

***CONTINUATION OF STUDIES*** - Students moving from one level of education to another must obtain an I-20 form for the new degree program from the Admissions office. ***This must be accomplished within 15 days of registering.***

***DURATION OF STATUS "D/S"*** - The term "D/S" (which appears on a student's I-94 and I-20) refers to the period of time during which the student is pursuing a full course of study or working on authorized practical training following completion of studies. The student is considered to be maintaining status if he or she is making normal progress toward completing a full-time program of study. Not completing the course of study from the school that issued the I-20 is a violation of status, unless the student obtains proper approval from the INS (IMMIGRATION & NATIONALIZATION SERVICE).

Full-time student status must always be maintained. The only exceptions to these rules are: documented health reasons, circumstances within the University that are beyond the control of the student, or if a student is completing degree requirements in the last term.

***EXTENSION OF STAY*** - If the completion date on the I-20 is not adequate to finish a student's degree program or practical training program, an Extension of Stay must be filed with the Admissions office during the 30-day period before the end date listed on the student's I-20.

***F-1 VISA/J-1 VISA*** - An F-1 or J-1 Visa is a certificate issued by the United States Consulate or Embassy granting foreign national's legal permission to enter the United States for academic purposes. A multi-colored stamp in your passport represents this.

It is very important to be aware that, immigration officials at any United States port of entry can deny entry to any foreign national with a valid Visa issued by the United States Embassy. The Visa may be issued for single or multiple entries up to the date indicated. A single entry visa must be renewed by an American consulate abroad to re-enter the United States. If you travel to Canada or Mexico for less than 30 days, you do not need to obtain a new Visa to return to the United States.

With a multiple-entry visa, departure and re-entry to the United States is allowed up to the expiration date indicated on the Visa. In addition to a valid Visa, you must always travel with a valid I-20 that has been signed by a Designated School Official or valid IAP-66 that has been signed by the Responsible Officer.

***NO VISA IS EXTENDED OR ISSUED FROM WITHIN THE UNITED STATES*** - You should obtain a **NEW VISA outside** the United States if you plan to leave and re-enter the United States after your Visa has expired or if your Visa status changed while in the United States.

***I-20*** - The I-20 is used to obtain an F-1 or F-2 visa. The information on your I-20 must be kept current at all times. If it needs to be renewed or adjusted due to a change of major, contact the Admissions Office. The INS requires that before traveling, you must have your I-20 signed by a Designated School Official in order to reenter the country.

**I-94** - The I-94 form is an important document that accompanies the passport and visa. The immigration officer at the port of entry staples it to the student's passport. The stamp on the I-94 card represents the period of time a student is permitted to stay in the United States. This is the only document stating the duration of one's legal status in the United States. When leaving the United States, the I-94 must be given to the Immigration Officer.

**IMMIGRATION & NATIONALIZATION SERVICE (INS)** - The INS is the government agency responsible for enforcing the regulations that apply to foreign nationals within the United States. The nearest immigration office is located at:

1086 Troy-Schenectady Rd.  
Latham, NY 12110  
1-800-375-5283

**IN-STATUS** - A term used by the INS to refer to a student who is maintaining proper visa status.

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT** - You are considered an international student if:

- You were not born in the United States
- You are not a United States citizen
- You do not have a "green card" granting you permanent residency status in the United States (permanent residents are called "resident aliens")
- And, you are in the United States for educational purposes

**PASSPORT RENEWAL** - A valid passport must be maintained while in the United States. Passport renewal is conducted at the embassy of the student's home country. The Admissions Office can provide the phone number and/or address of the nearest embassy.

**SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER** - A number used by the United States government to identify people in the United States. The Social Security number is often asked for when opening bank accounts or applying for a driver's license. It is required for you to work in the United States. The regulations regarding Social Security numbers have recently changed and you may not be able to obtain a number unless you are offered a job. ([Read for more Information](#))

**STATUS** - Upon entering the United States, you are classified in a specific visa status corresponding to your purpose in the United States. The INS officer at the port of entry will note your purpose and the amount of time you may remain in the United States on your I-94 card. A letter and a number, which usually corresponds with your Visa stamp, will code your purpose.

Although there are some exceptions, you may apply to the INS to change your Visa status to F-1 student or any other status. If your application is approved and you leave the United States, you will need to apply for a new Visa at the embassy to re-enter the country.

***VISA WAIVER PROGRAM*** - Citizens from certain countries may enter the United States as tourists (*WCT-tourist status*) without applying for a Visa from outside the country. However, in exchange for this privilege, these tourists ARE NOT ALLOWED TO CHANGE STATUS while in the United States. Therefore, someone planning to study in the United States should not enter the country under this program.