit the extension request at least 1-2 months prior to the expiration of your current I-20 form.

Be sure to keep this new I-20 and all previous I-20 forms that you have been issued. They must be submitted upon request to an immigration officer when you travel outside the U.S., for future immigration petitions and applications or to the International Center when applying for any benefits of F-1 status.

**NOTE:** *If you are participating in a dual degree program you will need to submit advisor recommendation forms from each program's advisor or graduate coordinator.*

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**Source URL:** <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students/f1-students/extension>

### Links

[1] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/sites/default/files/forms/I20extend.pdf>

[2] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/sites/default/files/forms/I20-DS2019advisor-ext.pdf>

[3] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/sites/default/files/forms/I20-DS2019state-finance.pdf>