

MAINTAINING F-1 STATUS

Under United States immigration law, it is your personal responsibility to maintain lawful F-1 student status. Begin by reading the "Instructions to Students" on page two of your I-20. By following those instructions, as well as the guidelines listed below, you should be able to maintain lawful F-1 student status with little difficulty. You must maintain lawful student status if you wish to enjoy the benefits associated with it, such as on-campus employment, practical training, and the ability to re-enter the United States when you travel. A violation of status may result in termination of your SEVIS record.

If you follow the guidelines listed below, you should be able to maintain F-1 student status.

Keep an unexpired passport valid for at least 6 months into the future.

Contact your country's nearest consulate or embassy in Washington D.C. (<http://www.embassy.org/embassies/>) for instructions if you need to extend your passport while in the United States.

Notify the International Student Advisor of your physical address (hint: you can't live in a campus mailbox or post office box) upon arrival during your check-in meeting and within 10 days any time you change addresses. Failing to maintain a current physical address with UAA is a violation of F-1 status.

Maintain full-time enrollment and make **normal academic progress**

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) regulations require that you register during the University's published registration period. Failure to do this will result in violation of your F-1 status. You are expected to maintain full-time registration (12 credits each Fall and Spring semester for undergraduates and 9 credits for graduate students). Normal academic progress, in part, is defined as NOT having a semester GPA of less than 2.0 for two consecutive semesters.

Obtain PRIOR authorization from the International Student Advisor (if eligible) BEFORE dropping below a full course of study, withdrawing from classes, or taking a leave of absence.

There are very limited exceptions to the full-time requirement, so you must consult the International Student Advisor before any drop below full-time, or you will be in violation of your status and your SEVIS record will be terminated.

If you leave the United States without completing your program of study, complete your program early or change to another non-immigrant status, you must notify the International Student Advisor so that your record in the SEVIS database accurately reflects your current situation.

Do not accept any off-campus employment without written permission from the International Students Office, and, if necessary, authorization from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

Working without proper authorization is considered by the DHS as the most serious violation of its regulations. If you refer to your I-94 card, you will see the statement, "Warning: a nonimmigrant who accepts unauthorized employment is subject to deportation."

It is most important, therefore, that you consult with the International Student Advisor before you accept an offer of employment or begin to work. We will advise you whether it is possible for you to work and assist you with the appropriate procedures. It is illegal to begin to work while waiting for authorization; you must have the appropriate authorization first. Students in F-1 status are allowed to work on-campus for the University for a maximum of 20 hours per week during the academic year (unlimited during vacation periods).

Make timely transfers of your F-1 supervision if you change schools.

DHS regulations specify that you must use the Certificate of Eligibility (I-20) issued by the school you are attending (or plan to attend) when entering the U.S. Consequently, make sure that you use UAA's Certificate of Eligibility. You are required to report to the International Student Advisor shortly after your arrival and no later than the beginning of the semester. For information on transfer procedures, see our instructions on <http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/iss>.

Obtain extensions, as needed, of your permission to stay in the U.S. before your I-20 expires.

If you have valid academic or health reasons for requiring more time to complete your program

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you must request a program extension through the International Student Advisor. Contact the International Student Advisor as soon as you know that you will need an extension and at least 30 days before the completion date noted on your I-20 in order to have enough time to obtain any necessary documents. In most cases, an e-mail will be required from your Academic Advisor explaining the academic reasons for an extension.

If you require an extension because you will be starting a new program at UAA (for example, if you are moving from a bachelor's degree to a master's degree program), you must apply for a new I-20 to begin a new program within 60 days of the completion of the first program. Contact the International Student Advisor for more information.

Once you have completed your studies and any practical training that is authorized, you must leave the U.S. or change to another immigration status within the appropriate time allowed.

This means that you are allowed to stay for the period of time to complete a program of study plus practical training and a grace period. Those in F-1 status have a 60 day grace period in which to depart the US or change to another status.

If applicable, comply with all Special Registration Procedures for Certain Foreign Nationals

Since September 11, 2002, certain non-immigrants are required to be fingerprinted and photographed at U.S. ports of entry and to make physical appearances to the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) office at specified intervals during their stay in the United States.

Currently, the published registration rule applies without exception to nationals or citizens of Iran, Iraq, Libya, Syria and Sudan. This list is subject to change at any time, and registration may be required of any non-immigrants of any nationality who are deemed by a consular officer or inspections officer to

If you undergo Special Registration when you arrive, failure to comply with ongoing requirements has severe consequences. Requirements are described at

www.ice.gov/doclib/pi/specialregistration/WalkawayMaterial.pdf.

You are urged to contact the International Student Advisor if you have any questions.

Shannon Foster (907)834-1632