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

What is a transfer?
- Change from ISU to another U.S. school where a student has been admitted to
  - SEVIS record is transferred from ISU to the new school
  - Transfer can occur in the middle of a degree program, after completing a degree program, or after engaging in a period of OPT

How is a transfer processed?
1. Student is admitted to a new U.S. school
2. Student submits a request to ISSO to transfer his/her SEVIS record to the new school (see below for required documentation)
3. ISSO releases student’s SEVIS record to the new school on a date indicated by the student
4. New school issues transfer I-20 for student

When must I submit the transfer request to ISSO?
- No later than 45 days from the last day of the semester when you were last enrolled at ISU, if you completed your program of study at ISU
- No later than 15 days from the start date of the next semester at ISU if you are in the middle of a degree program

How do I submit the transfer request?
- Log in to Cystart using your ISU NetID and password. The link to Cystart can be found on the ISSO website
- Cystart ▶ F-1 Student Services ▶ Transfer from ISU
  - Upload admission letter from new school (required)
  - Academic/Faculty Acknowledgement e-form (not required if you have completed your program at ISU or have been on OPT)

How long will it take ISSO to process my transfer request?
- Up to 10 working days after there is a check mark in all boxes on your Cystart Transfer from ISU request
- ISSO will not start processing your request until all required e-forms and the admission letter is submitted, as noted above

How will I know if my request has been processed?
- ISSO will send an e-mail to your ISU e-mail address when processing is complete.
- If you do not receive this e-mail after 10 working days as noted above, please send an e-mail to isso@iastate.edu to check on the status of your request

When must I begin classes at the new school?
- Within 5 months from the last day of the semester when you were last enrolled at ISU
Do I need to meet an ISSO advisor?
- No, but you may want to discuss the SEVIS release date with an ISSO advisor

How is my authorized employment (on campus, CPT, OPT) affected by my transfer?
- Students must stop all employment authorized by ISSO the day before the SEVIS release date
- Students are eligible to begin employment at the new school on the date their SEVIS record is transferred
  - However, policies do vary between schools, so please consult with the international student advisor at the new school regarding the earliest employment date

What else should I do after I decide to transfer from ISU?
- Withdraw from ISU if enrolled for the current semester
  - Process begins with your academic/faculty advisor
  - If you fail to complete this step, you will remain responsible for paying your ISU tuition and fees
- Cancel your future registration if transferring between semesters
  - If you fail to complete this step, you will remain responsible for paying your ISU tuition and fees
- Notify the Department of Residence if living in a residence hall or university apartment

When will I get my new I-20 from my new school?
- The new school must wait until your 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 your SEVIS record was transferred to the new school.
  - The second I-20 documents that you have registered for classes at the new school. It will say continued attendance.

What if I want to go home before starting classes at the new school?
- You must use the I-20 from the new school to return to the U.S. You will not be able to reenter the U.S. earlier than 30 days before the day you need to report to your new school.

Will I need to apply for a new F-1 visa since my SEVIS record was transferred?
- If your current F-1 visa expires after your date of return and has multiple entries, then you will not need to apply for a new F-1 visa. This is true even if your current F-1 visa has ISU listed in the annotation at the bottom of the visa.

What are the immediate consequences if I fail to request a transfer within the timeframes 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 H-1B
What if I change my mind about which school I want to transfer to?

- ISSO can cancel the transfer if you notify an ISSO advisor before the SEVIS release date you selected
  - To request a cancellation, e-mail isso@iastate.edu or call 515-294-1120
  - If you change your mind after the SEVIS release date, ISSO will not be able to assist you. You will need to work with the new educational institution to correct your SEVIS record.

What if I don’t complete the immigration transfer process and the new school gives me a new I-20?

- This type of I-20 is issued for the purpose of initial attendance
  - You will not be able to return to the U.S. until 30 days prior to the report date on your new I-20
  - You will need to enroll full time for one full academic year before being eligible for CPT or OPT
  - If you failed to inform the new school you were previously enrolled at ISU
  - This is viewed as fraud and is reason for the new school to cancel your admission