



**Office of International Education
Immigration Services**

**1324 S. Lumpkin Street, Athens, GA 30602-5407 immigration@uga.edu
(706) 542-2900 fax: (706) 583-0123**

Completing Program of Study

International students who are about to meet all the requirements to earn a degree, graduate, etc. will need to consider their options. Students should contact Immigration Services at least 4 months in advance of completing all degree requirements.

Student immigration status is directly tied to participation in the academic program, and when that academic program is coming to an end, the student must make plans to take one of the following actions:

F-1 students:

1. If you will NOT be graduating or completing your academic program by the end date on your I-20 form, you must request an extension through our iStart portal at istart.uga.edu. Please click this link to access the extension application instructions:
http://issis.uga.edu/docs/Student_Section/F-1_I-20_Extension_Form_Instructions.pdf
2. If you will be graduating before the end date on your I-20 form, you must contact us to request that we shorten the validity of your I-20 form.
3. If you will be graduating by the end date on your I-20 form, you may apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT), a post-graduation work benefit available to international students. You must apply for OPT no later than 60 days after your program end date. Information about applying for OPT can be found here:
http://issis.uga.edu/docs/Student_Section/F1_OPT_Information_Sheet.pdf
4. If you are graduating and wish to transfer to a new U.S. school, please see the information here about transfer-out: <http://international.uga.edu/issis/international-student-information/currently-enrolled-students/transferring-out-to-a-different-u-s-school>
5. If you are graduating but will remain at UGA to begin a new degree program, you must contact us to request a change of degree level. Information about change of level can be found here: http://issis.uga.edu/docs/Student_Section/Change_of_Level_Info_Sheet.pdf

J-1 students:

1. Apply to your immigration advisor for a program extension BEFORE the current DS-2019 form end date, if all program requirements will NOT be completed by that end date:
http://issis.uga.edu/docs/Student_Section/J-1_DS-2019_Extension_Form_Instructions.pdf

2. Depart the U.S. within 30 days following completion of all degree requirements
3. Apply for post-completion Academic Training work authorization, so as to allow the student to remain and work in the U.S. for up to 18 months:
<http://international.uga.edu/issis/international-student-information/currently-enrolled-students/work-and-employment-options-for-international-students/j-1-work-authorization-information>
4. Apply to transfer the immigration status out to a new U.S. school
5. If eligible, apply to the U.S. government for a change of immigration status, to a new status that might allow the person to remain in the U.S.