Enrollment and Program Extensions

For F-1 and J-1 students
Today’s Agenda

- Enrollment Requirements for F-1 and J-1 students
  - Definitions for graduates and undergraduates
  - Definition of in-person course
  - Reduced Course Load
  - Withdrawals
  - Leaves of Absence
- Program Extensions
  - Eligibility requirements
  - Program extension process
- OIS Statistics
- Resources
Enrollment Requirements: the Basics

- Must be enrolled full-time in their first term of study
- Must be enrolled full-time each fall and spring term, unless it is their last term
- No enrollment requirements for summer term, unless summer is their last term
- Summer graduates must be enrolled in the summer term
How many credits is full-time?

• Graduate students
  • 9 credits OR
  • Full-time dissertator status (FTDR, etc.)

• Undergraduate students
  • 12 credits
Online Credits

• Only 3 online credits can count toward a student’s full-time enrollment each term.

Maintaining Status

• A graduate student with 3 online credits out of 9 total credits for the term
• An undergraduate student with 3 online credits out of 12 total credits for the term
• A graduate student with 6 online credits out of 12 total credits for the term
• An undergraduate student with 6 online credits out of 15 total credits for the term

Violating Status

• A graduate student with 6 online credits out of 9 total credits for the term
• An undergraduate student with 6 online credits out of 12 total credits for the term
Hybrid Courses
Hybrid courses count as in-person
Medical Reduced Course Load

- Illness or Medical reason
- This can be for partial enrollment or NO enrollment
- Student can stay in the US with under a medical RCL
- Medical documentation is required
  - MD
  - Doctor of Osteopathy
  - Licensed clinical psychologist
Reduced Course Load Options

- To Complete Course of Study in Current Term
- Unfamiliarity with American Teaching Methods – *first term only*
- Initial Difficulty with Reading Requirements – *first term only*
- Initial Difficulty with the English Language – *first term only*
- Improper Course Level Placement
W’s, I’s, G’s, etc.

W’s – do not count toward full-time enrollment

I’s, G’s – usually okay, except when in last term
What about withdrawing from course(s) during the term?

- If the student will no longer actively participate in 12 credits (UG) or 9 credits (GRAD)

- If a student has received RCL authorization from OIS...
  or

- If a student withdraws from a course, and is still actively participating in 12 credits (UG) and 9 credits
Leave of Absence

- Students need to report their plans to OIS
- Students can choose to withdraw mid-semester or before a semester starts
- Students must depart the US while taking a leave of absence
- OIS can work with these students for new immigration documents when they are ready to return
Suspensions

• Dates are important!
  • Please notify OIS when students have been suspended.
  • Appeals?

• Students aren’t eligible to remain in U.S. if they can’t enroll

• After suspension period is over, OIS can work with student to create new immigration document for return
Program Extension Eligibility

• The US government requires there to be a "compelling academic or medical reason" for the extension

• Examples:
  • Change in major
  • Change in research project
  • Documented medical condition/illness affecting studies
Program Extension Process

Student fills out Program Extension e-form in My OIS

E-form goes to student's academic advisor for comment/review

OIS reviews student's e-form and processes extension, then sends new immigration document to student
## OIS Statistics: e-forms

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<th>18-19</th>
<th>19-20</th>
<th>20-21</th>
<th>21-22</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>388</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced Course Loads (all)</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>153</td>
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<tr>
<td>Return to Pitt from Leave</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Pitt has about 2,800 enrolled F-1 students
Resources: Handouts

- Reduced Course Load for Final Term
- Reduced Course Load for Medical Reason
- Leave of Absence
- Program Extension for F-1 and J-1 Students
- Maintaining Your Immigration Status
Resources: OIS Immigration Specialists

https://www.ois.pitt.edu/whoismyis
Questions?