

Dear International Student:

This is an important reminder that although UTRGV has changed their mode of instruction to online due to COVID-19, you are still required to maintain your F-1 student responsibilities.

If you continually meet the following obligations, you will be considered “in good status” or “maintaining your F1 visa status.”

**TO REMAIN “IN STATUS”, YOU MUST ALWAYS:**

1. Maintain a valid and unexpired passport throughout your stay in the U.S.
2. Attend the school whose name appears on the I-20.
3. Be registered as a full-time student or part-time border commuter student:
  - a. **F1 full time:** (12 credits for undergraduate students or 9 credits for graduate students)
  - b. **F1 border commuter:** (6 credits for undergraduate students or 3-6 credits for graduate students)Make normal process towards your academic classes and your instructor’s expectations.

*NOTE: Exceptions to the full-time enrollment requirement can be granted by your International Student Advisor (Reduce Course Load), please see form attached.*

4. Always keep your I-20 valid and apply for any program extensions before expiration of your I-20 with plenty of time.
5. Keep your immigration information current and inform your International Student Advisor of any new visa stamps, passport renewal, change of visa and/or termination of other visa status.
6. Update our office within 10 days of any change of address, major, change of level, extensions, finances, dependents, so we can properly update it into SEVIS.
7. Request a travel signature/endorsement on your I-20 every 12 months. This is the third page signature on your page 3 of your I-20.

8. Follow SEVIS immigration transfer procedures when changing from one school to another in the U.S.
9. Upon completion of your program of study, an F-1 student has 60 days of grace period to:
  - a. Leave the U.S.
  - b. Begin student work authorization (Optional Practical Training – OPT)
  - c. Obtain a new I-20 as a transfer to new school
  - d. Obtain a new I-20 for a new program for the next semester in the same school.
  - e. Change to another immigration status

*Note: You can start accruing unlawful presence the day after you no longer pursue the full-time course of study or OPT, or the day after you engage in an unauthorized activity; the day after your I-94 expires.*

10. Check your emails constantly from our office or from your International Student Advisors for important updates and alerts to keep you informed and “in status”.
11. ALWAYS maintain a 2.00 G.P.A. or better (undergraduates) or 3.00 G.P.A. (graduates – masters) / 3.25 GPA (graduates – doctoral).

#### **TO REMAIN “IN STATUS”, YOU MUST NEVER:**

1. Must not work off campus or be part of an internship/training/practicum unless you have the necessary authorization from International Admissions and Student Services advisor on your I-20 (OPT, CPT, or Practical Training).
2. Must not work on campus more than 20 hours a week while school is in session. You may work full time on campus during break periods, summer and winter break up to 40 hours a week.
3. Must not take a leave of absence, drop below full-time course load, CPT or OPT without receiving approval from International Admissions and Student Services - International Student Advisor.
4. Must not drop a class before talking to an International Student Advisor and find viable options, if available.

Attached you will find some forms that you may need for any updates or requests. For your convenience, you can also find these forms in our website: <https://www.utrgv.edu/iass/current-students/department-forms/index.htm>.

We trust that you are complying these rules and also making normal academic progress for the rest of the semester. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us.

We are here to serve you –

Sincerely,  
IASS Staff

