



# F-1 Degree Level Change

International Student Services – Texas A&M University

SEVIS makes a distinction between 2 types of Degree Level Changes for F-1 students. ISS must report both types of Degree Level Changes to the Department of Homeland Security through SEVIS. Students will receive a new I-20 after completing either type of Degree Level Change.

## Types of Degree Level Changes

1. **Program Information Update** – Applies to any graduate student who would like to move to a new degree level without graduating from their current degree level. A Program Information Update will first have to be processed and approved by the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS). Once OGS has approved the Program Information Update and the new data has been updated in COMPASS, ISS will automatically update this information on the student's SEVIS record. The student does not have to submit any paperwork or requests to ISS in order to complete the Program Information Update. The student will be e-mailed when their new I-20 is available for pick-up at the ISS front counter. The student does not have to submit any of the documents listed on this handout. The student will not receive an extension to the program end date on their I-20. If they are unable to complete their new degree program by the program end date on their I-20, the student must apply for an Extension of Stay.
2. **Change of Educational Level** – Applies to any student who graduates and moves to a new degree level. The deadline to apply is the 15<sup>th</sup> class day of the semester in which you want the update to take effect or within 60 days after graduation, whichever is first. ISS must approve all Changes of Educational Level. Failure to obtain ISS approval will result in the student being out of legal immigration status. If ISS is notified that a student has graduated and changed educational levels, ISS will place a registration hold on the student's record until the student applies for a Change of Educational Level. To apply, the student must meet all requirements and submit all documents listed on this handout.

## Change of Educational Level Requirements

- Any student who graduates and begins a new academic program must obtain a new I-20 reflecting the new Educational Level.
- There cannot be a gap of 5 months or more between graduation and the start of the new program unless you leave the U.S. and re-enter to begin the new program or you continue authorized employment with Optional Practical Training (OPT) during the gap.
- If a student has been accepted to begin a new program in the summer term, he/she is required to register for a full course of study in the summer. For graduate students, this means completing 6 credit hours in the 10-week session or 3 in each 5-week session. For undergraduates, this means completing 8 credit hours in the 10-week session or 4 in each of the 5-week sessions.
- A student may not change educational levels during the second summer session.
- A student must receive the I-20 for their new educational level before they may begin or resume on-campus employment.

**The documents required to apply for a Change of Educational Level are listed on the reverse side of this handout.**

## Documents Required for a Change of Educational Level

1. Photocopies of the student and each F-2 dependent's **passport, visa, I-94 card, and most recently issued I-20.**
2. Official University Proof of Acceptance into the New Program
  - a. Students beginning a new graduate-level program should submit one of the following to ISS:
    - i. A **Letter of Intent** from OGS if you have completed one graduate program and are moving to another. You should apply for the Letter of Intent during the semester you will graduate.
    - ii. An **Acceptance Letter** from the Office of Graduate Admissions if you have completed an undergraduate program and are moving to a graduate program.
  - b. Students beginning a new undergraduate-level program should submit an **Acceptance Letter** from the Office of Undergraduate Admissions.
3. Current evidence of all sources of financial support for the student and any dependents. For detailed information about acceptable proof of financial resources, please visit the ISS Proof of Financial Resources page, accessible at <http://international.tamu.edu/iss/financial/financial.asp>.
4. If the new educational level is a non-degree seeking program or other special program, submit a "Non-degree/Special Program" Form (available on the ISS website). This form must be completed by the Academic Advisor.
5. Sponsored students must submit a letter from the Sponsored Students Program (SSP) Advisor indicating the sponsor's approval for the student to begin the new educational level as well as a financial analysis sheet with supporting documents.