

F-1 PROGRAM EXTENSION INSTRUCTIONS

In accordance with F-1 regulations, students are given the normal length of full time study on their form I-20 in order to complete their degree requirements. Under certain circumstances, regulations allow an ISO advisor to extend your I-20 should you be unable to complete your degree requirements by the program end date on your I-20.

Eligibility

You must meet the following criteria in order to be eligible for program extension:

- You must be in **valid F-1 status**, having maintained a full course load each fall and spring semester.
- You must demonstrate that you have **compelling academic or medical reasons** that necessitate the extension of your I-20.
- You must **apply** for a program extension **30 to 90 days prior to the expiration date** of your I-20. Failure to extend your I-20 by the expiration date will cause you to fall out of status.
- You must demonstrate that you have sufficient funds to cover the remaining time needed to complete your program.

You are **not eligible** for a program extension if any of the following applies:

- You were enrolled for less than a full course load without **prior** approval by an ISO advisor.
- You require additional time to complete **incompletes**, withdrawals, failed classes, or because you were placed on academic probation or were academically suspended.
- You have otherwise failed to maintain your F-1 status (illegal employment or any other violation.)
- You fail to have your I-20 extended by the completion date on your I-20.

How to apply

Please submit the following documents no later than **30 days prior** to the expiration date of your I-20 in order to request an extension. We strongly recommend scheduling an appointment to see an ISO advisor if you have any questions regarding any of the documents.

- Copies of the following documents:
 - All I-20s issued to you (page 1 and page 3);
 - Passport identification and expiration pages;
 - Front and back of I-94, with the red stamp clearly legible;
 - F-1 visa.

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- **Original** documentation of **financial support**, no more than six months old, in English, referring to US dollars, showing sufficient funds for yourself and your dependents (if applicable) for requested period of your extension. Students using personal funds must show sufficient funds for the entire length of the extension. Students using a sponsor must also submit a letter signed by the sponsor indicating that they intend to support your expenses while studying in the U.S. Living expenses are \$15,600 per year, and books and insurance are \$2,480 per year as of the Fall 2003 semester. Consult your department for the cost of tuition.
- An I-20 request form.
- A **current unofficial transcript**, issued from the Registrar's office. Transcripts submitted during a previous semester for any other request are not acceptable.
- A **letter** from your **academic advisor** on GW letterhead, detailing the following:
 - Your name and student ID number;
 - That this letter is support of an I-20 extension request;
 - Your degree level and major;
 - The number of credits you have completed towards your degree;
 - The requirements you have left to complete, including the number of credit hours;
 - If you are writing a thesis or dissertation, when the thesis or dissertation will be turned in/defended;
 - A detailed explanation of the compelling academic or medical reason(s) that necessitate extension, i.e., why it is that you have not finished by the expected time;
 - Your anticipated completion date.
- If you are extending because of medical reasons, a letter from your attending physician detailing the nature of your illness and how this affects or affected your ability to pursue full time study is also required.

Once a complete request is submitted, an ISO advisor will review your application to determine your eligibility. If your request is approved, a new I-20 will be issued to you with your new completion date.