Program Extension: Frequently Asked Questions
Students in F-1 Status

When do I need to submit this type of request?

- Current degree program cannot be completed by end date on I-20
  - Refer to section 5 on page 1 of your I-20

What are acceptable reasons for this request?

- Compelling, valid academic reason (see examples below)
  - Change of major
  - Change of research topic
  - Unexpected research problem(s)
- Completing a master’s degree with a creative component or thesis and only given two years to complete the program on the original I-20
- Addition of a second major at the same degree level
- Addition of minor
- Compelling medical reason (student’s illness or medical condition)

What reasons are not acceptable for this request?

- Allow additional time for Curricular Practical Training
- Poor job market/failure to find employment
- Delay in completing degree requirements caused after being placed on academic probation or having been suspended from Iowa State University

How long an extension can I request?

- Any length of time it would reasonably take to complete degree requirements.

Can I request additional extensions, if needed?

- Yes, as long as there continues to be a compelling academic or medical reason.

When do I submit this request?

- As early as four months prior to the end date on current I-20
- At least ten calendar days prior to the end date on current I-20

How do I submit this request?

- This is an electronic process completed by logging in to Cystart using your ISU NetID and password.
- Start this processing by reviewing the Program Extension page found ISSO web site (www.isso.iastate.edu):
  - Enrolled Students » Immigration Info & Forms » F-1/F-2 Status » Program Extension
What must I submit for this request?

- Program Extension: Student Request e-form
- Verification of Academic Status e-form
- Director of Graduate Education (DOGE) Support e-form
- Proof of financial support for next two semesters (or next one semester if requesting extension for only one semester)
- Letter from a licensed medical doctor or licensed clinical psychologist which documents your illness or condition, if applicable

What if I don’t know who the DOGE is for my graduate program?

- Please refer to the following website for a list of graduate programs. Click on your program to find the name of the DOGE, then consult the ISU Directory for the DOGE’s e-mail address and phone number.
  - http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/academics/programs/approgram.php

What do I need to know about the financial documentation?

- Please refer to the Estimated Expenses information found on the ISSO web site (www.isso.iastate.edu):
  - Enrolled Students » Immigration Info & Forms » F-1/F-2 Status » Estimated Expenses

What is the timeline for processing this request?

- 10 calendar days after there is a check mark in all boxes on the Cystart Program Extension 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 calendar days as noted above, please send an e-mail to isso@iastate.edu to check on your request.

What are the immediate consequences if I fail to make this request before my current I-20 expires?

- 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