Recovering F-1 Status

There are two options to recover your F-1 status.

1. With the recommendation of your international student advisor, apply to USCIS for reinstatement to F-1 status, or
2. Obtain a new I-20 from OISS, leave the United States and reenter in F-1 status.

If you are uncertain about which option will be best for you, please make an appointment with an international student advisor to discuss your options.

Reinstatement
You will only be considered for reinstatement as an F-1 student if you establish:

1. That the violation of status was due to circumstances beyond your control or that failure to reinstate you will result in extreme hardship,
2. You are pursuing or will pursue a full course of study, and
3. You have not been employed without authorization

In order to apply for reinstatement, you must make an appointment with an international student advisor who will review the situation and determine whether NOVA can recommend reinstatement. You will need to bring the following documents to your appointment:

- Letter explaining, in detail why the violation was beyond your control and if not, why not receiving reinstatement will result in extreme hardship
- New F-1 Financial statement and bank statements
- Passport
- I-94
- Photocopy of all previous I-20 forms
- Official transcripts from all schools attended in the U.S.
- Completed I-539 form (available at www.uscis.gov)

If the international student advisor agrees that NOVA can recommend reinstatement she/he will provide you with following documents and help you to prepare your application for mailing.

- Letter, on official school letterhead, with a detailed explanation of the events which lead up to the termination of the I-20. The letter will also include how long you have been out of status; whether you are pursuing or intend to pursue a full course of study in the immediate future; whether the violation was beyond your control and if so, how; and whether the violation might have been authorized as less than a full course of study.
- New I-20

You will need to make a copy of all documents for your file and mail all the documents with a check or money order for $290 written to U.S. Department of Homeland Security with to the following address. It generally takes 2-3 months to get an answer.

USCIS Vermont Service Center
75 Lower Welden Street
St. Albans, VT 05479-0001
Travel and Re-entry in F-1 Status

If you elect to leave the U.S. and re-enter with a new "Initial Attendance" I-20, it will be necessary for you to schedule an appointment with the Office of International Student Services (OISS).

You should arrive at your appointment with the following documentation.

- Completed I-20 Application form
- Evidence of financial support
- Copy of official transcript
- Passport

After you have your I-20 you must depart the U.S. as soon as possible. In order to return to the U.S. you will need:

- Valid passport
- Valid F-1 visa
- New I-20
- New receipt for SEVIS fee paid for the new I-20
- Official transcript

You will be eligible to return to the U.S. no more than 30 days before the reporting date on the new I-20.

NOTE: To be eligible to work off campus, an F-1 student must have been lawfully enrolled as a full-time student for nine months or one academic year. If a student falls out of status after being enrolled for nine months and decides to recover status by reentering the United States, the nine-month period begins again when he/she returns.