

# TERMS FOR NONIMMIGRATION IN THE U.S

Common terms and topics for international students. Review and learn important terms and topics. If you have any questions please contact your International Advisor in the International Student Services Office.

## NONIMMIGRANT VISA

- Your **NONIMMIGRANT VISA** is a stamp in your passport that is like an application to enter the U.S. for a temporary period of time. Each type of visa has a letter and a number. Holders of different visas have different reasons for entering the U.S.
  - F-1** visas for full-time study in academic or language programs
  - J-1** visas for full-time study or exchange researcher
  - B-1/B-2** visas for visiting and tourism
- A U.S. embassy or consulate in your country is the only place you can get a new visa.
  - You cannot get a new visa inside the United States
- USCIS or U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services** is a U.S. government agency that makes and enforces rules for nonimmigrants.

## DS-2019

- DS-2019** is the Certificate of Eligibility for J-1 status. A signed DS-2019 is like a signed contract; it is an agreement among three parties: you, the school, and the U.S. Government. When there is any change, you need a new DS-2019. Contact the International Student Services Office if your situation changes.

## I-20

- I-20** is the Certificate of Eligibility for F-1 status. A signed I-20 is like a signed contract; it is an agreement among three parties: you, the school, and the U.S. Government. When there is any change, you need a new I-20. Contact the International Student Services Office for a new I-20 if your situation changes.

## I-94

- An electric **I-94** card will be available for you to print once you enter the country. You will also receive an annotated stamp in your passport. This website is where you can print your card:  
<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home>.

## STATUS

- Your **STATUS** is your specific purpose for being in the country. Your status is decided by the immigration officer who examines your documents at the port of entry. Visa and status are usually the same, an F-1 visa is usually the same as F-1 status. You may apply to USCIS for a new status (but NOT for a new visa). If you are approved for a CHANGE OF STATUS, the new status will be in effect only for the period of time you remain in the U.S. It will be canceled when you leave.

## DURATION OF STATUS (D/S)

- D/S** means **DURATION OF STATUS**. F-1 and J-1 students have D/S (instead of a final day) on their I-94 record. D/S means you can legally remain in the US as long as you follow the rules to remain "in status".

## IN STATUS

- IN STATUS** means you maintain a valid passport, attend the school which you are authorized to attend, pursue a full course of study, and you are not engaged in unauthorized employment.
- F-1 and J-1 visa holders are **REQUIRED** to be enrolled in **FULL TIME** study to be in status. Full-time study means that you are:
  - Undergraduate student: you maintain at least 12 credit hours per term
  - Graduate student: you maintain at least 9 credit hours per term

## OUT OF STATUS

- OUT OF STATUS** means that you have broken the rules of your status. **YOUR VISA WILL BE CANCELED: YOU WILL NOT BE ELIGIBLE FOR "BENEFITS" FROM USCIS** (for example, transfer from one school to another in the U.S, practical training, etc.).

#### EXCEPTIONS TO FULL COURSE OF STUDY

• **EXCEPTIONS TO FULL COURSE OF STUDY** are annual vacation, medical problem, teaching or research assistantship, full-time practical training, etc. Please contact your International Student Advisor for more details of full course of study regulations before registration.

#### PROGRAM EXTENSION

• You are admitted to the US for "duration of status" (D/S) and must complete your academic program by the completion date on the I-20 or apply for a program extension. **PROGRAM EXTENSIONS can be given to people who have maintained status and whose completion dates have been delayed due to academic or medical reasons.** Academic delays include: change in major field of study, change in research topic, unexpected research problems, lost credits upon transfer to school. You must see an International Student Advisor to apply for a program extension 30 days prior to the completion date on the I-20 or DS-2019.

#### REINSTATEMENT APPLICATION

• **REINSTATEMENT APPLICATION** is an explanation of why you broke the rules of your status. If UCSIS accepts your explanation and approves your application, you may be returned to status (or "in status") again. If USCIS denies your application, you will be told to leave the U.S.

#### TRAVEL AND RE-ENTRY TO THE U.S.

• Before you temporarily leave the US, you must see your International Student Advisor to ensure that you have sufficient documents to **RE-ENTER THE U.S.** You must be sure that you have: a **valid** passport, **valid** entry visa, **valid** I-20 or DS-2019, and **current** proof of financial support.

## TOPICS FOR NONIMMIGRATION

#### ACADEMIC TRAINING

• If you are a J-1 Student, you are eligible for **ACADEMIC TRAINING**. Please see your International Student Advisor for more details and procedures.

#### CHANGE OF EDUCATION LEVEL, DEGREE, OR MAJOR

• You can **CHANGE YOUR DEGREE OR MAJOR** but remain at the same school. For example if you began in Intensive English Program then progress to an academic program or graduate program, you must inform your International Student Advisor.

#### ON CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT

• You are **ELIGIBLE TO WORK** for FHSU only if you maintain your status. You can work no more than 20 hours per week while school is in session and you may work full-time during vacation periods.

#### CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING (CPT)

• F-1 visa students are eligible to apply for employment (i.e. internship, apprenticeship, etc.) which is a requirement of the field of study curriculum. Students must be enrolled full time for at least nine consecutive months prior to application and maintain status. Employment **MUST** be related to the major field of study with a course associated. Students must be enrolled in associated course during **CPT**. Intensive English Program students are **NOT** eligible for **CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING**. Workshops to further explain the **CPT** process and requirements are held throughout the semester or contact the International Student Services Office for further details and requirements.

#### OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)

• F-1 visa students are eligible for **OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)** if you have maintained your status, were enrolled as a full-time student for at least nine consecutive months, and will be completing your field of study. **OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)** is defined as temporary employment in your field of study for the purpose of gaining practical experience. **OPT** eligibility is for a maximum of only 12 months. Workshops to further explain the **OPT** process and requirements are held throughout the semester or contact the International Student Services Office for further details and requirements.