



University at Buffalo  
*The State University of New York*

Office of International Education  
International Student and Scholar Services

## **EXTENSION OF STAY FOR F-1 STUDENTS**

### **What is an “Extension of Stay?”**

If you will not complete your program by the expected completion date in Section 5 of your current I-20, you must file for an extension of stay and receive a new I-20 with a new ending date. **This must be done before your current I-20 expires.**

### **When should I apply for the Extension of Stay?**

**We recommend that you submit your application to our office 30–90 days prior to the completion date on your current I-20.**

- **Your extension request must be made and granted prior to the completion date listed in Section 5 of your current I-20.** Immigration regulations do not allow granting an extension to a student who requests the extension after the expected completion date listed on the current I-20. Failure to file a timely application will therefore result in loss of F-1 status.
- **How does this affect the timing of my application?**  
Since large numbers of students will be requesting an Extension of Stay in the weeks prior to February 1<sup>st</sup>, June 1<sup>st</sup> and September 1<sup>st</sup>, we recommend that you submit to ISSS your complete Extension of Stay application several weeks before your current I-20 expires. We cannot guarantee that your information will be entered into the SEVIS system before your current ending date unless you submit your documents to us at least one week in advance.

### **Who is eligible for an Extension of Stay?**

To be eligible for an extension of stay, you must document that:

- You are currently in valid F-1 student status AND
- You have maintained F-1 status and continually been a full-time student
- You are making normal progress toward completing your course of study AND

- The delay in completion was caused by compelling academic or medical reasons
  - For example:
    - Change of major or research topic
    - Unexpected research problems
    - Loss of credits upon transfer to the University at Buffalo
    - Documented illness

***Please note: Delays due to academic probation or suspension do not qualify for an extension. The USCIS permits students to have reduced course loads due to medical condition for up to twelve months.***

### **How do I apply for an Extension of Stay?**

To apply for an extension, submit the following documents to ISSS, 210 Talbert Hall prior to the expected completion date on your current I-20:

- International Student Data Form (attached)
- Academic Advisor's Recommendation (attached)
- Financial documentation (see attached guidelines)
  - ISSS will calculate the total amount of financial support that you must document for an extension of stay depending upon the number of credit hours you need to complete and the number of months / semesters you require to finish your program.
- Register full-time for the next semester

### **Will I receive a new I-20?**

Yes. After we receive your complete Extension of Stay application, ISSS will enter your extension information into SEVIS. After receiving approval of the extension from SEVIS, a new I-20 with a revised completion date will be issued and returned to you.

Please staple this new I-20 to all your previous I-20's. Do not throw away your old I-20's. You must keep and carry all of them, because you may be required to present all of your I-20's as proof of your immigration history.