

ISS TOWN HALL

The D/S Final Rule and its Impact on F and J International Students and Scholars.

International Students and Scholars
31 July 2026

UCR Land Acknowledgement



We at UCR would like to respectfully acknowledge and recognize our responsibility to the original and current caretakers of this land, water, and air: the Cahuilla [ka-wee-ahh], Tongva [tong-va], Luiseño [loo-say-ngo], and Serrano [se-ran-oh] peoples and all of their ancestors and descendants, past, present, and future. Today this meeting place is home to many Indigenous peoples from all over the world, including UCR faculty, students, and staff, and we are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work on these homelands.

Meet the International Student and Scholar Support Team



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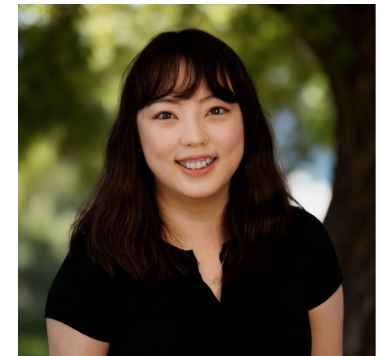
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Agenda

- Background Information
- Key Changes
- Resources
- Q & A

** Information in this presentation is current as of 31 July 2026, is subject to change, and does *not* constitute legal advice. **



Background Information

History of the D/S Rule

1991 & 1993	D/S introduced for F and J
28 Aug 2025	Proposed Rule published in the Federal Register
29 Sep 2025	Comments due
17 Jun 2026	Proposed Rule review completed by OMB
17 Jul 2026	Final Rule published in the Federal Register
15 Sep 2026	Final Rule goes into effect

Definitions

Duration of Status (D/S)

The period of time during which an F-1 international student, a J-1 Exchange Visitor Student, or a J-1 Exchange Visitor Scholar is allowed to remain in the United States. Typically, this is until the completion of their academic program or their research program as indicated by the end date on their I-20 and DS-2019. They must remain in legal status during their program.

I-20 and DS-2019

Immigration documents issued by ISS for F-1 and J-1 status and used by students and scholars to apply for an entry visa and to show at the border when seeking admission to the US.

I-94

Admission document issued by Customs and Border Protection to non-immigrants entering the US. The document shows the status of admission (e.g., F-1, J-1) and indicates how long the individual may legally remain in the US.

Admit Until Date (AUD)

The program end date on the I-20 or DS-2019 - not to exceed four years - plus a grace period of 30 days.



Key Changes

Fixed-Date Admissions to US

- F students or J Exchange Visitors who arrive in the US starting **15 September 2026** will no longer receive “D/S” on their I-94.
- The AUD will be the program end date on the I-20 or DS-2019 - not to exceed four years - plus a grace period of 30 days.

I-539 Extension of Stay (EOS) Application

- F students or J Exchange Visitors who need time beyond their AUD for whatever reason (e.g., program extension, transfers, changing academic levels, OPT, or Academic Training) must file a I-539 Extension of Stay Application with USCIS before their AUD expires.
- The I-539 will require the payment of a filing fee, biometrics, and a possible interview.

Transition Provisions

- Transition Provisions apply to F Students and J Exchange Visitors who were admitted with D/S and are inside the US on 15 September 2026.
- These students and exchange visitors do not have to apply for a date-fixed I-94 once the rule goes into effect.
- They will have to apply for an Extension of Stay if they wish to stay in the US beyond the program end date on their I-20, DS-2019 or OPT EAD, **OR** four years from the effective date of the Final Rule, whichever is shorter.
- These students will continue to retain their 60-day grace period (F students) after the effective date of the Final Rule. However, if they exit and reenter the US, or apply for an extension of stay on or after the effective date, they will be assigned a date-fixed AUD and a 30-day grace period on their I-94.

Academic Mobility Issues

Below the Graduate Level

- Cannot change their academic program for one year (extenuating circumstances exception possible).
- Cannot transfer to another institution for one year (extenuating circumstances exception possible).
- Grace period for F students who complete their program shortened to 30 days.
- Cannot enroll in a new program unless it is a degree level up. Lateral and reverse matriculation are not allowed.

Graduate Study and Above

- Cannot change their academic program.
- Cannot transfer to another institution (extenuating circumstances exception possible) for duration of their program. Can transfer after completion of program if to a higher degree level.
- Grace period for F students who complete their program shortened to 30 days.
- Cannot enroll in a new program unless it is a degree level up. Lateral and lower degree level programs are not allowed.

Various Topics I

Travel

- If inside the US, consider not traveling outside the US from 15 Sep onwards to preserve D/S on I-94.
- If outside the US, consider returning to the US before 15 Sep to avoid getting an AUD.

Admit Until Date (AUD)

- AUD is not the same as your program end date.
- Your program end date is the end date on your I-20 or DS-2019.
- $AUD = \text{Program End Date} + 30\text{-day grace period}$.
- If you finish before your program end date, your I-20 will be shortened to the day you complete all program requirements.
- Notify the ISS office in advance if you believe you will complete your program early.

I-94

- Check the AUD on your I-94 and share that with ISS.
- Your AUD may be earlier than expected if your passport will expire before your program end date.
- Dependents may have a different AUD than the principal visa holder.

USCIS Adjudications

- Prepare for delays in processing applications and for challenges by USCIS.
- Consider filing applications as soon as you possibly can.
- Be prepared for increased costs - filing fees, premium processing, attorney fees.

Various Topics II

Extension of Stay (EOS)

- Expect greater scrutiny for extension applications.
- In the Preamble to the Final Rule, DHS states:
 - "In these circumstances, DHS will only extend the stay beyond the program end date of an otherwise eligible F-1 student requesting additional time to complete their program if the additional time needed is due to a compelling academic reason, documented medical illness or medical condition, or circumstance that was beyond the student's control. As with all nonimmigrant EOS requests, an alien seeking an EOS generally must have continually maintained status. If an F-1 student dropped below a full course of study, that drop must have been properly authorized."
- Possibility of biometrics and interview requirements
- Travel may be an option instead of an EOS application to obtain new AUD.
- If your I-20/DS-2019 is going to expire before 15 Sep, or if you know you will need an EOS in the near future, contact ISS to discuss extending your program now.

OPT

- F-1 students admitted for D/S **AND** who are present in the US for 60 days when the Final Rule takes effect on 15 Sep 2026 **AND** who timely file for post-completion OPT or STEM OPT by 18 March 2027 do not need to file a separate application for an EOS.
- If you are required to include a request for EOS when you apply for OPT, these applications can be submitted concurrently to USCIS. However, the OPT application (Form I-765) can be premium processed, but the EOS application (Form I-539) can not be premium processed. This means that one application could be pending longer than the other.
- Traveling and reentering the US from 15 Sep onwards with a pending OPT application will result in an I-94 with an AUD.



Resources

Important Links

Federal Register: Final Rule

https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2026/07/17/2026-14439/establishing-a-fixed-time-period-of-admission-and-an-extension-of-stay-procedure-for-nonimmigrant?utm_campaign=subscription+mailing+list&utm_medium=email&utm_source=federalregister.gov

Study in the States D/S Rule Quick Facts

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/final-rule-establishing-a-fixed-time-period-of-admission-and-an-extension-of-stay-procedure-quick>

Study in the States D/S Rule FAQs

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/final-rule-establishing-a-fixed-time-period-of-admission-and-an-extension-of-stay-procedure-faq>

International Student Resource Center Review of D/S Rule

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/68efa75e435c96768a4c97cf/t/6a5ab0569359ff0b374e9e94/1784328278877/Loss+of+D%3AS.pdf>

International Student Resource Center FAQs

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/68efa75e435c96768a4c97cf/t/6a5ac4609b4a8d39c3037bbf/1784333408838/FAQs+for+Loss+of+D%3AS+Regulation.pdf>



International Affairs

Drop-In Mondays

Meeting with Kelly, Makbule, and Michael every Monday through 14 September 2026

- Time: 3.30pm to 4.30pm
- Purpose: Discuss the Final D/S Rule
- Link: <https://ucr.zoom.us/j/97272115633>

No Appointment/Registration Necessary!



Thank you for supporting our international students and scholars at UCR!

Thank you for your support and advocacy for our international students.
Let's continue to work together to provide a welcoming environment of trust
and advocacy for all of our students.



International Affairs