



**Sangeetha Padman Principal**

## **VISA RENEWAL OR LEAVING THE COUNTRY**

All I-20 students are required to keep their school informed of their residence location and travel plans.

### **VISA RENEWAL**

Your F-1 Visa is used to enter the United States.

Once you are here, your I-20 is what allows you to stay.

So long as you stay in school, we continue to extend your I-20.

If you are leaving the United States during your course of study, and you plan to return to the United States to resume study, you must do the following:

**Before leaving**, notify the DSO at your school of your travel plans. Currently the DSO is Mr. Delgado. He will review your I-20 with you and add a signature on Page 2 if necessary. This will allow you to re-enter.

As long as you re-enter the United States with your I-20 before your F-1 expires, you are okay. **If you return to your home country** and your F-1 visa has expired or will expire before you return, you will need to renew it as well.

**If you need to renew your F-1 Visa while away**, be sure to request a copy of your most recent report card, and let us know it is for that purpose. We print it on a special template providing additional information to meet the requirements of the US Consul. You may need it to verify that you are considered "in status" by the school that has issued your I-20. We do not use transcripts for that purpose because they do not as clearly indicate what is considered in or out of status. Because a student's status may change, this should be issued immediately before you leave. \*

**The best way to avoid visa problems** is to notify the school in writing of your travel plans as soon as you know them. Please provide details, so we can advise you on what you may need to take along with you.

**Happy Academy will not** issue documentation vouching for status that may affect any period beyond a student's current I-20 visa end date. The obvious exceptions are transcripts and recommendation letters for our graduates who are continuing their I-20 status at the college level. The release of documentation may be delayed in circumstances including, but not limited to, suspicion of immigration fraud or other inappropriate intent.

## OTHER DEPARTURE CIRCUMSTANCES

Your I-20 has an expiration date, and that is only one of the reasons you will return to your home country. A school has the discretion to terminate an I-20 before the completion of study. The reason for the expiration/termination of your I-20 determines how soon you are required to leave the United States.

### **214.2(f)(5)(iv)**

(iv) *Preparation for departure.* An F-1 student who has completed a course of study and any authorized practical training following completion of studies will be allowed an additional **60-day period** to prepare for departure from the United States or to transfer in accordance with paragraph (f)(8) of this section. An F-1 student authorized by the DSO to withdraw from classes will be allowed a **15-day period** for departure from the United States. **However, an F-1 student who fails to maintain a full course of study without the approval of the DSO or otherwise fails to maintain status is not eligible for an additional period for departure.**

\* If you leave the country before a term's grades have been finalized, you will receive a message when the grades are ready.

**IMPORTANT:** It is the "program end date" on your I-20 that determines when you are required to leave the United States. You are not required to leave the United States if your F1 expires while you are here.

Students have told us, "I need to go home to renew my F1." That is backwards. The only reason to renew the F1 is **if you go home after it has expired**. The trip itself would be for some other reason.

If you must travel home after your F1 has expired, we will provide you with the documentation to renew your F1 by mail if you are eligible. This will help to minimize the risk of a denial at a new in-person interview.

Students who leave during their course of study do so at their own risk, as we cannot be responsible for any unexpected F1 denials or changes in travel restrictions imposed by any government.