



Cornell University International Students and Scholars Office

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F-1 Students: Graduating Soon?

Apply for Work Authorization BEFORE you Graduate!!

In order to use the Optional Practical Training (OPT) employment benefit of F-1 status, the immigration service must RECEIVE your application NO LATER than your graduation date. Pick up or download an **OPT application**. Once you apply for OPT, the documents required for re-entering the U.S. are slightly different than while you are in school.

60 Day Grace Period to Remain in the U.S. but CANNOT Re-Enter

As an F-1 student, you have a 60 day grace period after your date of graduation. During that grace period, you may remain in the U.S. but you may NOT re-enter the U.S. in F-1 Status. If you are not going to remain in the U.S. for work or another degree program and only need to re-enter the U.S. to pick up your belongings, speak to an advisor at the ISSO about the possibility of entering the U.S. in tourist status.

Continuing at Cornell in a New Degree program

Pick up or download a **change of level or degree program form**. If you are planning to begin a new degree program at Cornell after you graduate from one program, you MUST have a new I-20 issued for the new program no later than the end of the 60 day grace period. In order to get your new I-20, you must complete the following steps:

- send your funding certification to the graduate school or the relevant admissions office (JGSM, Law, Vet)
- fill out the top section of the change of level I-20 application
- have your graduate student services representative fill out the bottom section
- bring it to the ISSO and speak with an advisor

Unfortunately, if the new I-20 is not issued by the end of your 60 day grace period, you will be out of status.

Transferring to a different school for another program

If you are planning to begin a new degree program at another U.S. college or university after graduating, you MUST contact the ISSO and let us know which school you will be attending no later than the end of your 60 day grace period. We will enter the information for your planned transfer to the new school into your electronic SEVIS record. We only have to enter this information by the end of your grace period, you do not have to have the new school's I-20 by that time. Pick up or download a **transfer form**. Unfortunately, if we do not enter that information by the end of your grace period, you will be out of status.