



## Cornell University International Students and Scholars Office

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### **F-1 Students: Graduating Soon?**

#### **Apply for Work Authorization EARLY!!**

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 60 days after the end date of your status (your status ends on your date of graduation or last day as a registered student--whichever is earlier). 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.