

# *Keys to Maintaining your Non-Immigrant Status*

As an international student, it is important to follow certain rules pertaining to your F-1 or J-1 nonimmigrant status. Here is a list of things that you can do to help maintain your status:

- **Do not let your immigration documents expire**  
Look for the expiration date noted on your I-20 or DS-2019. If you cannot complete your studies by that date, you must request an extension of your document. The application materials for F-1 and J-1 program extension are available at:  
[www.eiu.edu/~interntl/applications\\_forms/CertificationAdvisorextension.pdf](http://www.eiu.edu/~interntl/applications_forms/CertificationAdvisorextension.pdf)
- **Keep your passport valid**  
As is the case with your immigration documents, you should keep your passport valid at all times. Contact your [home country consulate](#) or embassy for information on extending the validity of your passport. Note: citizens of Canada are exempt from the passport requirement.
- **Register for a full course of study**  
In general, you should plan to register for 12 credit hours (undergraduates) or 9 credit hours (graduates) in the Fall and Spring semesters. Summer registration is optional.
- **Do not work without authorization**  
You must always secure permission to work, even for jobs at Eastern Illinois University.
- **Work no more than a total of 20 hours per week during the Fall and Spring semesters**  
In some instances, you may be eligible to work more than 20 hours per week. Consult with an IP staff member for more information.
- **Notify the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services and IP of any address change no later than 10 days after moving**  
Complete the Form AR-11 by Certified Mail with a Return Receipt requested. Keep the mail receipt and a photocopy of the AR-11 for your records.  
  
Complete the Change of Address form available at IP.
- **Follow transfer procedures if you begin a new program of study, change field of study, or plan to attend a different school**

Consult with a designated school official prior to the change in order to determine what you must do.