

PROGRAM EXTENSION FOR F-1 STUDENTS
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

What is a program extension?

A program extension is the process of obtaining a new I-20 (for F-1 students) to extend a student's authorized period of stay in the United States. A program extension is appropriate when a student is unable to complete the original study before the expiration date on the current I-20.

Who is eligible for a program extension?

You are eligible for a program extension if you (1) have been enrolled full time throughout your period of studies (12 credits for undergrad and 6 for graduate or have an OISS Part-Time Enrollment Authorization Form on file for each applicable semester), (2) have otherwise maintained your immigration status, and (3) the additional time is needed for *academic* or *medical* reasons. Student's academic advisor must state that the delay is caused by compelling academic or medical reasons, such as changes of major or research topics, unexpected research problems, or documented illnesses.

Who is not eligible for program extension?

You are not eligible for an extension if you have been dismissed from the university. If you have been dismissed, you may want to discuss your options with an OISS advisor. Nor are you eligible if you have ever been enrolled less than full-time and do not have a completed RCL Form on file with the OISS. **Nor are you eligible if you have completed all terms of your program of study and simply wish to delay your graduation date simply because you want to remain in the U.S. longer.** Nor are you eligible if you are out of status with the U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) in any way.

When should I seek a program extension?

The regulations require F students to obtain extensions *before the expiration date on their current I-20*. You should apply and visit the OISS approximately 4 to 6 weeks prior to your I-20 expiration date. Students who fail to obtain the extension *before* the I-20 expires are considered "out of status" and must seek reinstatement. Reinstatement can require a long processing period, during which time a student cannot legally be employed, even on campus. *Reinstatement may be difficult to obtain, even for simple reasons like "forgetting" that your I-20 expired.*

What are the consequences of failure to obtain a program extension?

If you forget the deadline and apply late, you will be "out of status". If you are employed and overlook the date, you WILL be working "illegally" and may begin accruing "unlawful presence." Such mistakes will jeopardize prospects for obtaining employment authorization, extensions of stay, and obtaining permanent resident status. They could even lead to being banned from entering the United States.

What is the procedure for obtaining a program extension?

1. **Get your academic advisor's approval.** At least one month before your I-20 expires (and preferably earlier than that), ask your academic advisor or department chair to complete an "Academic Advisor's Recommendation for Program Extension," a copy of which is included in this packet. Bring the form with you to your appointment with the OISS advisor (see next step).
2. **Make an appointment to see an OISS advisor.** After you have your academic advisor's approval, contact the OISS at 857-6474 to make an appointment with an OISS advisor.
3. **Bring to your appointment a completed "Request for Program Extension form."** Also bring the completed academic advisor's approval form. Before the appointment please check the following:
 - You must provide updated documentation (issued within last 6 months) of your financial support, such as a bank statement or offer letter for a graduate assistantship, so please bring this information with you.
 - If you have been enrolled for less than full time (12 credit hours for undergraduates or 6 credit hours for graduate students) you need to have your academic advisor complete and sign the "RCL Form." **This form must be completed for each semester for which you have been enrolled less than full time.**

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES, Grossley Hall-Room 115
DELAWARE STATE UNIVERSITY
1200 North Dupont Highway, Dover, DE 19901
Phone: 302-857-6474/Fax: 302-857-6567

STUDENT REQUEST FOR PROGRAM EXTENSION

This form is provided for your convenience and is designed to facilitate the communication of information required by U.S. immigration regulations for students who will not complete their studies within the “normal” time frame for their level of study.

If you have any questions regarding the regulations or the completion of this form, please do not hesitate to call us at cmoore@desu.edu (please include your complete name and D# in the email)

SECTION I

TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT

Family Name _____ First Name _____

Address: _____
City State Zip code

Email: _____ D#: _____ Date: _____

What is the completed studies date on your current I-20? _____.

Financial Support: *Check all that apply. A new I-20 will not be issued without current financial evidence.*

- Graduate Assistantship Amount: \$ _____ (Must provide copy of offer letter from department stating salary)
- Personal Funds Amount: \$ _____ (Must provide copy of most recent bank statement.)
- Family Funds Amount: \$ _____ (Must provide documentation of family funding no more than 6 months old.)
- Other Sources of Funding Amount: \$ _____ (Must provide documentation no more than 6 months old.)

TOTAL AMOUNT: \$ _____ the total amount MUST match the total anticipated tuition/expenses listed on the I-20.

Do you have any dependents currently in F-2 status? Yes No

(This form must be attached to the **Academic Advisor’s Recommendation for Program Extension**)

SECTION II

TO BE COMPLETED BY ACADEMIC ADVISOR OR DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSON

ACADEMIC ADVISOR'S RECOMMENDATION FOR PROGRAM EXTENSION

(This form will be returned to the student if the below information in NOT completed)

1. The student is engaged in the following course of study:

Student's Name: _____ D# _____

Major: _____ Undergraduate/Graduate (Please circle one)

Number of Credits Earned To Date: _____ Total Required for Degree _____

New Anticipated Graduation Date: _____
Month/Year

2. The student has not yet completed the course of study due to:

- Delay caused by a change in area of specialization
- Delay caused by a change in research topic
- Delay caused by unexpected research difficulties
- Delay caused by lost credits upon transfer to DSU
- No unusual delay, original completion estimate not reasonable for average student in this program
- Other (Please explain in detailed complete sentences)

3. I am aware that the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services does not allow program extensions due to delays caused by financial difficulties, failure to find employment, academic probation/suspension, or **simply because the student wishes to remain in the U.S. for a longer period of time.** I recommend that the student be granted additional time to complete the course of study.

Academic Advisor's (or Chair's) Signature

Date

Phone No.

Academic Advisor's (or Chair's) Name Printed

E-mail Address