

Help! After Basic F-1 Training: How to survive the information overload

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TOPIC	PRESENTER		
COM/COL		(Other schools share)	
Extensions		(Other schools share)	
Change of Status		(Other schools share)	
Reinstatement		(Other schools share)	
Travel & Reentry		(Other schools share)	
Employment/PT (On-Campus/CPT)			
Resources & Questions			

Change of Major & Change of Education Level



http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international/current/maintaining_I20.html#tog5

Change of Level Check List:

_____ Check to see if student indicated level they are moving to and beginning semester. Check to see if they have dependents.

_____ Check financial affidavit to make sure student has enough funding for him/herself and dependents for one year. Make sure they signed the form.

_____ Check bank statement or TA/RA letter to make sure it is valid within the past six months and that funds are available for the upcoming year.

_____ Make sure student is F-1 and SEVIS active

_____ Check passport expiration date

_____ Check notes in FSA

_____ Make sure student has not exceeded 60 day grace period of first academic program or OPT

_____ Check to see if student has continued to maintain status by being fully enrolled in all long semesters or that he/she has been on OPT for the past year and we have a copy of the EAD card

_____ Check to make sure that new matriculation starts at the time the student has requested the Change of Level



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Change of Major & Change of Education Level



- ▶ One-person office; no batch software and everything is process in RTI(directly in SEVIS)
- ▶ Students contact the International Office by email, phone, or an appointment for a COM/CEL update as needed
- ▶ If any other information is needed, the academic department is contacted

Extensions

<http://www.uta.edu/oie/forms/ExtensionRequest.php>



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Geeta comes during advising a year later. She says that due to her change of major, she needs additional time on her I-20.

- ▶ Students submit request form, funding, and an explanation from their academic advisor why they need more time to complete their program
- ▶ Largely depends on what the academic advisor recommends for the student

Extensions

<http://www.uta.edu/oie/forms/ExtensionRequest.php>



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Instructions to the Academic Advisor:

Important: The information you are providing on this form has a direct bearing on the student's immigration status. Should any action by a school come under question by an immigration officer, the school must provide documented reasons why the action was taken. Please complete this form with care and as soon as possible since the extension must be recorded in the SEVIS system prior to the current expiration date which the student has given above.

This student has indicated that he (she) is unable to complete his (her) program of study in the normal amount of time. Immigration regulations require the school to indicate the **academic** reasons, beyond the student's control, causing the student to be unable to complete the program in time. Such reasons as the student the student had certain pre-requisite courses, the student changed his major, or the student had difficulties with thesis or dissertation research are acceptable academic reasons. If illness caused the delay in completion of studies, the student must present a letter from his physician to OIE for evaluation.

Personal reasons such as elective internships, additional courses beyond requirements of degree, or financial reasons such as an offer of a continuing assistantship, or postponing graduation because of future H-1 application restrictions are reasons for an extension which are not accepted by immigration. In the space below, please indicate the date the student can reasonably be expected to complete the program of study and graduate. Please give a full explanation of the academic reasons why this student requires more time to complete his program:

Extensions



<http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international/forms/documents/Fin%20Affidavit.pdf>

- ▶ Student meets with the advisor.
- ▶ Advisor determines initial eligibility (academic or medical) and explains finances to student.
- ▶ Student takes request form to academic advisor.
- ▶ Student submits form completed by academic advisor with proof of finances.
- ▶ Advisor processes request and prints I-20.

Check	✓
Is student in-status? Making progress toward degree?	
Valid reason? Compelling academic or medical? Research?	
Applied before expiration?	



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Extensions

- ▶ Processed in RTI
- ▶ Students contact the international office for an I-20 extension
- ▶ International Office communicates directly with the department about how much longer the student needs to finish their program



Change of Status to F-1

Former student Meha comes by your office for advising. She is currently working nearby while in H1B status. Her company is facing massive layoffs in the next few months and she's afraid she may lose her job.

As of today, she is still employed and doesn't know for sure how much time she might have left.

Meha had already been considering a return to school to work on a second Master's program. She would like to know how she can return to F-1 status and go back to school full-time.

► Checklist:



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Change of Status to F-1

<http://www.uta.edu/oie/services/b2f1.php>



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- ▶ General process: student submits required forms (listed on our website), advisor checks the forms, creates a new I-20, then meets with the student to pay SEVIS fee and sign I-20. We mail the application and use UTA's address in the student's application.
- ▶ During the advising process, the advantages and disadvantages of applying for a change of status within the U.S. and traveling to change status are discussed.
- ▶ We have different pages on our website for the various types of changes we do: B-2 to F-1, B-2 to F-2, F-1 to F-2, F-2 to F-1, etc. The timing of filing is different for each status type.

Change of Status to F-1



- ▶ University of Dallas's request form:



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- ▶ Procedure:



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- ▶ Student submits forms to the International Office, advisor reviews it and makes recommendations, application is sent in.



Change of Status to F-1

<http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international/forms/documents/Change%20of%20Status%20Guide.pdf>

Check	Do
Is the Change of Status request form complete?	Create the task/event in FSA(batch system).
Is the student in study/non-study category? Are they eligible to file for F-1 status in the United States?	Review documents, process request, create I-20, make copies for file, and give to student with mailing instructions
Did student provide both a local and international address, if applying inside the U.S.?	Create “COS-FOLLOW UP” Task; defer attendance to the next available semester, if needed.
Does the student have an unexpired I-94 card?	Review I-94 approval notice for accuracy and if F-1 has D/S. By Travel: student must report within 10 days of entry. SEVIS register.
Is enough financial support shown?	



Change of Status to F-1

<http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international/forms/documents/Change%20of%20Status%20Guide.pdf>

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You can legally stay in the U.S. while the application is pending.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It takes 3-4 months (or more) to receive approval.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You can enroll in courses, if you are currently on a visa status that allows study.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No work (including TA/RA) while application is pending.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less expensive (no travel costs).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Departure from the U.S. while change of status is pending invalidates the application.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full time enrollment in consecutive semesters in a visa type other than F-1 can count towards eligibility for CPT and OPT.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You must make an appointment at a U.S. consulate to obtain an F-1 visa the next time you depart the U.S.



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Reinstatement of F-1 Status

At the midpoint of the semester it comes to your attention that Kentaro has dropped below your school's requirement for full-time enrollment. Apparently he wasn't paying attention when you went over this requirement several times during orientation. It's too late to add another course at your school and even the "fast-track" courses at the local community college are full.

You've terminated his record and now Kentaro would like to know what to do next to "fix his situation."

► Checklist:



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Reinstatement of F-1 Status

<http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international/forms/documents/Reinstatement%20Guide.pdf>

Check	Do
Is the Reinstatement request form complete?	Create the task/event in FSA(batch software).
Does student meet USCIS eligibility requirements?	Review documents, process request, create I-20, make copies for file, and give to student with mailing instructions
Is student academically able to begin or continue studies?	Create “RI-FOLLOW UP” Task in FSA(batch software).
Did student provide original I-94 card, if applying in the U.S.?	<u>Review I-94 approval notice for accuracy and if F-1 has D/S. By Travel: student must report within 10 days of entry, register in SEVIS.</u>
Is enough financial support shown?	

Reinstatement of F-1 Status

<http://www.uta.edu/oie/services/reinstatement.php>



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- ▶ General process: Students turn in forms at the front desk and an advisor makes an appointment with the student after a review to discuss recommended changes and to mail the application
- ▶ During advising: present both options to travel and file for RI and explain the processing time for filing may take several months
- ▶ If the student's SEVIS record has been terminated for more than one year, we will not support their petition and only create a new I-20 for them
- ▶ Student RI letter guidance:



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Reinstatement of F-1 Status



- ▶ Student contacts the International Office by email, phone, or appointment if they are out of status
- ▶ Processed in RTI



Travel to Gain Status

<http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international/forms/documents/Change%20of%20Status%20Guide.pdf>

Nadia decided to visit her uncle and aunt in Dallas and fell in love with the lifestyle. She wants to change her status in the U.S. now, but doesn't want to wait because she wants to be able to start classes and to work as a TA. The school will close for Winter Break and she wants to spend Xmas with her family.

- ▶ Student meets, call for phone appointment or send email to Advising Team.
- ▶ Advisor determines if student has been admitted to a program and explains PROS/CONS, proof of financial for student and dependent (s) and required documents to student.
- ▶ Student submits forms and supporting documents.
- ▶ Advisor reviews local and foreign address, processes request and prints I-20.



Travel to Gain Status

<http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international/forms/documents/Change%20of%20Status%20Guide.pdf>

- ▶ Student meets advisor about eligibility and the documents needed in their specific circumstance.
- ▶ Student requests Initial Attendance I-20 for “Regaining Status by Travel”(starting over F-1) and provides required documents.
- ▶ Advisor reviews documents and issues I-20.
- ▶ Instructions to student after I-20 is issued:



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Travel to Gain Status

<http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international/forms/documents/Change%20of%20Status%20Guide.pdf>

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This method is faster.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a risk you will not be able to re-enter the U.S. if the visa application is denied.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You get the visa immediately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expensive because of cost of travel.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You will be eligible to work on-campus after re-entering the U.S. in F-1 status.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cannot enter the U.S. more than 30 days before program start date on the I-20.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full time enrollment in consecutive semesters in a visa type other than F-1 can count towards eligibility for CPT and OPT.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a risk of denial in Canada if you are not a citizen of Canada. Check if Mexico is not issuing change of status visa at this time.



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Travel to Gain Status

<http://www.uta.edu/oie/forms/newi20request.php>



- ▶ During advising for change of status and reinstatement, we discuss traveling as an option.
- ▶ If the student chooses to travel to gain F-1 status, our process is:
 - ▶ Student submits I-20 request form and financial documents.
 - ▶ New I-20 is given to the student before they leave the country.
 - ▶ An enrollment hold is placed on their account to ensure they bring in copies of their stamped I-20 and new I-94 card after they reenter the U.S.

Travel to Gain Status

- ▶ Student contacts the International Office by email, phone, or appointment if they need to travel to gain F-1 status.
- ▶ Processed in RTI

On-Campus Employment & CPT

Ming, a sophomore Electrical Engineering student comes in during advising about an internship opportunity at a well-known company. She would like to know whether or not she is eligible to take this position. What information would you need before approving CPT?

► Checklist



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On-Campus Employment & CPT



On-Campus Employment http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international/current/on_campus_employment.html	CPT http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international/current/cpt.html
Must have active I-20.	Must be current UTD F-1 for one academic year and lawfully enrolled full-time in a US university for at least one academic year.
Must either be performed on the school's premises;	Must be in good academic standing.
Or at an off-campus location which is educationally affiliated with the school.	Must meet all CPT requirements of the UT Dallas Jonsson School Industrial Practice Program (all ECS students) or UT Dallas Career Center (all other students).
The UTD Career Center has a database of UTD on-campus jobs.	Work experience must be integral to student established curriculum.
Student must provide employment letter from UTD Career Center to apply for a Social Security letter.	Not eligible if requested I-20 extension in current program or failed previous CPT course.

On-Campus Employment & CPT

http://www.uta.edu/oie/forms/cpt_forms.php



- ▶ Other than advising, we have very little to do with on-campus employment.
 - ▶ We go over restrictions during orientation and in advising.
 - ▶ We refer to various campus resources for finding a job.
 - ▶ We sign an employment letter for use in obtaining a Social Security number.
- ▶ UTA restricts non-required CPT to two semesters.
- ▶ We require CPT authorization for volunteer positions.
- ▶ We require enrollment in a corresponding internship course.
- ▶ We let the department determine appropriateness of the position.
- ▶ We do not limit CPT to the actual dates of the semester (we allow the time between semesters to be used as part of either the previous or upcoming semester's authorization).

On-Campus Employment & CPT

http://www.uta.edu/oie/forms/cpt_forms.php



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- ▶ **UTA CPT workflow for students:**
 - ▶ Talk to your academic advisor to discuss internship options.
 - ▶ Interview and get an offer letter for an INTERNSHIP position.
 - ▶ Get an appropriate offer letter from the company.
 - ▶ Enroll in the corresponding internship course.
 - ▶ Have your academic advisor fill out the CPT Academic Advisor Recommendation form.
 - ▶ Fill out the CPT Student Form.
 - ▶ Submit completed forms to the OIE with your current I-20.
 - ▶ Once you receive your new I-20, you may begin working on the start date listed on page 3.

On-Campus Employment & CPT



<http://resource.udallas.edu/132/CPT-InternshipApplicationforwebsite.pdf>

- ▶ CPT Employer letter



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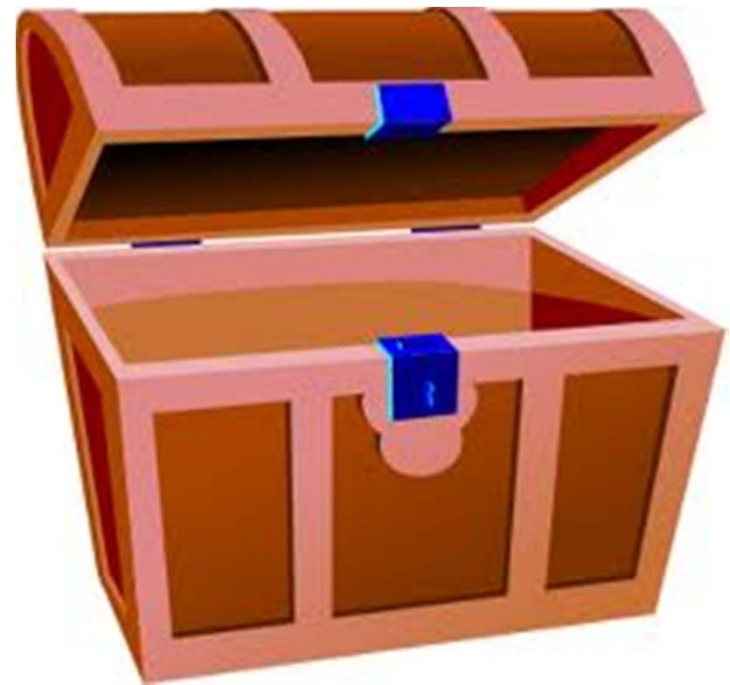
- ▶ The International Office works closely with the career placement center on campus to coordinate appropriate CPT opportunities for students, as well as their eligibility for CPT.
- ▶ Processed in RTI.

Resources

- ▶ ICE website
 - ▶ Newsletters, SEVP announcements, training
 - ▶ <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/outreach.htm>
- ▶ SEVIS manual
 - ▶ Directions on using SEVIS and its functions
 - ▶ http://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/School_UM_Vol2.pdf
- ▶ NAFSA website
 - ▶ Resources library http://nafsa.org/regulatory_information.sec/regulatory_document_library.dlib/
 - ▶ Law & Gov't Resources
 - http://nafsa.org/regulatory_information.sec/laws_government_resources/
- ▶ NAFSA manual <http://www.nafsa.org/advisermanual/default.aspx?id=26557>
 - ▶ \$265/year for NAFSA members; \$486/year nonmembers

Additional Resources

Topics	Slide
Change of Status	33
Economic Hardship	39
Cap-Gap Extension	42
Reporting OPT Employment	45
Reduced Enrollment	50
OPT	53



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Questions?

