International Student Employment & Degree Level Changes
Topics to Cover

> Background on International Student Services (ISS)
> Newcomer’s Intro to International Student Employment
  - Background on CPT & OPT
  - Recent OPT Changes
> I-20 Duration, UW Level Advancement, and Affect on Study and Benefits
> New Tools and Processes
> Questions
  - Case Studies
International Student Services (ISS)

What We Do:

1) Provide recommendations to students on the maintenance of their F-1 student visa status
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2) Support timely and complete reporting and recordkeeping as required by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
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What We Do:

1) Provide recommendations to students on the maintenance of their F-1 student visa status

2) Support timely and complete reporting and recordkeeping as required by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
   - Changes from full-time to part-time enrollment
   - Degree level changes
   - Field of study changes
   - Program duration and extension changes
ISS Updates Student’s Record in SEVIS Database

Screenshot of SEVIS Record
Newcomers’ Introduction to International Student Employment

Off-Campus: Prohibited

On-Campus: Permitted
Practical Experience Models Across Campus

> Varying Names
  – internship
  – practicum
  – co-operative education with sponsoring employer
  – civic engagement

> Varying Compensation Models
  – Paid
  – Unpaid

> Varying Curricular Integration
  – Credit-bearing
  – Mandatory (non-credit-bearing)
Practical Experience and Pre-Authorization

> Pre-authorization required before:
Practical Experience and Pre-Authorization

> Pre-authorization required before:
  – Off-campus internship
Practical Experience and Pre-Authorization

> Pre-authorization required before:
  – Off-campus internship
  – Off-campus experiential education
Practical Experience and Pre-Authorization

> Pre-authorization required before:
  – Off-campus internship
  – Off-campus experiential education
  – Off-campus employment
Practical Experience and Pre-Authorization

> Pre-authorization required before:
  – Internships off-campus
  – Off-campus experiential education
  – Off-campus employment
  – An excess of 20 hours/week of on-campus employment/internships
    > inclusive of all activity/positions
Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

> Temporary employment authorization to gain practical experience
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  - Directly related to student’s program of study
  - Integral part of established curriculum
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> Fast-Track
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> Fast-Track

> Vetted by departments and ISS
Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

> Government pre-approval via I-20 update
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  – **Integral** part of established curriculum
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    or
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Optional Practical Training (OPT)

> Temporary employment authorization to gain practical experience
  - **Directly related** to student’s program of study
  - **Non-curricular**; the student self-selects to participate
Optional Practical Training (OPT)

> Temporary employment authorization to gain practical experience
  – Directly related to student’s program of study
  – Non-curricular; the student self-selects to participate

> Portable – student can choose to change employers, positions, or locations.
“Standard” Optional Practical Training (OPT)

> “Standard” OPT is for 12 months
  – Most commonly used immediately after program completion
“Standard” Optional Practical Training (OPT)

> “Standard” OPT is for 12 months
  - Most commonly used immediately after program completion

> Tied to academic level
  - Additional blocks can be granted as student advances/completes higher academic level.
  - OPT must be used during or immediately after completing a degree level:
    > can’t “bank” OPT for later use.
2016 -- Significant OPT Changes

Completion of Degree → 12-Month “Standard” OPT
2016 -- Significant OPT Changes

Completion of STEM-Extension Eligible Degree → 12-Month “Standard” OPT → 24-Month STEM-Extension
2016 -- Significant OPT Changes

- Higher Degree Level
  - Completion of STEM-Extension Eligible Degree
  - 12-Month "Standard" OPT
  - 24-Month STEM-Extension

- Lower Degree Level
  - Completion of STEM-Extension Eligible Degree
  - 12-Month "Standard" OPT
  - 24-Month STEM-Extension
CIP Codes

> CIP codes are used in reports to the U.S. Department of Education.

> All degrees at UW have an existing CIP code.
What’s in a Name?

University of Washington: Political Science
Illinois State: Politics and Government
Cornell University: Government
University of Maryland: Government and Politics

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Text Changed</th>
<th>Title &amp; Definition</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>CIP Code</th>
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<td>Political Science and Government, General. A general program that focuses on the systematic study of political institutions and behavior. Includes instruction in political philosophy, political theory, comparative government and politics, political parties and interest groups, public opinion, political research methods, studies of the government and politics of specific countries, and studies of specific political institutions and processes.</td>
<td></td>
<td>45.1001</td>
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STEM Extension Benefit Eligibility

Detail for CIP Code 11.0401
Title: Information Science/Studies.

Definition: A program that focuses on the theory, organization, and process of information collection, transmission, and utilization in traditional and electronic forms. Includes instruction in information classification and organization; information storage and processing; transmission, transfer, and signaling; communications and networking; systems planning and design; human interfacing and use analysis; database development; information policy analysis; and related aspects of hardware, software, economics, social factors, and capacity.

See also: 25.0101) Library Science/Librarianship., 52.1201) Management Information Systems, General.

Detail for CIP Code 25.0101
Title: Library and Information Science.

Definition: A program that focuses on the knowledge and skills required to develop, organize, store, retrieve, administer, and facilitate the use of local, remote, and networked collections of information in print, audiovisual, and electronic formats and that prepares individuals for professional service as librarians and information consultants.

See also: 11.0401) Information Science/Studies., 13.1334) School Librarian/School
Public CIP Code Lookup

https://grad.uw.edu/admissions/find-a-program/

Check it out: https://grad.uw.edu/admissions/find-a-program/

Program Detail

Civil & Environmental Engineering - MS

Apply Now >>

Basic Information

Degree Information

Highest Degree: doctoral
Degrees offered: MS
Accepts GNM: Yes
CIP Code: 14.0801
**CIP Code on I-20**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>PROGRAM OF STUDY</th>
<th>MAJOR 1</th>
<th>MAJOR 2</th>
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<td>EDUCATION LEVEL</td>
<td>MASTER'S</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>NORMAL PROGRAM LENGTH</td>
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<td>PROGRAM START DATE</td>
<td>01 SEPTEMBER 2015</td>
<td>ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTES</td>
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<tr>
<td>PROGRAM END DATE</td>
<td>31 MAY 2021</td>
<td>Student is proficient</td>
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<td>MAJOR 1</td>
<td>Economics, General</td>
<td>45.0601</td>
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Non-Employment Immigration Benefits and Degree Level

Per Degree Level

> 4 quarters of leave/part-time study for medical reason
> Permission for part-time study for valid, pre-approved academic reason
Employment Benefits and Degree Level

Per Degree Level
> 12 months of OPT per level
> More than 356 days of FT CPT cancels OPT eligibility
> 24-month OPT extension for STEM students (twice)
Students Unaware of Immigration Factors When Advancing Degree Levels

> Students are focused on academic issues involved with a degree level change/advancement.
> No “banking” benefits for use later at/after another level.
> Many fail to consult ISS about possible immigration consequences
Possible Consequences to Students

- Missed deadline for issuing doctoral level I-20 – possible outcome is forced departure from USA
- US border crossing and visa denials because contradictory level of study records
- Full-time enrollment unexpectedly required in summer if change of level “effective” summer quarter
- Existing on-campus employment and CPT cut short when change of level unexpectedly becomes “effective”
- Potential loss of OPT when change of level to doctorate is processed unexpectedly
Not a New Issue!

> Not a new issue
> Previously resolved case-by-case
> Steep increase in number of international students and stagnant technology = more and more students experiencing negative consequences
How to Avoid Pitfalls? New Process, New Tools

Goals:

> Ensure both student and university compliance with immigration regulations
> Help students avoid immigration problems and inadvertent loss of immigration benefits
> Provide graduate program advisors with better information and streamlined processes
Data Flow

MyGrad → SDB → ISS database → Gov’t SEVIS database

= New I-20 Form

MyGrad Update Button: Do Not Press Until...
Filter the Student List for International Students
Check “Visa Type”
Proposed Timeline

Start of Quarter

1. Identify int’l student who wants to advance to new pathway.

2. Student submits Change of Level Request to ISS

3. 7-10 days

4. ISS issues updated I-20 to student

End of Quarter
Step 1: ISS Change of Level Request Form

International Student Services

Change Level of Study

- Overview
- Change of Level Instructions
- Frequently Asked Questions

Overview

You were admitted to the United States to complete a specific educational program as reflected on your I-20 or DS-2019. If your academic program will change, it is your responsibility to request an update to your immigration status.

Please complete the Change of Level Request Form to request a change in your level of study.
Step 1: ISS Change of Level Continued

Graduate students:

If you are changing from a Master's degree to PhD or vice versa (or if you are in your approved OPT period following your Master's or PhD), follow these instructions to request the new I-20:

If you submitted a new application through MyGrad:

- Inform your ISS advisor of your expected graduation date.
- Request a Change of Level I-20 from Graduate Enrollment Management Services (GEMS) in your online admissions application's Next Steps Page.
- Warning: if you are currently in your OPT period, remember that your OPT authorization be cancelled on the first day of the quarter of your new graduate program.

If your department did not require you to submit a new application through MyGrad, request your new I-20 from ISS. See instructions below.

1. Complete and submit a Change of Level Request Form to ISS together with supporting documentation.
2. Allow 7-10 business days for ISS processing.
3. You will receive an email from ISS (uwiss@uw.edu) when your document is ready for pick up.
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Change of Level I-20 Request Information

- Will student earn Master’s or promote without earning MS/MA?
- Will student enroll full-time the next available quarter or take vacation in between? (Such as spring to autumn)
- Does student want to take a break from studies for an internship or job related to their degree?
- Will student travel between the “end” of one program level and “start” of next program level?
Feedback and Ideas

ISS will send message to GPA/GPC listserv to announce when formal feedback process is live.

Urgent questions or feedback? Email uwiss@uw.edu
   Subject Line: Attn: Leana & Megan – Change of Level
Case Studies & Examples
Example 1 – Medical Reduced Courseload

> Student has master’s I-20 expiring June 2018
> Student has a chronic health problem that flares up, and during Autumn 2017 she applies for and is approved for graduate on-leave status.
> Student also applies for and is approved for a medical reduced course load, permitting her to remain in the USA for treatment.
> Student returns to study in Winter 2018, and is promoted to PhD as performance before and after leave has been stellar.
> PhD promotion incorrectly transmitted to SEVIS as “program information update” instead of “change of level,” indicating that original master’s level was incorrect, and the student has always been PhD level.
> Previously-authorized medical reduced course load now linked to PhD level, meaning student has only 3 more quarters of medical reduced course load if more flare-ups occur.
Case Study 2
Effective Quarter Problem

> Student had 2-year master’s I-20 with August expiration date.
> Promoted by department to PhD in June – effective AUT quarter
> Student follows current ISS “Change of Level” process; grad advisor completes ISS’s “Change of Level” form indicating SUM effective quarter
> ISS issues student “Change of Level” I-20 showing SUM PhD start
> Mid-June, ISS contacts student to determine why not enrolled FT for summer. Student indicates not planning to enroll, and traveling SUM quarter for vacation and visa renewal
> ISS explains that with I-20 “Change of Level” effective for SUM, FT enrollment mandatory in SUM.
Case Study 3
Master’s Degree Conferral Triggers Deadlines

> Student had 2-year master’s I-20
> Master’s was conferred in SPR 2016. No record of pending level change in MyGrad or SDB.
  – Student’s on-campus work authorization ended last day of SPR 2016.
  – Student required to leave the USA within 60 days of last day of SPR 2016.

> Student contacts ISS by email 18 days before 60th day deadline to consult about change to PhD. Indicates has been trying to request a Change of Level I-20 through GEMS online application process
  – If unable to have Change of Level processed by 60 days of last day of SPR 2016, student must leave the country
    > Re-entry on new I-20 possible, but student will be ineligible for CPT and OPT for one academic year
    > Student is in financial difficulty as PhD funding does not kick in until AUT 2016 – travel will present unexpected burden