

## Maintaining Status and Guidelines for Travel

### Maintaining your F-1 Student Status

What is status? Your permission to remain in the United States.

Students are responsible for making sure they maintain status while in the country. If you fail to meet the criteria to remain in status, Bank Street is legally required to terminate your status.

- Engaging in appropriate F-1 activity**
  - Full-time student (at least 9 credits) for each fall and spring term
  - Post-OPT employment
  - Refraining from engaging in any unauthorized employment
  
- Travel:** Be sure to get your I-20 signed for travel every time you plan to leave the country. Make sure you plan to do this in advance of your travel date.
  
- Program extension:** Your I-20 lists a program start date and program end date for your studies. If your course of study will take longer than the time given on your I-20, please notify the PDSO as soon as possible so we can begin the process for obtaining a program extension.
  
- Reduced Course Load:** If you need to drop a course or withdraw from school completely, please contact the PDSO **BEFORE** taking any action to withdraw from your courses. Based on the situation, you might be eligible to obtain permission for a reduced course load if you meet certain academic or medical criteria. However, if you withdraw from courses **before** speaking with the PDSO, we will be required to terminate your status.
  
- Update PDSO with any name or address changes**
  
- File Federal Income Tax:** Even if you aren't earning an income, you are still required to submit the Form 8843 by April 15 each year.

### What ends F-1 Status?

- Engaging in activities prohibited by the F-1 status (ie unauthorized employment)
- Failing to enroll in courses
- Dropping below full-time student status (9 credits is considered full time)
- Being absent from the US for more than 5 months

\*\*Depending on the situation, it might be in your best interest to continue taking classes full time while applying for reinstatement if you wish to regain your F-1 status. Contact the PDSO immediately to schedule a meeting.

## Travel

### Exit Procedures

- Surrender I-94 upon departure (unless traveling to a neighboring country for less than 30 days)

### Reentry Requirements

- Valid Passport
- Valid F-1 Visa
- Form I-20 with PDSO signature and any old I-20s
- Best Practice: transcripts, proof of financial support, PDSO contact information, copy of I-94

- Time Restrictions:** When the PDSO signs your I-20, we will note the last possible reentry date for you. If you attempt to enter the country after the specified date, you might be refused entry.