



UW INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES

Upcoming Immigration Changes

Introductions



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Important Reminders

- Session will not be recorded but slides will be made available to you
- Chat will be enabled for Q&A after the presentation
- This new rule is complex
- ISS staff are still learning and assessing the new rule
- We do not have all the answers yet and need clarification from the government
- ISS staff are not lawyers – we provide guidance, not legal advice
- ISS will continue updating the D/S Hub resources

Current Policy





I-94 Arrival/Departure Record

- Currently, when you enter the U.S., **Customs and Border Protection (CBP)** issues you an electronic I-94.
- The I-94 confirms your legal admission to the U.S. and includes the following:
 - Your **class of admission** (visa type)
 - Your **Admit Until Date** (how long you can stay in the U.S.)



Most Recent I-94

Admission (I-94) Record Number : 1234567890

Most Recent Date of Entry: 2023 June 10

Class of Admission : F1

Admit Until Date : D/S

Details provided on the I-94 Information form:

Last/Surname : the Husky

First (Given) Name : Harry

Birth Date : 1995 September 27

Document Number : #####

Country of Citizenship : Seattle

Duration of Status (D/S)

- Currently, F and J students are given an Admit Until Date (AUD) of “**D/S**” which stands for **Duration of Status**.
- Duration of Status means you can **remain in the U.S.** as long as you maintain your status including:
 - Keeping your immigration documents valid
 - Enrolling full-time each quarter
 - Following employment authorization requirements

Upcoming Changes

A close-up photograph of a person's hands writing in a lined notebook. The person is wearing a purple long-sleeved shirt. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a computer monitor and other office equipment. A dark purple banner with the text "Upcoming Changes" is overlaid on the left side of the image.

What is changing?

- The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is eliminating the Duration of Status rule.
- Under the *new* rule, F and J students will be admitted to the U.S. for a **fixed date** known as your **Admit Until Date (AUD)**.
- This period of stay in the U.S. will be limited to the **Program End Date** on your I-20 or DS-2019 but **not to exceed 4 years** plus a 30-day grace period.

What is changing? (continued)

- Currently when a student needs additional time to complete their current program, begin a new program, or transfer to a different school, ISS is able to approve and process these requests.
- Under the new rules if you need to stay beyond your AUD, you will **still** need to request permission from ISS. However, now you will also need to extend your AUD by either:
 - Timely filing an **Extension of Stay (EOS) application** with U.S. **Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)** before your AUD expires; **OR**
 - **Departing and reentering** the U.S.

Additional new restrictions & limits

- The **grace period** for F-1 students will be reduced from 60 to 30 days. J-1 student grace period remains 30 days.
- Pursuing another degree at the **same or lower education level** will not be allowed once you've completed your degree.
 - Example: Masters to Bachelors or a 2nd Master's degree program

Any degree earned before September 15, 2026, will not be considered in this new restriction/limit

Additional new restrictions & limits (continued)

- **Undergraduate students:** Cannot change majors or transfer schools in their first year of study.
- **Graduate students:** Cannot change education objective (program) or transfer schools at any time during their program.

When does this take effect?

- The new rules take effect on **September 15, 2026**.
- If you are physically present in the U.S. **before September 15**, you will continue under D/S status. However, any future international travel will change your status to the new fixed-AUD policy.
- If you enter the U.S. **on or after September 15**, you will receive an I-94 with a fixed-AUD (not to exceed 4 years) plus a 30-day grace period after your program end date.
- The restrictions on academic changes will take effect for all students on September 15, 2026.

Extension of Stay (EOS)



Extension of Stay

- Students who need additional time beyond their I-94 AUD for any of the following reasons will need to apply to extend their stay:
 - Complete current program/degree requirements
 - Change education level to a higher degree
 - Transfer schools for a new program
 - Apply for post-graduation employment authorization including OPT, STEM OPT, or Academic Training

Extension of Stay

- There are two ways that you can extend your stay:
 - Timely filing an **Extension of Stay application (I-539)** with U.S. **Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)** before your AUD expires OR
 - **Departing and reentering** the U.S.

** Premium processing is not currently available for F-1 and J-1 I-539 Extension of Stay applications with USCIS*

Extension of Stay

- Stricter standards could be applied, and the following could be considered in determining whether an extension is justified:
 - Poor academic performance
 - Excessive course failures
 - Pattern of repeating & dropping classes
 - Making normal academic progress (as determined by government)

Example Scenarios

Scenario 1:

- Undergraduate student needs 2 additional quarters to complete degree requirements.
- Student submits a program extension request to ISS with approval from their academic/departments adviser for 2 additional quarters.
- Before the original I-20 end date, the student files an EOS application to USCIS with reason additional time is needed **or** the student travels & reenters U.S. with the extended I-20. Once adjudicated by USCIS or CBP, a new I-94 Admit Until Date (AUD) is issued.

Example Scenarios

Scenario 2:

- Master's degree student plans to graduate in December 2026 and begin a PhD program at a new school in late January 2027.
- Student requests their SEVIS record be transferred to the new school once the UW program ends in December and the new school can issue a transfer pending I-20 for the PhD program.
- Student needs to file an EOS application to USCIS with reason additional time in the U.S. is needed **or** the student travels & reenters with the transfer I-20. Once adjudicated by USCIS or CBP, a new I-94 Admit Until Date (AUD) is issued.

Example Scenarios

Scenario 3:

- Student will earn a Bachelor's degree at the end of spring quarter 2027 and receives admission to a Master's degree program at UW for autumn quarter 2027.
- Student submits a Change of Level/Program request to ISS.
- Change of Level I-20 issued by ISS for Master's degree program with a September I-20 program start date and new I-20 end date.
- Student will need to file an EOS application to USCIS with reason additional time in the U.S. is needed **or** travel & reenter with the Change of Level Master's degree I-20. Once adjudicated by USCIS or CBP, a new I-94 Admit Until Date (AUD) is issued.

Example Scenarios

Scenario 4:

- Incoming Master's degree student for autumn 2026 with a program start date 9/21/2026 and a program end date of 6/9/2028.
- Student travels to the U.S. on 9/16/2026 and is given an I-94 fixed AUD of 7/9/2028 (2 years plus a 30-day grace period).
- If the student needs additional time to complete degree requirements, they plan to change to a higher degree level, or they plan to apply for OPT, they will need to file an EOS application to USCIS **or** travel & reenter with an updated I-20. Once adjudicated by USCIS or CBP, a new I-94 Admit Until Date (AUD) is issued.

Example Scenarios

Scenario 5:

- New PhD student receives has an I-20 with a program start date of 9/21/2026 and program end date 6/13/2031 (5 years).
- Student enters the U.S. on 9/18/2026, and the I-94 fixed-AUD is 10/21/2030 (4 years plus a 30-day grace period).
- After the first year of the PhD program, the student travels internationally over summer break 2027 and reenters the U.S. in August with their same I-20 program end date of 6/13/2031.
- Student is issued a new I-94 fixed-AUD of 7/12/2031 (6/13/2031 end of program plus a 30-day grace period).
- No EOS to USCIS is required in this scenario UNLESS additional time beyond 6/13/2031 is needed to complete all degree requirements.

Example Scenarios

Scenario 6:

- PhD student has already completed 3 years at UW and is outside the U.S. Their I-20 start date was in 9/2023 and their program end date is 8/18/2028.
- The student will return to the U.S. on 9/20/2026.
- Student is issued a new I-94 fixed-AUD of 9/17/2028 (8/18/2028 I-20 end date plus a 30-day grace period).
- No EOS to USCIS is required UNLESS additional time beyond 8/18/2028 is needed to complete all degree requirements.
- 4-year AUD limit does not apply since the program end date is less than 4 years from the reentry date (8/18/2028 = 2 years).



Transition Provisions & What's Next

Transition Provisions

- Students physically present in the U.S. before September 15, 2026, will retain D/S (not to exceed 4 years) plus the legacy 60-day grace period.
- **Benefits for F-1 students keeping D/S:**
 - **Retain D/S** for the remainder of your academic program end date or a maximum of 4 years.
 - **Retain the legacy 60-day grace period** at the end of your completed program.
 - No EOS application with USCIS required if you apply for post-completion OPT by **March 18, 2027**.

Transition Provisions

- The D/S transition provisions **DO NOT**:
 - exclude students from the new educational limits and restrictions on changing majors, programs, levels, schools, etc. This applies to all F-1 and J-1 students regardless of D/S status.
 - eliminate the EOS application for students who require additional time beyond their I-20/DS-2019 Program End Date.
 - prevent a fixed I-94 AUD if traveling any time after September 15, 2026.

What can I do now?

- No specific action is required.
- For upcoming international travel, review travel guidelines to understand how entering the U.S. on or after September 15 may impact your I-94 AUD.
- Familiarize yourself with your most recent I-94 Arrival/Departure record.
- Be aware of end dates and plan early to allow for processing times.



U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Securing America's Borders

Most Recent I-94

Note to employers, local, state or federal agency granting benefits:

Please visit the CBP I-94/I-95 Website and click on the tab for "Get Most Recent I-94/I-95" to perform a search for the applicant to confirm that the biographic and travel information displayed on this I-94/I-95 printout matches the "Get Most Recent I-94/I-95" returned results for this applicant. Reference the CBP I-94/I-95 Website FAQs.

Admission I-94 Record Number: 1234567890

Arrival/Issued Date: 2025 September 09

Class of Admission: F1

Admit Until Date: D/S 

Details provided on the I-94 Information form:

Last/Surname: THE HUSKY

First (Given) Name: HARRY

Birth Date: 2000 JANUARY 01

Document Number: 1234567

Country of Citizenship: USA

Commonly Asked Questions

Q: Do I need to change my travel plans and enter/reenter the U.S. before September 15?

A: For most students, entering the U.S. before September 15 is not necessary, as most students will be admitted under the new fixed-program end date at some point.

Entering the U.S. before September 15 under **D/S could be beneficial if:**

- You will not travel internationally for the remainder of your program.
- You will not need additional time beyond your I-20/DS-2019 program end date (complete degree requirements, change educational levels, etc.).
- You will be eligible to apply for post-completion OPT before March 18, 2027.

Commonly Asked Questions

Q: How do I know what my I-94 Admit Until Date (AUD) is?

A: Your AUD can be found on your I-94.

You should access and download your I-94 Arrival/Departure record each time you enter the U.S.

Instructions, a sample I-94, and more information can be found at <https://iss.uw.edu/travel/i94/>.

Commonly Asked Questions

Q: Who will keep track of the I-94 Admit Until Date (AUD)?

A: You are responsible for understanding and monitoring your own immigration records and deadlines.

While ISS generally sends reminders about I-20/DS-2019 program end dates using data available to us, you will need to keep track of your fixed-AUD and plan early if an extension of stay will be needed for any reason.

Commonly Asked Questions

Q: Can I request a program extension before September 15 if I already know I need more time to complete all degree requirements?

A: Yes.

Discuss your degree plan with your academic adviser. If you both agree that additional time beyond your current I-20 or DS-2019 end date is needed to complete the required courses for your degree, submit the Program Extension request in MyISSS now. If ISS extends your I-20 before September 15, you will not be required to apply for an extension of stay.

Note: You must still meet the current F or J requirements for a program extension.

Commonly Asked Questions

Q: If my degree program requires more than 4 years, how does the maximum 4-year entry to the U.S. impact me?

A: Under the new regulations, students requiring more than 4 years will have to request an extension of stay to verify they have additional requirements and are making academic progress.

This is done through an application to USCIS or through travel and re-entry.

Commonly Asked Questions

Q: I have already been in the U.S. for 2 years of my 5-year PhD program. I am outside of the U.S., and my program end date is 6/8/2029. When I return after Sept. 15, will I only be allowed 2 additional years?

A: No, you should receive a fixed-AUD of 7/8/2029 (6/8/2029 program end date plus 30-day grace period).

The new 4-year limit doesn't include the years already spent in the U.S. It is a limit on how long students can continuously stay without traveling or requesting an Extension of Stay. The I-94 fixed-AUD is calculated on the I-20 or DS-2019 program end date or a maximum of 4 years.

Commonly Asked Questions

Q: Does the new rule change my F-1 or J-1 visa? What if my visa expired and I am currently in the U.S.? Do I have to leave or renew my visa?

A: The new rule does not change your visa's expiration date or the policies governing how long you can stay in the U.S. after your visa expires.

A valid F-1 or J-1 visa stamp allows you to request entry to the U.S. at a Port of Entry, where a CBP officer determines whether to admit you.

After entry to the U.S., the I-94 record with either D/S or the new fixed-AUD determines how long you can stay in the U.S. in F or J status. Your status validity does not automatically end if your visa expires when you are in the U.S.

Commonly Asked Questions

Q: Do I need to leave the country if my Extension of Stay (EOS) is not adjudicated by my fixed AUD?

A: No. Students with a pending USCIS application should be able to remain in the U.S.

This also applies to students who have pending EOS and I-765 employment authorization applications.

Commonly Asked Questions

Q: Can students still exit a PhD program with a Master's degree instead of completing all requirements for the PhD? Will I still be able to apply for OPT with the Master's degree?

A: We believe students can still elect to exit a PhD program and earn a Master's degree instead. However, you would likely not be eligible to apply for OPT with the Master's degree.

Awarding a Master's degree for a PhD student exiting the program is a Graduate School and University policy. However, ISS would not be allowed to change your I-20 degree level since the new regulations do not allow program updates to a lower educational level, which is required for ISS to recommend OPT in these cases.

Commonly Asked Questions

Q: How is the OPT application process changing and when can I apply? Is there any way to apply earlier?

A: The post-completion OPT application process or the timeline for applying is not changing.

F-1 students with a fixed-AUD will be required to file an Extension of Stay (EOS) in addition to their I-765 employment authorization application. Both applications should be adjudicated together by USCIS.

- Students with D/S will not be required to file an EOS under the transition provisions if you file your I-765 before March 18, 2027.
- All students filing the I-765 after March 18, 2027, will be required to also file an EOS application with USCIS (even if you still have D/S).

Commonly Asked Questions

Q: I will graduate in spring 2027 and plan to apply for OPT. The website shows that ISS can recommend OPT starting 3/13/2027. Will I be able to receive an OPT I-20 so I can file the I-765 before 3/18/2027?

A: Federal regulations do not allow you to apply for OPT earlier than 90-days before your program end date. 3/13/2027 is 90-days prior to the spring quarter end date.

ISS is aware that spring quarter graduates will have a very short window to receive their OPT endorsed I-20 and file the I-765 employment authorization before 3/18/2027. We will work on a plan to address how we can best accommodate spring quarter graduates who wish to file for employment authorization early. We will also update our post-completion OPT guidance and Information Session for fall quarter.

Commonly Asked Questions

Q: Can an undergraduate student still pursue a double major or double degree?

A: Yes, we believe so.

Our understanding is that undergraduate students are not restricted from adding a second major. However, if additional time beyond your I-20/DS-2019 Program End Date is needed to complete both majors/degrees, you will need to go through the Extension of Stay process.

Commonly Asked Questions

Q: How will the "first year" be determined for undergraduate transfer students?

A: We are unsure.

We do not know if transfer students who have completed 1 year at a previous institution will be restricted from changing their major during their first year at the UW.

We have asked for clarification from the government on this policy.

Chat Instructions

- Submit your questions in the **chat** or **raise your hand** in Zoom if you want to ask your question live. We will unmute you so you can ask your question.
- We can answer general questions to help you understand the new policies.
- Case-specific questions should be asked to us through **email** or ISS **advising**.
- If we are unable to get to your question, please send us an email.

<https://iss.uw.edu/email/>

A large, three-dimensional black sculpture of the letters 'WU' stands prominently in a park. The sculpture is made of thick, dark material, possibly metal or stone, and is set on a low stone base. The background is a lush green park with trees and a clear blue sky. In the distance, some buildings are visible. A purple rectangular box with a yellow horizontal line is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the word 'Questions?' in white text.

Questions?