Transfer from ISU:
Frequently Asked Questions for Students in F-1 Status

Overview
What is a transfer?
A transfer is requested when a student is admitted to another U.S. school and wants their immigration record to be transferred to that institution. A transfer can occur in the middle of a degree program, after completing a degree program, or after engaging in a period of Optional Practical Training (OPT).

How is a transfer processed?
- Student is admitted to a new U.S. school
- Student submits a request to ISSO to transfer their SEVIS record to the new school
- ISSO releases student’s SEVIS record to the new school on a date indicated by the student
- New school issues transfer I-20 for student

Cystart Request
Do I need to meet with an International Student Advisor?
No, students are not required to meet with an International Student Advisor, but students may wish to meet with an advisor to discuss the SEVIS release date.

When should I submit the transfer request to ISSO?
- If completed degree program, students should submit the Cystart request no later than 45 days from the last day of the semester when the student was last enrolled at ISU
- If in the middle of a degree program, students should submit the Cystart request no later than 15 days before the start of the next semester
- If unemployed on OPT, no later than 15 days before reaching 90 days of unemployment

How do I submit the transfer request?
Transfer requests can be submitted through an electronic process in Cystart. Students may log in to Cystart using their ISU NetID and password. Complete and submit the Transfer from ISU request found under F-1 Student Services tab.

What must I submit for this request?
Students must submit an admission letter from the U.S. institution where they wish to be transferred.

What is the timeline for processing this request?
It will take ISSO up to 10 working days after there is a check mark in all boxes on the Cystart Transfer from ISU page and the admission letter has been submitted. ISSO will send an email to the student's ISU email address when processing is complete. If this email is not received in 10 working days as previously noted, ISSO recommends contacting the office by email at isso@iastate.edu to request the status of the application.

What else should I do after I decide to transfer from ISU?
- Withdraw from ISU if enrolled for the current/future semesters to avoid charges for tuition and fees (process must be done through AccessPlus or your academic/faculty advisor)
- Notify the Department of Residence if living in a residence hall or university apartment
What if I change my mind about which school I want to transfer to?
ISSO can cancel the transfer before the SEVIS release date. Students must contact ISSO at isso@iastate.edu in advance to request a cancellation. Students who wish to cancel a transfer request after the SEVIS release date will need to work with the new U.S. school and ISSO to correct the SEVIS record.

The New I-20
When will I get the new I-20 from my new school?
The new school must wait until the SEVIS record is released to issue the new I-20.

Why does my new transfer I-20 say transfer pending?
The SEVIS transfer is a two-step process. The first I-20 documents that the SEVIS record has been transferred to the new school. This I-20 will say "Transfer Pending." The second I-20 documents that the student is registered for classes. This I-20 will say "Continued Attendance."

What if I do not complete the immigration transfer process and the new school gives me an initial I-20?
This type of I-20 is issued for the purpose of initial attendance. An initial I-20 can be problematic for students, as they must reenter the U.S. and can return to the U.S. no more than 30 days prior to the report date on the new I-20. Students are advised to inform the international office at the new school that they intend to transfer their SEVIS record.

Impact on Enrollment
When must I begin classes at the new school?
Following a transfer, students are required to begin classes the next available term AND within 5 months from:
- The last day of the semester when last enrolled
- The last day of OPT employment

Impact on Employment
When must I stop my authorized employment (on campus, CPT, OPT)?
Students must stop all employment authorized by ISSO:
- The day before SEVIS release date, if they have not completed degree
- On the last day of enrollment, if they have completed degree

How will I be notified that I must stop on-campus employment?
If the student has or will complete their degree before transferring, ISSO will shorten the student’s I-20 to the last day of the semester they were enrolled. As a result, the student’s I-9 work permit will also be shortened preventing the student from working on campus. The student and department will be notified of the last day they can work on-campus.

When can I resume on-campus employment at the new school?
Students may be eligible to begin employment at the new school as early as the date their SEVIS record is transferred. Policies vary between schools, so please consult with the International Student Advisor at the new school regarding the earliest on-campus employment date.

Impact on Travel
What if I want to go home before starting classes at the new school?
Students who have transferred their records must use the I-20 from the new school to return to the U.S. Students may not be able to reenter more than 30 days before the reporting date on the new I-20.

**Will I need to apply for a new F-1 visa after my SEVIS record was transferred?**

Students whose current F-1 visa expires after the date of return and who have multiple entries do not need to apply for a new F-1 visa. This is true even if the current F-1 visa has ISU listed in the annotation at the bottom of the visa.

**Immigration Consequences**

**What are the immediate consequences if I fail to request a transfer within the timeframes noted above?**

- Considered in violation of F-1 nonimmigrant status
  - Must apply for reinstatement or travel and reenter for new F-1 status
- Not allowed to continue working on campus
- If authorized for off-campus employment, it will be automatically terminated
- Lose eligibility for all other benefits of F-1 nonimmigrant status
- Lose eligibility to change status, for example from F-1 to H-1B
Disclaimer: This *Frequently Asked Questions* document is intended for general information and guidance. Please consult with an International Student and Scholar Advisor in the International Students and Scholars Office regarding your individual request.