Change of Level: Frequently Asked Questions
Students in F-1 Status

When do I need to submit this type of request?

- When you complete one degree program and will begin a new degree program.

When do I not need to submit this type of request?

- While these changes are considered changes of level for immigration purposes when the previous degree was completed, they are processed differently. In these cases, Admissions issues an admission letter and notifies ISSO you are changing degree programs.

When do I submit this request?

- No later than 60 days after completion of your old program
- Student completing in the spring semester and beginning a new program in the following fall semester
- No later than 15 days from beginning of classes at the new academic level
- Student completing in the fall semester and beginning a new program in the following spring semester
- Student completing in the spring semester and beginning a new program in the following summer session

How do I submit this request?

- This is an electronic process completed by logging into Cystart using your ISU NetID and password.
**What must I submit for this request?**

- Change of Level: Student Request e-form
- Verification of Academic Status e-form
- Documentation of admission to new degree program (*one of the following)*:
  - Admission letter
  - Copy of one of the following Graduate College forms:
    - Masters Student on Ph.D. Track in Same Department
    - Request to Transfer from one Major/Program/Department to Another
- Proof of financial support for next two semesters

**What do I need to know about the financial documentation?**

- Financial documents more than 3 months old will not be accepted
- Please refer to the Estimated Expenses information found on the ISSO web site (www.isso.iastate.edu):
  - Resources » Expense Worksheets

**What is the timeline for processing this request?**

- 10 working days after there is a check mark in all boxes on the Cystart Change of Level page

**How will I know if this request has been approved?**

- ISSO will send an e-mail to your ISU e-mail address when processing is complete.
  - If you do not receive this e-mail within 10 working days as noted above, please send an e-mail to
    [iss@iastate.edu](mailto:iss@iastate.edu) to check on your request.

**Why do I receive two I-20 forms for this type of request?**

- The first I-20 notifies U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) that you **intend** to change your academic level and enroll in a new academic program.
- The second I-20 must be issued by the deadline noted on page 1 of this document.
- The second I-20 notifies USCIS that you have enrolled in your new program
- The second I-20 is issued the first week of the semester when you register in your new program

**What are the immediate consequences if I fail to make this request within the time period noted above?**

- You will be considered in violation of your F-1 nonimmigrant status
- You will not be allowed to continue working on campus
- If you have authorization to work off campus, it will be automatically terminated
- You lose your eligibility for all other benefits of your F-1 nonimmigrant status
- You lose your eligibility to change your status, for example from F-1 to F-2, F-1 to H-1B, etc.