Maintaining Legal Status (F-1)

*Plymouth State University is a better place because you are here, and we are strongly committed to your success as a student.*

- You have been admitted to the United States without a definite ending date for your stay. You are here for "duration of status." This is defined as the time during which you are pursuing a full course of study or engaging in authorized practical training following completion of studies.

- We want to assist students in ways that prevent status violations from ever occurring. **Maintaining legal status is YOUR responsibility, however. It is up to you to ensure that you:**
  - Enroll full time*
    - *only 1 online course allowed per term; NO online courses allowed in final term
  - Make normal progress
  - Only work on campus and with authorization
  - Get your I-20 signed when required (before travel)
  - Notify GEO of address change
  - Notify GEO if you are changing your major
  - If applying for OPT, that you file the application within the timeframe stated by the regulations

- **Reasons for SEVIS record termination:**
  - Failing to enroll
  - Unauthorized withdrawal or failure to attend classes
  - Suspension or expulsion from school
  - Inappropriate transfer out or in from another school
  - Illegal employment
  - Absence from the U.S. for more than 5 months
  - Failure to update GEO of address changes
  - Failure to request in ADVANCE permission ---
    - Employment
    - Dropping below full-time
    - Requesting an extension to your program
    - Reporting completion of program studies if earlier than I-20 completion date
Upon completion of the program or the end of practical training, you are allowed 60 days to prepare for departure from the United States.

OPT NOTE: If you apply for and are granted OPT (Optional Practical Training) upon graduation/completion of your program, you will continue to be considered an F-1 visa holder and all above rules will continue to apply.

If you officially withdraw from school before completing your program, without transferring to another school, then you have only 15 days to complete your preparations to leave the U.S. If you just walk away from school without doing any official paperwork, then you must leave the U.S. immediately.

NOTE: If you violate the rules for maintaining status, you will need to seek reinstatement in order to gain any benefit of your status. Until reinstated, you will lose your privilege of working on campus and will not be eligible for internships, cooperative education programs or practical training. Reinstatement is a special application to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. It is not guaranteed and if denied, you will need to leave the U.S. immediately. PSU institutional policy allows for very limited support during reinstatement process.

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