The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for F-1 students and the Department of State (DOS) for J-1 students each have regulations regarding how to maintain visa status. As long as you continually meet these obligations, you will be considered “in status” or “maintaining your visa status.” International student advisors are available to assist you with maintaining your status; however, it is your responsibility to know and follow the regulations. A brief overview of how to maintain your visa status is provided below.

**TRANSFERS**

If you are transferring to Oregon State University from another U.S. school or from OSU to another U.S. school, you will need to complete an immigration transfer and acquire a new I-20 or DS-2019 form within the first 15 days of your first term at the new school. School transfers include INTO OSU students who are transferring to OSU. Transfer In and Transfer Out forms are available on the ISFS website and in the ISFS Student Services’ reception lobby.

**REGISTRATION**

F-1 and J-1 students must register for and complete a full course of study each term during the academic year. Full-time status for undergraduates is 12 credits per term. Full-time status for graduate students is 9 credits per term (12 or 16 credits for graduate students with assistantships). Students in the Conditional Admission Program (CAP) or the INTO OSU Pathways program must follow the registration requirements of their specific program.

Summer and vacation periods normally do not require registration as long as you are a continuing student. Since audited courses and withdrawals do not count toward full-time enrollment, it is very important NOT to withdraw from or audit any classes that will result in less than a full course load. Also, no more than 3 credits of distance education (E-Campus) classes can count toward full-time enrollment per term. If you have serious academic or medical concerns, you will need to make an appointment with an international student advisor to discuss possible exceptions prior to dropping below full-time status.

If you do not pass a course or wish to improve your grade, you may retake a course. Both grades will appear on the academic record, but only the second grade will be counted in the cumulative grade point average, and the credits will only count one time toward graduation requirements. Be aware that if you repeatedly retake courses, use the S/U grading option for courses requiring a letter grade, or otherwise fail to progress in your academic goals, any requests for a program extension may be denied.

Undergraduate students may apply for a “Reduced Course Load” at the start of their final term if they have less than 12 credits remaining to complete their degree. Graduate students who have completed all required coursework and all requirements listed on their specific graduate program of study may apply for a “Reduced Enrollment.” Reduced Enrollment may be approved for up to 4 terms for a master’s student or 6 terms for a doctoral student. Both forms are available on the ISFS website and in the ISFS Student Services’ reception lobby.

**CHANGE OF MAJOR OR DEGREE LEVEL**

If you change your major or degree level at any time during your studies at OSU, you will need to notify International Student & Faculty Services. Once the change has been approved by the Oregon State University, ISFS staff will prepare an updated I-20 or DS-2019 form.

**PROGRAM EXTENSION**

If you are unable to complete your academic program by the end date listed on your I-20 or DS-2019, you must request a program extension. You will need to show funding for the duration of the extension as well as compelling academic or medical reasons for your request. It is important to apply for an extension one to two months before the expiration date on your I-20 or DS-2019. Program Extension Request forms are available on the ISFS website and in the ISFS Student Services’ reception lobby.

**ON-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT**

F-1 and J-1 students may engage in part-time employment (up to 20 hours per week) on the OSU campus while classes are in session. Students may work full-time (more than 20 hours per week) in between terms and during the summer vacation as long they plan to be a full-time student the following term. J-1 students who are sponsored by Oregon State University must request authorization for employment from International Student & Faculty Services before beginning employment. The J-1 Student Employment Authorization Request form is available on the ISFS website and in the ISFS Student Services’ reception lobby. J-1 students who are sponsored by an agency other than OSU should contact their program sponsor directly to obtain work authorization. Students who are in the Conditional Admission Program (CAP) or the INTO OSU Pathways program are not eligible for employment. If you have questions about types of jobs that qualify for on-campus employment, please make an appointment with an international student advisor.

**OFF-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT**

F-1 and J-1 students may NOT participate in any type of off-campus employment unless authorized by International Student & Faculty Services (ISFS) and/or the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Internships which are required or integral to the student’s program of
study must be authorized by ISFS prior to the internship start date. Students interested in off-campus employment should make an appointment with an international student advisor before accepting an employment offer. ISFS also holds weekly information sessions on off-campus work authorization for F-1 students.

PASSPORT VALIDITY
It is important to keep your passport valid at all times. Contact your country’s embassy or consulate in the U.S. for instructions on how to renew your passport at least 6 months before it will expire.

HEALTH INSURANCE
All OSU international students and their accompanying dependents are required to maintain health insurance coverage throughout their stay in the U.S. Please direct all health insurance questions to the Student Health Insurance Liaison in 110 Plageman Hall (541-737-7568).

TRAVEL
If you plan to travel outside the U.S. during your studies, you will need to obtain a travel signature from an international student advisor prior to leaving the U.S. Travel signatures are valid for one year (refer to the bottom of page 3 of your I-20 or the lower right section of your DS-2019) and for 6 months for F-1 students on Optional Practical Training. If your visa has expired or will expire while you are outside the U.S., you will need to apply for a visa renewal at a U.S. consulate or embassy before returning to the U.S. (unless you will visit Canada or Mexico for less than 30 days). For more comprehensive information, please see the Travel Outside the U.S. handout available on the ISFS website and in the International Program’s reception lobby. Note: Federal regulations require visitors to the U.S. to carry proof of identification and immigration status at all times. If you are traveling within the U.S., be sure to carry the following items: 1) a valid passport, 2) a valid I-20 or DS-2019 form, and 3) the I-94 arrival/ departure card.

COMPLETION OF PROGRAM
Once you complete your degree program (and final term of registration), immigration regulations allow you a 60-day grace period (F-1 visa holders) or a 30-day grace period (J-1 visa holders) in which you may remain in the U.S. The grace period begins from the last day of the term for which you were last registered and not from the expiration date on the I-20 or DS-2019. If you plan to apply for off-campus work permission following your degree, you should attend an employment workshop (F-1 visa holders) or meet with an international student advisor (J-1 visa holders) prior to your degree completion. If you do not intend to apply for off-campus work authorization, please inform International Student & Faculty Services by completing the Notice of Departure Form available on the ISFS website and in the ISFS Student Services’ reception lobby.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS
If you move to a new residence, immigration regulations require that you inform USCIS within ten (10) days. You may do so by sending an email to ISFS.Advisor@oregonstate.edu in International Student & Faculty Services. Please type “Change of Address” in the subject line and include your new address information in the content section. If you prefer, you may come to the ISFS Student Services’ reception area and complete a Change of Address form available from the receptionist. You should also update your OSU student information by going to OSU Student Online Services at http://infosu.oregonstate.edu.

REINSTATEMENT
F-1 and J-1 students who violate their visa status should meet with an international student advisor to discuss possible options. In certain cases, a student may work with an advisor to file for “reinstatement” with the USCIS (F-1 students) or the Department of State (J-1 students). This can be a time-consuming and expensive process, and it is possible the request could be denied. Students who are in violation of their visa status are not eligible for any benefits of their status (e.g. on and off-campus employment and travel signatures). It is therefore in your best interest to know the regulations regarding your visa status and to consult an international student advisor if you have any questions.

QUESTIONS
If you have questions about your visa status, please make an appointment with an international student advisor by calling the ISFS Student Services receptionist at (541) 737-6310. Our office is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

I have read the above statements and understand that it is my responsibility to maintain my status as an F-1 or J-1 visa holder.

First Name   Last Name   OSU ID #

Signature  Date:

Revised 11/27/2012