

# Academic Regulations for International Students

The International Student Advisor administers academic regulations for nonimmigrant alien students. In addition to complying with the general academic regulations of the University, students from foreign countries who are enrolled on F-1 student visas are required by law to maintain a minimum full-time status (9 credit hours) during every regular semester and to be progressing toward a degree from the University. Such students must obtain the permission of the International Student Advisor before dropping a course, changing majors or programs, or withdrawing from the University. For this reason, the enrollment status of all international students is monitored every month. To remain in compliance with the terms of their visa, F-1 students may not work without authorization, nor may they leave the country without obtaining a travel endorsement from the International.

## Maintaining F–1 and J–1 Status

Per immigration regulations, F and J visa holders are required to “enroll and complete a full course of study” every regular semester (Fall and Spring), thus making academic progress towards a degree. Graduate students are required to take a minimum of 9 credit hours in the fall and spring semesters. Summer enrollment is optional unless it is the student’s first semester at UST. Students beginning in a summer semester must enroll for a minimum of six credit hours in order to maintain status. A student may take less than 9 credit hours in their final semester or for other reasons mandated by United States Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS). Students are advised to seek guidance from the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (OISSS) for more information.

Immigration does have specifications on how many online/hybrid courses an international student may take. A student who takes more than the appropriate number of online/hybrid classes will be out of status. To immigration a student that does not physically attend a class automatically becomes a Homeland Security issue.

Total number of credit hours # of required credit hours of face-to-face classes Acceptable # of credit hours of online courses		
9 credit hours	6	3
12 credit hours	6	6
15 credit hours	9	6

Additionally, students must obtain permission from an International Student Advisor (ISA) before dropping a course, changing degree programs or withdrawing from the University. The OISSS reserves the exclusive authority in authorizing such requests. Failure to obtain such permission beforehand will result in a direct violation of one’s status, and a termination of their SEVIS record.

Immigration documents such as passports and I–20’s/DS–2019’s must be valid at all times. Passports must be valid for at least six months into the future; I–20’s must be extended before the expiration date. Failure to extend the end date of one’s I–20 will result in a termination of one’s SEVIS record and will be required to apply for reinstatement.