According to USCIS, international students are required to complete their academic programs within certain time limitations; however, there are legitimate reasons for delays in graduation that are clearly defined by the USCIS. Extensions are only allowed under specific circumstances. International students who do not complete their program of study within the time period stated on their immigration forms may apply for an extension or may need to apply for a reinstatement to student status.

An extension of stay is required for students who do not complete their degree program by the completion date on the I-20 or DS 2019. Never let your I-20 or DS-2019 expire! Students must apply for an extension well before the completion date stated in Item 5 of the I-20.

To apply for an extension of stay, please bring the following documents to the Office of International Studies:

- Passport
- Form I-20/DS-2019
- Form I-94
- Proof of financial support. You should be able to verify the amount necessary for the extension of the I-20 with a personal bank statement, Research Assistant/Graduate Assistantship verification letter (should include salary and tuition payment details), or sponsor’s letter and sponsor’s bank statement.
- Completed Academic Advisor recommendation (attached) stating:
  1. That your academic progress has been adequate given your particular degree requirements and circumstances.
  2. The academic or other circumstances affecting the amount of time required for completion of your degree program as opposed to the time stated on your I-20.
  3. Expected completion date (semester and year).

Students working on campus need to show a copy of the extended I-20 or DS-2019 to their employing department, or take a copy directly to Human Resources to update their Form I-9 (Employment Eligibility Verification).
Academic Advisor’s Form for Extension of Stay

As part of the application process for this type extension includes permission from the Academic Advisor, Department Chair, Thesis Advisor, or ELI Director who must provide the following information to the Office of International Studies.

Student’s name: ____________________________________________________________

UID Number: ______________________________________________________________

Student’s major: ____________________________________________________________

**NEW** Expected completion Date: ________________________________

Expected Date of Thesis/Dissertation/Project Completion (when applicable) ______________________

Has this student been continuously enrolled for a full course of study: _______YES _______NO

This student is unable to complete his/her program of study by the date listed on the I-20/DS 2019, due to the following reason(s): *(please check all that apply)*

- □ Change of major
- □ Change in research topic
- □ Unexpected research delays
- □ Loss of credits upon transfer to Illinois State University
- □ Illness (Doctor’s note of explanation required)
- □ Length of time given of I-20/DS 2019 was inadequate. Explain: _____________________________
- □ Other: ____________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

Academic Advisor’s name (print)

________________________________________________________

Academic Advisor’s Signature    Department    Date