

# Visas, I-20s, Passports, Program Extensions, and Overstays

Created by Tammy Silver, Senior International Student Advisor

A pair of golden scales of justice is centered in the background of the slide, set against a dark brown gradient.

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## Important Vocabulary

- Visa
- I-94 Card
- Passport
- I-20
- Change of Status
- Duration of Status
- Full Course of Study
- Program Extension
- Grace Period
- Overstay
- 3/10 Rule

A pair of golden scales of justice is centered in the background of the slide, set against a dark brown gradient.

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### What is the purpose of the visa?

- The visa gives a non-immigrant the opportunity to present him or herself to an inspecting officer at a port-of-entry (POE) of the United States, but does not guarantee entry to the United States.
- The purpose of a visa is **TO ENTER** a country. It is **NOT** necessary **TO STAY** in a country.

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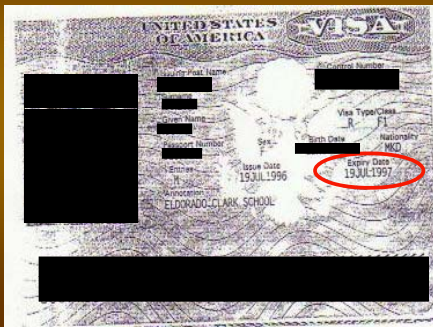
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True or False. The Visa date in the passport must be valid at all times while F-1 students are in the United States.



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### Answer: False

- The visa date in the passport does not have to be valid the entire time that the student is in the United States.
- Why? Because the purpose of a visa is **TO ENTER** a country. It is **NOT** necessary **TO STAY** in a country.

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## What is the purpose of the I-94?

1. It shows the length of legal stay in the United States
2. It shows the student's status, change of status (COS), or extension of status (EOS)
3. It provides an "Admission/Departure" number for the purpose of tracking – knowing when the person is in or out of the country

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**Warning** - A nonimmigrant who accepts unauthorized employment is subject to deportation.

**Important** - Retain this permit in your possession; you *must* surrender it when you leave the U.S. Failure to do so may delay your entry into the U.S. in the future. You are authorized to stay in the U.S. only until the date written on this form. To remain past this date, without permission from immigration authorities, is a violation of the law.

**Surrender this permit when you leave the U.S.:**

- By sea or air, to the transportation line;
- Across the Canadian border, to a Canadian Official;
- Across the Mexican border, to a U.S. Official.

Students planning to reenter the U.S. within 30 days to return to the same school, see **Departure** on page 2 of Form I-94 prior to surrendering this permit.

**Record of Changes**

**EOS GRANTED**  
**PL#: OCT X-5 2007 LVG 84835**

**OCT X-5 2007**      **MAR 18 2002**

**Port: Extension of Status**      **Processing Date**

**Date:**

**Carrier:**

**Flight #/Ship Name:**

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## Duration of Status (D/S)

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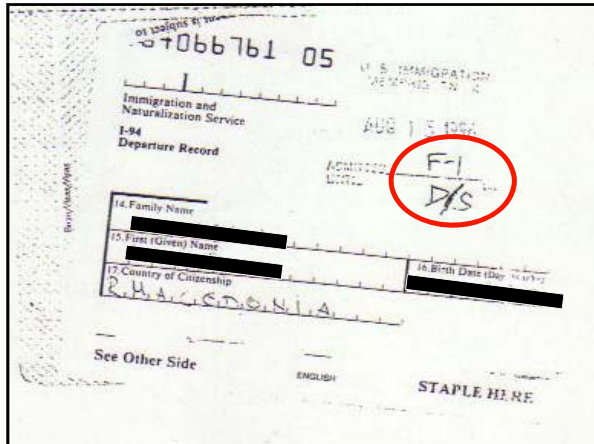
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### Duration of Status (D/S)

The amount of time an F-1 student can stay in the US

D/S is defined as the time that an F-1 student is pursuing a full course of study at an approved educational institution.

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### A Full Course of Study

- **Must** lead to the attainment of a specific educational professional objective.
- Requires at least 12 credit hours or units of instruction per academic term.
- **Must physically attend at least 9 credits each spring and fall semesters, although the other classes may be on-line.**

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If F-1 students can stay for D/S, or duration of status, how do we know what that expiration date is?

- It's located on the I-20

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### I-20

Remember to keep your I-20 current. If you stay in the United States beyond this date, you will be out of status, and you may have trouble obtaining a future visa.

The image shows a sample I-20 form. A red circle highlights the 'Duration of Status' field in section 4, which contains the date '09/30/2024'. A red arrow points from the text on the left to this field.

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### Other important facts

#### about your I-20

##### Your Major:

If you change your major, you must fill out a "change of major form" and a "document request form" and obtain a new I-20 with the correct major

##### Remarks:

You must observe the remarks in the "Remark" section

##### Signature:

You must sign, print, & date every I-20

The image shows another sample I-20 form. Two red circles highlight the 'Duration of Status' field (containing '09/30/2024') and the 'Signature' field. A red arrow points from the text on the left to the signature field.

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What must all international students have done to their I-20 before leaving the country if they wish to return as a full time student in F-1 status?

- Get their I-20 signed by a DSO (Designated School Official)
- DSOs at CSN:  
Tammy Silver, Mari Estrada, Scott Naus, Aster Yehdego, Stacey Vanada, Jeff Buchwald, Peggy Guiberson

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**Page 3 of the I-20**

Work authorizations listed here

All other authorizations listed here

Travel signature here.

*Travel signature is valid for one year*

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**Notice to Students Who Have Any Other Type of Visa & Made a Change of Status**

■ If you leave the United States for ANY reason, you must go to the US Embassy in your country to get an F-1 visa before you will be allow to re-enter in F-1 student status

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Where do you go to change or extend your visa?



You must go to an American Embassy in your home country

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What documents do you need to change or extend your visa?



- A valid I-20 from the school you are currently attending
- A valid passport
- Registration documentation for the current or upcoming semester (better if it's paid for and you have the receipt)
- A letter of support from a counselor in our office
- A valid reason for requesting the change or extension

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How many months should your passport be valid in the United States?

- At least 6 months

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## Where do you go to extend your passport?

- Your country's embassy or consulate in the United States (Washington D.C., Los Angeles, or San Francisco)

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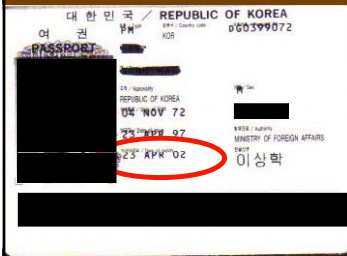
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## How to extend your passport



At least 6 months before the expiration date of your passport, contact your nearest embassy or consulate. You can obtain information on the web at:

<http://www.state.gov/s/cpr/rls/fco/index.htm>

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## How to extend your passport

- Once you have gone to the website:  
<http://www.state.gov/s/cpr/rls/fco/index.htm>

Find your country and look for visa/passport information. You might want to call the embassy or consulate office first just to be sure you know exactly what to do or mail to receive your passport extension

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A Program Extension means  
Extending your I-20

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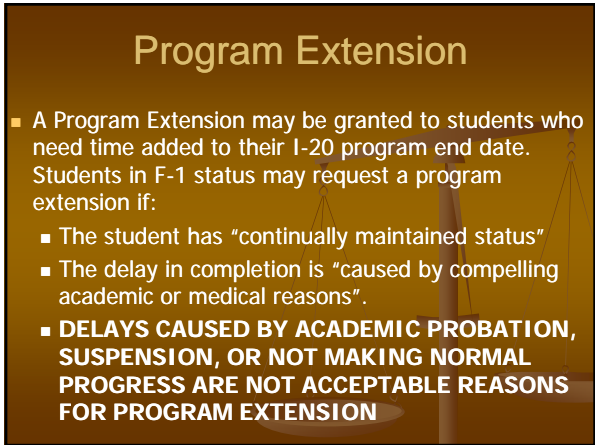
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### Program Extension

- A Program Extension may be granted to students who need time added to their I-20 program end date. Students in F-1 status may request a program extension if:
  - The student has “continually maintained status”
  - The delay in completion is “caused by compelling academic or medical reasons”.
  - **DELAYS CAUSED BY ACADEMIC PROBATION, SUSPENSION, OR NOT MAKING NORMAL PROGRESS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE REASONS FOR PROGRAM EXTENSION**

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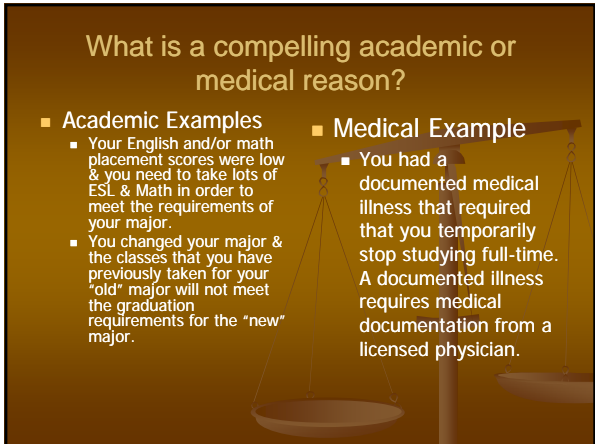
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### What is a compelling academic or medical reason?

- **Academic Examples**
  - Your English and/or math placement scores were low & you need to take lots of ESL & Math in order to meet the requirements of your major.
  - You changed your major & the classes that you have previously taken for your “old” major will not meet the graduation requirements for the “new” major.
- **Medical Example**
  - You had a documented medical illness that required that you temporarily stop studying full-time. A documented illness requires medical documentation from a licensed physician.

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### How to apply for a program extension

- Make an appointment with an advisor in the International Center.



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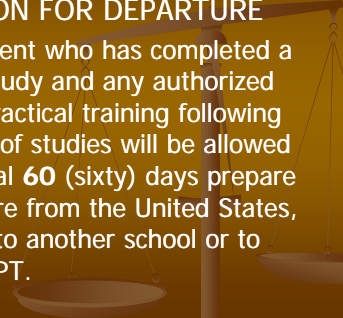
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### Leaving the Country & Grace Periods

- **PREPARATION FOR DEPARTURE**
  - An F-1 student who has completed a course of study and any authorized period of practical training following completion of studies will be allowed an additional **60** (sixty) days prepare for departure from the United States, to transfer to another school or to apply for OPT.



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### Leaving the Country & Grace Periods

- **AUTHORIZED EARLY WITHDRAWAL**
  - An F-1 student authorized by the DSO to withdraw from classes will be allowed a 15 day period for departure from the United States.



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## Overstays

- This is called an “**overstay**” when you stay in the United States longer than you are authorized.

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## If You Overstay Your Status

- You will have violated your status if you overstay.
- The 3/10 Rule:
  - If unlawfully present in the United States for a period of **more than 180 days but less than 1 year**, you may not be able to receive another visa for **3 years** after the date of departure from the United States, or
  - If unlawfully present in the United States for **one year or more**, you may not be able to receive another visa for **10 years** after the date of departure from the United States.

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Document	Purpose	Expiration Dates
Passport	A government issued document that enables a citizen of a particular country to travel abroad, subject to visa requirements, certifying identity & citizenship: it entitles the bearer to the protection of his or her country & that of countries visited.	Pass port must be valid while in the United States & is recommended that it be valid for at least 6 months.
I-20	Gives legal authorization for the student to attend that particular institution for the time specified on the document.	Field 5 designates the expected program completion date.
Visa	Enables the student to present him/herself & supporting documents to an INS officer at a port of entry (POE) in order to be granted status	Students may lawfully remain in the US with an expired visa, but must renew the visa, in the home country, if s/he leaves & intends to reenter as an F-1 student
I-94	Grants status, shows date of entry	Show specific date for some visa categories or D/S for students & scholars

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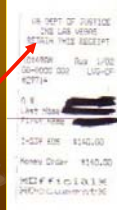
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## A Good Idea!!!

- The documents we have been discussing are VERY important documents in your life as an F-1 student in the United States. We suggest that you photocopy your:
  - Passport expiration page
  - Visa page of passport
  - I-94 card, front & back
  - All I-20 pages
  - Any receipts from the USCIS




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## Homework Checklist

- My Passport will expire \_\_\_\_\_
- My Visa will expire \_\_\_\_\_
- My I-20 will expire \_\_\_\_\_

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