

Dear Students,

Today, Friday, July 17, 2026, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) published a [Final Rule](#) indicating its intent to end the duration of status (D/S) policy for nonimmigrants in F and J status. To date, the D/S policy has allowed nonimmigrant students and exchange visitors (such as postdocs, visiting professors, and other scholars) to remain in the U.S. for the full duration of their program of study or the length of their appointment. Under the new final rule, F students will be admitted to the United States for a fixed period of time instead of duration of status. This fixed period is based on the length of a student's program of study listed on their Form I-20, not to exceed four years, plus a 30-day period for departure. Other visa types will also have a fixed end date, subject to extension.

Key Provisions:

- Fixed-date admissions to the United States - the length of a student's program of study listed on their Form I-20, not to exceed four years, plus a 30-day grace period.
- The F-1 grace period will be reduced from the current 60 days to 30 days
- Individuals who need time beyond their Admit Until Date (AUD) for whatever reason (e.g., an extension of program, school transfers, moving academic levels, use of post-completion practical training or academic training) will have to timely file a complete Form I-539 extension of stay application with USCIS before their AUD expires, on Form I-539 (with fee and biometrics).

What You Need to Know Now:

- You **do not** need to take any immediate action. This Final Rule does **not** go into effect immediately. The implementation date is published as **September 15, 2026**.
- There are transition provisions for individuals who were admitted for D/S on their Form I-94 and are inside the United States on September 15, 2026.
- Students who are currently on approved or pending OPT/STEM OPT do not need to file for Extension of Stay at this time.
- The Final Rule allows F students to extend their program, pursue a new one, or take advantage of OPT or STEM OPT opportunities, however, students must complete the required steps and timely submit an Extension of Stay application to USCIS.
- DHS and other agencies may provide additional guidance, which could modify the impacts.

Additional Details:

- This Final Rule is lengthy and complex.
- We are carefully reviewing the provisions and impacts of the Final Rule and are developing a summary that we expect may answer many of your initial questions. We will notify you when the summary is available.

We know that changes in U.S. immigration policy may create concern and uncertainty. Please know that the Center for Global Education is here to support you and will provide guidance during this process. We encourage you to reach out to us if you need assistance.