



CHANGE OF MAJOR PROCEDURES

F-1 and J-1 students are admitted to the U.S. to work towards "the attainment of a specific education or professional objective," as stated in U.S. Federal Regulations.

J-1 students are not permitted to change academic majors in the U.S.

F-1 students are permitted to change their majors. U.S. regulations do not require a government adjudication to change or add academic majors. However, as an F-1 visa holder, you are responsible for maintaining an accurate, updated SEVIS I-20 as the major listed on the I-20 has implications for subsequent employment authorization. Notify your International Student Adviser of a change of major so that a new SEVIS I-20 may be processed and printed.

For F-1 students only:

- Follow all Vanderbilt University academic requirements for change of major
- Inform your International Student Adviser of the program change, submit to ISSS a letter of authorization on departmental letterhead and written by your academic adviser or dean.
- Submit the [Student I-20/DS-2019 Extension](#) form
- Your International Student Adviser will review your application for approval and issue you a new document

CHANGE OF LEVEL PROCEDURES

As an international student, if you decide to pursue a different or subsequent academic program at Vanderbilt, you must follow procedures to maintain status while continuing to another degree level. A change of level may be from B.S. to M.S., M.A. to PhD, or other. This also includes reductions of academic level, such as PhD to M.S., and same-level degree changes, such as one M.A. to a different M.A.

Like a change of major, a change of academic degree level does not require government adjudication. Again, you are responsible for maintaining an accurate, updated SEVIS document as the academic level listed on the I-20 or DS-2019 has implications for subsequent employment authorization. Notify your International Student Adviser of your change of level so that a new SEVIS I-20 may be processed and printed.

For F-1 and J-1 students:

- Follow all Vanderbilt University academic requirements for change of level
- Before ending the prior/current program, inform your International Student Adviser of the program change. Note: When moving up a degree level (e.g. M.S. to PhD), you must initiate the change of level either before ending the prior program or before the post-completion "grace period" is reached (30-day grace period for J-1 students; 60-day grace period for F-1 students).
- If you are moving up a degree level, you must have completed (or be nearing completion of) the prior degree level and have been admitted to the higher degree level. ISSS must receive a copy of your admission letter (this is typically provided by The Graduate School or the admitting school or department).
- If you are moving down a degree level (e.g. PhD to M.S.), you must submit to ISSS an authorization letter on departmental letterhead, written and signed by your academic adviser or dean.
- If moving between two academic degree programs at the same academic level, your International Student Adviser will advise you as to how you will proceed as this change may be considered as a change of level or as a change of major.
- Submit the [Student Program Extension](#) form
- Your International Student Adviser will review your application for approval and issue you a new document (DS-2019 or I-20)