

F-1 GRADUATE GUIDE

What can I do Next?



Completing your Course of Study

If fewer classes are needed to complete your course of study, you may be able to reduce the number of credits taken in your final quarter.

- Meet an Academic Advisor for a degree audit and authorize Reduced Course Load
- Apply for Graduation
 - [Transfer Degree Graduation Application](#)
 - [Professional/Technical Degree Graduation Application](#)
 - [Certificate of Proficiency Graduation Application](#)

Online Course in your Final Quarter

If you only need one class to complete your program of study, the class cannot be online.

- You must take the class on campus

If the class is **ONLY** offered online, what should I do?

- Transfer to a university if you are already accepted
- Withdraw from the college and complete the class in your home country
- Add at least one face-to-face class (The class must be approved by an Academic Advisor)

I-20 Program End Date & Grace Period

Your I-20 program will be shortened to the program end date (last day of final exam).

– Check your program end date: [Academic Calendar](#)

<https://www.shoreline.edu/calendars/academic.aspx>

Your 60-day grace period starts after your program end date.

Example:

- Program end date (last day of final exam): June 20
- Grace period starts on: June 21
- 60-day grace period ends on: August 19

What can I do during my Grace Period?

During your 60-day grace period, you can:

- **Transfer to another U.S. school**
- **Apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT)**
- **Apply for a new program at the same school**
- **Prepare to go home**
- **Apply for change of status (not common)**

Transfer to another U.S. School

Request Shoreline to transfer your SEVIS record to your new school. (This will allow the new school to issue an I-20 with the same SEVIS number.)

Eligibility:

- Your SEVIS record must be ACTIVE (if your SEVIS record is COMPLETED or TERMINATED, please contact your new school for your options)
- You must start at a next available session AND the program starting date at the new school must be within five months from your program completion date

How to Transfer my SEVIS Record?

Submit the [Transfer-out Request form](#) to Shoreline with a proof of acceptance letter/email from the new school

- Your SEVIS record will be released to the new school
- May not be able to cancel your request once it is processed

Ask Shoreline to complete any transfer status verification forms given to you by your new school

- This form provides your F-1 status information and is NOT a request to transfer your SEVIS record

Contact your new school to obtain an I-20 issued by your new school

Deadline - Transfer Out Request Form

DO NOT WAIT until the last minutes to submit your Transfer-out Request form.

- Processing your [Transfer-out Request form](#) takes time.
 - You must submit your [Transfer-out Request form](#) at least a week before the end of your 60-day grace period.
- If you missed the deadline for Transfer Out Request...
 - Your SEVIS record is **COMPLETED**; therefore, Shoreline cannot transfer your record.
 - Contact your new school for your options

Travel after SEVIS Transfer to another U.S. School

Can I travel within in the U.S.?

– YES

Can I travel within outside of the U.S.?

– YES, but you need to return to the U.S. with a Transfer Pending I-20 issued by the new school.

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

What is Optional Practical Training (OPT)?

- Work authorization related to your major area of study
- Approved by USCIS
- Post-completion OPT – maximum of 12 months
 - If you did pre-completion OPT, the length will be deducted.

Eligibility

- Enrolled at least one full academic year in a valid F-1 status
- Will complete program of study (degree, certificate)

Apply for OPT

When can I Apply?

- USCIS can accept your application between 90 days before your program completion date and 60 days after your program end date

Application deadline?

- Your application must be received by USCIS before the end of your 60-day grace period or within 30 days from the OPT recommendation date, whichever is earlier

Steps to Apply for OPT

Step 1: Go to F-1 Immigration page and review [Optional Practical Training information](#) or see an F-1 specialist to obtain information

Step 2: Read [OPT Handout](#) carefully

Step 3: Submit the [OPT Major Confirmation Request Form](#)

Step 4: Prepare required documents, scan, and save them in your computer

- 2x2 photo, Passport ID page, I-94

Steps to Apply for OPT

Step 5: Submit the [OPT Worksheet](#)

- Think about your OPT starting date and consider the following:
 - When do I want to start working?
 - Can I find a job easily?
 - Do I want to travel before OPT?
 - When will I complete my application?

Your request date may not be the same as your actual starting date and you cannot start working until you receive your EAD card. However, you can only choose your request starting date within your 60-day grace period.

Steps to Apply for OPT

Step 6: Work with an F-1 specialist and obtain your OPT recommendation I-20

Step 7: Create UCCIS Account

Step 8: File online OPT application (Form I-765) with appropriate application fee

You can request an appointment with F-1 specialist if you need assistance for filing the online application.

Travel for OPT Students

Travel outside of the U.S.

– Before graduation

- YES – make sure you have an updated travel signature

– After graduation but your application is still in pending status

- Not recommended – may be risky
- Must have receipt notice from USCIS

– After graduation and your application is approved

- Must have EAD card
- Have a job offer or employment verification
- If you have no employment, travel is NOT recommended as you may be denied reentry

Start a new program at Shoreline

See your academic advisor and submit the [I-20 Request form](#)

- Determine eligibility to study a new program
- Prepare your financial document

New program starting date must be within five months from your program completion date.

If you travel outside of the U.S., you need to return with a new program I-20.

Preparing to Go Home

You must leave the U.S. on or before the end of your 60-day grace period

You can travel within the U.S. during your grace period. However, if you leave the U.S. (including a short trip to Canada and Mexico), you cannot reenter with your current Shoreline I-20 (program ended).

Unlawful Presence

Unlawful presence starts:

- **After 60-day grace period is over**
- **After you accumulate 90-day unemployment limit during OPT**

Plan to leave the U.S. before you accumulate any unlawful presence time as it may impact you for traveling to the U.S. and obtaining a visa in the future.

Questions?

International Education/Immigration [Home Page](#)

<https://www.shoreline.edu/international/immigration/>

Immigration Walk-in Hours

Monday – Thursday 2:00-3:00 pm

Schedule an Appointment:

- **Currently enrolled students:** [log into Starfish](#)
- **Not currently enrolled** email F-1 specialists at hkendall@shoreline.edu or ktowns@shoreline.edu (you may email one or both)