

Reportable Events/Maintaining F-1 Status

Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS)
Eastern Illinois University

To maintain your legal status in the United States as an F1 student, you must remember these important requirements:

1. Report to OISS no more than 30 days after start date of I-20

It is REQUIRED that you come to the International Students and Scholars Office no more than 30 days after the start date of your I-20 (listed in Item 5 of your I-20). Bring your passport, your I-20 and your I-94 card with you to 1170 Blair Hall.

2. Always Enroll Full Time

F-1 students must maintain full-time student status every semester. For undergraduate students, full-time is at least 12 credits each semester; as a graduate student, full-time is at least 9 credits each semester. There are some rare exceptions to this regulation however, please talk to a Designated School Official BEFORE you drop below full time enrollment or take a leave of absence.

**** F-1 student regulations allow enrollment in one online course per semester.****

3. Update your Local Address with the Immigration Service within 10 days of moving

You must do this by notifying OISS. You are required to use a physical residential address and not a PO Box or EIU department address. The Change of Address form can be found at <http://www.eiu.edu/internl/machform/view.php?id=8>

4. Keep your Immigration Documents VALID and CURRENT

You should make photocopies of your immigration documents and keep the copies and originals in a safe place

- * the passport pages with your personal information and picture
- * the passport page containing the U.S. visa stamp
- * both sides of your I-94 Form
- * your I-20, pages 1-3

a) Keep your passport valid

You should keep your passport valid while you are studying in the U.S. Consult your country's consulate or embassy in the U.S. to renew your passport. You can find the contact information for your consulate at: <http://travel.state.gov>.

b) F-1 Extension

The end date of your immigration status is written on your I-20 as the "completion of studies" date, in item #5 (not the end date of your visa stamp). * If you need more time to complete your course of study, you must apply for an extension **BEFORE** the I-20 completion date. If you do not complete the extension before that date, you will be out of status. Pick up an F-1 Program Extension packet from OISS to begin the process.

c) Change of Degree Program or Level

If you are changing degree levels or programs within Eastern Illinois University, you must apply at OISS for a new I-20.

5. Discuss Transfer Plans with an OISS advisor

If you plan to transfer to another school, OISS will need to complete the immigration transfer procedure. Discuss your plans at OISS.

6. Notify OISS of a new degree program no later than 60 days after graduating

If you plan to go on to another program of study after graduating from EIU, either at EIU or at another school, you **MUST** contact OISS and complete the appropriate immigration procedures **NO LATER THAN 60 DAYS** after graduating from the first degree.

7. Never Work Off-campus Without Prior Authorization

Employment opportunities for international students in the U.S. are restricted by law and fall into types of employment:

On-campus Employment: Enrolled F-1 students are permitted to work on campus for 20 hours per week during academic year and 40 hours per week during summer and winter breaks.

Off-campus Employment: Off-campus employment is any type of work or services performed in exchange for money, tuition, fees, books, supplies, room, food or any other benefit that is not on the EIU campus. A work permit is required **BEFORE** any off-campus work is allowed. See the staff in OISS for advice and assistance.

8. Notify OISS When You Leave the U.S. or Change Visa Status

When you finish your program and leave the U.S. permanently or you change to another visa status (for instance if an employer plans to do an H1B visa application for you after you graduate or finish your OPT), come to OISS or email us to notify us of your plans.

9. Traveling outside of the United States/Re-entering the U.S. after a Temporary Absence

To re-enter the U.S., you need to have the following documents:

- valid passport (except Canadians unless entering from outside the Western Hemisphere)
- valid F-1 or F-2 visa stamp (except Canadians)
- current I-20 with a valid travel signature (see I-20 Endorsement)
- proof of financial support (bank statements and/or scholarship, financial aid or TA/RA letter)
- proof of enrollment (certificate of enrollment or transcript).