

Dear International Students and Scholars,

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has officially [published a final rule](#) that will change how international students and exchange visitors are admitted to the United States. This new regulation formally eliminates the Duration of Status (D/S) policy and replaces it with a fixed period of admission. The rule is scheduled to officially go into effect on **September 15, 2026**.

We understand that news of regulatory changes can naturally induce anxiety within our international community. We want to strongly reassure you that the Office of Global Engagement is fully prepared to guide and support you through this transition. We ask that you remain calm and avoid relying on inaccurate or overly exaggerated information currently circulating on the internet. Our team is closely tracking these developments and will provide you with verified, accurate, and high-level compliance guidance every step of the way.

To help you clearly understand how these changes might affect your specific situation, here is a summary of the core frameworks introduced by the new rule:

- **Fixed Admission Periods:** F-1 academic students and J-1 exchange visitors will now be admitted only until their program end date, capped at a maximum of four years.
- **Formal Extension of Stay (EOS):** Anyone needing authorized time beyond their fixed Date of Admission – such as PhD candidates or individuals transitioning to Optional Practical Training (OPT) – must file a formal EOS application directly with USCIS rather than relying on standard university updates. The current filing fee is nearly \$500.
- **Reduced Grace Period:** The post-completion grace period allowed for F-1 students to depart the United States or transition into a new academic program will be reduced from 60 days to 30 days.
- **Heightened Monitoring:** The rule introduces strict limitations and closer tracking regarding institutional transfers, changes in majors, and shifts in educational levels.
- **Transition Provisions for Current Students and Scholars:** If you are currently inside the U.S. under D/S before September 15, 2026, transitional rules allow you to remain through your current program (the end date on the I-20 or DS-2019) or for up to four years, whichever is shorter, before becoming subject to the new EOS application requirements.

Please know that you do not have to navigate these bureaucratic hurdles alone. Our office will be building a comprehensive FAQ landing page filled with detailed breakdowns, which we will share with you very soon. Additionally, following an initial leadership briefing in early August, our office will launch a dedicated campus outreach campaign. We will host campus-wide town halls and tailored meetings specifically for our international student and scholar communities to

ensure everyone fully understands their options and obligations well before the September 15 deadline.

Additionally, please save the date for a Virtual Townhall on D/S via Zoom on August 12th at 11:00 a.m. More details to come.

Our absolute priority is to preserve your status and make this transition as smooth as possible for you. If you are feeling understandably overwhelmed regarding the news and need to speak to someone or access resources, please reach out to the Global Community Center (GCC) in person or via email at icc@lsu.edu.