



Immigration Reminders During Period of Study

Category	Why is this important for F-1 students?
Number of Credit Hours a Student is Registered For	International students on F-1 visas are required to be registered full-time (at least 9 credit hours) each Fall and Spring term while they are completing their program of study. Note: If a doctoral student has completed his/her program course requirements and are only registering for dissertation hours the student MAY drop below 9 credit hours if the college has a policy in place stating that these students are still considered in full-time status. Proper documentation must be in the student's file showing this.
Dropping Below Full Time During the Fall or Spring Term	International students on F-1 visas have very limited approved reasons from Immigration when it comes to dropping below full time during the Fall or Spring term. If a student is planning on dropping a course they first need to come and talk to the International Student Adviser to ensure that proper steps are followed to do so without causing problems with their F-1 visa status.
Program Extension	Immigration paperwork requires that a program begin and end date be listed on all I-20 F-1 Immigration documents for any International student who studies in the U.S. Program begin and end dates are typically the first day of classes for the semester that the student begins study and the last day of the semester that they should graduate. Masters students are given 2 years to complete studies and Ph.D. students are given 5 years. During the last semester listed on a student's I-20 F-1 Immigration document the student is contacted by the International Student Adviser regarding if they will be able to complete their degree and graduate at the end of that semester OR if they need to extend for additional time to complete their degree. Students are allowed to extend their program dates until they finish their degree. A Program Extension Form must be filled out and on file in the International Student Adviser's office for this to be approved. This form can be found here: http://gradschool.uams.edu/files/2015/06/UAMS-Program-Extension-Request-Form.pdf .
Program Dismissal and Immigration Impact	International students are required to continue good academic progress in their program of study while they are attending UAMS. If a student is dismissed from a College it is imperative that the International Student Adviser be notified as soon as the student has been notified . This has a huge impact on the student's immigration status and the International Student Adviser and student will need to meet to discuss what needs to happen next regarding their visa status.



Work Authorization During Courses	International students are allowed to work up to 20 hours a week on campus during the Fall and Spring terms and up to 40 hours a week during the Summer, Winter break, and Spring break. Students are not allowed to work off campus without proper documentation . Typically the only way a student can obtain employment off campus during their program of study is if they are participating in an internship setting. Students are allowed to participate in internships with or without pay as long as the internship requirements are not something that an actual employee could do at the company. Please have any international student come and talk to the International Student Advisor if they are thinking about or required to do an internship to ensure proper documentation is in place for this.
Program End Date and Employment	International students are allowed to work for at least a year in their field of study after they have completed all program requirements. These students can apply for work authorization no earlier than three months before they will complete all program requirements. Ph.D. students are allowed to begin working in their field of study once their dissertation has been defended. The International Student Advisor works with students who want to apply for this work authorization to go through the work authorization request process as needed and requested.

Have any other questions about international students and immigration rules that apply to them during their time of study? Please contact Latrina Prince in the UAMS Graduate School for more information.

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