Maintaining Your F-1 Student Status

Maintain full-time enrollment each semester
U.S. federal regulations require international students to pursue a full course of study during the Fall and Spring semesters. There are limited exceptions to the rule that require prior authorization from an international student advisor. If you need to drop below full-time, meet with an International Student Advisor to discuss your options. Failure to do so may result in a violation of your F-1 status. As an international student you may only count 1 online course (up to 3 credits) toward the full-time enrollment requirement. If you have any questions about this please contact your International Student Advisor.

Keep your passport valid at all times
You must have a valid passport. If your passport will expire, contact your country’s embassy or consulate in the United States for information on renewing it.

Report address changes to the ISSSO within 10 days of moving
U.S. federal regulations require all F-1 students to report a change of address directly to the ISSSO within 10 days of change. The ISSSO is required to provide this and other student data to the federal government electronically.

Make sure all information on your I-20 or DS-2019 is correct
Students are required to notify the ISSSO as soon as possible if there are any changes to the information on the I-20. Changes may include name, citizenship, degree level, major and source of funding.

Notify ISSSO if there is a change in the “completion date” on your I-20
If you plan to complete your program before the date listed, you must notify the ISSSO of this change as it affects your legal stay in the U.S. If you cannot complete your program by the date listed, you will need to apply for an extension of your F-1 status BEFORE the completion date listed on the I-20. DO NOT LET YOUR I-20 EXPIRE.

Do not accept unauthorized employment
F-1 students in good academic standing may work on-campus up to 20 hours per week when school is in session and full-time during official school breaks. These 20 hours include the work you do for an assistantship if you have one. You cannot work off campus without PRIOR authorization from the ISSSO and the U.S. federal government.

Bring your I-20 or DS-2019 to the ISSSO BEFORE traveling outside the United States
Students should bring their I-20 form to the ISSSO prior to traveling outside the United States to obtain an updated signature. A new form may need to be issued to you. If you will be traveling AND applying for a new visa, you will also want to request a letter from the ISSSO verifying that you are a full-time student.

File a federal income tax form for every year you are in the U.S., even if you did not receive any income.