



**United States Citizenship and Immigration Service
United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement**

Regulations for F1 Students

It is of the utmost importance that you remain in good standing – in status, by following USCIS/USICE regulations. If you do not you will be considered out of status. Once you fall out of status you need to apply for reinstatement if you have a valid reason, or depart the country and return as an initial entry in a new F-1 nonimmigrant status. Please understand that reinstatement is not an easy or guaranteed process. And USCIS/USICE is very stringent now about what are deemed acceptable reasons for reinstatement. Here's how you will stay in status:

Remaining in Good Standing – IN STATUS – for all F1 students

A student must do the following to stay in status (eligible to remain at Menlo College and in the US as a matriculating student):

- a. Maintain and complete a full course load each semester – at least 12 units. We now have to enter the number of units you take each semester in the SEVIS database, which is a tracking system for international students.
- b. Not engage in off campus employment except where noted below and after completion of the appropriate paperwork. Students are permitted to work on-campus for 20 hours during the school year, and 40 hours during vacation times.
- c. Possess a current I-20 issued through the Russell Center.
- d. Possess a valid visa and passport.
- e. Follow correct procedures to transfer to a school other than one originally authorized on I-20.
- f. Ensure that your I-20 is validated by Designated School Official (DSO) (Virginia Spinelli) before you leave the US.
- g. Report any change in address or name to the Russell Center within 10 days of the change. The change will be reported to USCIS/USICE through the SEVIS database.
- h. Follow all regulations outlined in the Federal Register and in attached summary. Students are responsible for understanding and following all USCIS/USICE regulations that govern their status at Menlo College and in the US.

CPT – Curricular Practical Training (internship during course of study)

Eligibility:

- a. Full time status and current student
- b. F-1 status for at least one academic year
- c. Off campus Internship related to academic field

- d. I-20 must be updated prior to start of CPT and endorsed by Designated School Official

Transfer to Another Institution or Graduate School

You must be in status to transfer to another institution. If you transfer to another institution or start a new program in a graduate school you must begin classes at the new school within 5 months of transferring out or within 5 months of program completion end date (graduation) listed on I-20, whichever is earlier.

If you are not pursuing a full course of study at the institution you were last authorized to attend, you are ineligible to transfer and must apply for reinstatement or depart country and return as an initial entry in a new F-1 nonimmigrant status.

Transfer Process:

1. Student notifies DSO of intent to transfer and which school transferring to (student can only choose one school).
2. DSO updates student record in SEVIS as “transfer out” and indicates school student is transferring to and a release date (current semester completion date or date of transfer if earlier).
3. At the time of release date, new school will be granted access to student’s record in SEVIS and then student becomes responsibility of new school.
4. At the time of release date the transfer school (new school) must complete the transfer of the student’s record in SEVIS and issue student new I-20.
5. Student is then required to contact the DSO at transfer school within 15 days of program start date listed on I-20.
6. Upon notification that student is enrolled in classes, DSO of transfer school must update SEVIS to reflect students registration and address.
7. In remarks section of I-20, DSO notes that the transfer has been completed, including date and returns form to student.
8. Transfer is affected when DSO of transfer school notifies SEVIS that the student has enrolled in classes within 30 days.

Graduating Seniors

If you are a graduating senior you have several options to remain in the US: 1) Apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT), 2) Attend graduate school, or 3) Secure a job by a company who will sponsor you on a H-1 visa.

Optional Practical Training (OPT) -One year of work after completion of studies

Eligibility and Process:

- a. Full time status
- b. F-1 status for at least one academic year
- c. Seeking work related to your academic field

- d. You can submit OPT application up to 90 days prior to completion of studies. The application takes at least 3 months to process.
- e. Students must register for OPT **PRIOR** to graduation.
- f. Student does not have to secure position at the time he/she is completing the application.
- g. Student cannot leave the country until she/he receives his/her Employment Authorization Document (EAD) from USCIS.
- h. Student can only begin OPT on date listed on EAD.
- i. OPT must be completed within a 14 month period following completion of studies.
- j. You will need to complete the necessary paperwork with Virginia Spinelli in the Russell Center.
- k. You must report any change of name, address or disruption of work to Virginia Spinelli within 10 days of the change.

Termination of OPT

Your OPT application is automatically terminated if you transfer to another school for graduate work. This allows you to apply for OPT and graduate school simultaneously. However, you can only choose one option.