

International Graduate & Professional Student Webinar

ISEO + GEPA | October 23, 2025

Who we are

ISEO

International Services and Engagement Office

- Provide holistic support for UCSD international community
- Provide a full range of collaborative services and programs
- Foster an inclusive and welcoming environment

GEPA

Graduate Education & Postdoctoral Affairs

- Serve as main resource for graduate education and postdoctoral affairs
- Student Affairs and Financial Support
- Partner with programs to help scholars advance in their academic disciplines
- Offer innovative professional development

You Should Know

The information provided in this virtual presentation is for general informational purposes only and is not intended to constitute legal advice. Viewers are advised to seek professional legal advice or assistance regarding their specific circumstances.

*Furthermore, the content presented in this virtual presentation **may be subject to change**, and while we make every effort to ensure the accuracy and timeliness of the information, we cannot guarantee that it is always up to date. Therefore, we do not accept any responsibility for any loss which may arise from reliance on information contained in this virtual presentation. Any action taken based on the information presented is at the viewer's own risk. By viewing this virtual presentation, viewers acknowledge and agree that the presenters and organizers are not liable for any direct or indirect damages or any damages whatsoever resulting from the use of the information presented.*

As new developments unfold, it is important to consult with a qualified immigration attorney for individual advice regarding specific legal issues and to ensure you remain in close coordination with your graduate departments for any new changes to options, policies, and guidance stated in this presentation.

You are a valuable member of the Triton Community



Topics to be Covered Today

- 1 Visa Interview Waiver Policy Changes
- 2 Proposed Regulations on Duration of Status
- 3 Addressing Your Submitted Questions
- 4
 - Visa and Status
 - Hiring Trends and H1B
 - OPT

PLEASE NOTE: Questions may be submitted in the Q&A down below. This presentation was designed to answer the most common questions submitted via registration, so we will prioritize the submitted questions at the end of the presentation. We will neither take questions via the “raise your hand” feature, nor will this be recorded.

What we know so far

Visa Interview Waiver Policy and Country of Residency Changes

- **Effective October 1, 2025**, visa interview policy waiver reduced significantly for nonimmigrant visa application
- Most individuals applying for or renewing their visas - including F-1, J-1, H-1B, E-3, O-1 and their dependents - will be required to attend an in-person interview
- Also, **effective September 6, 2025** applicants for U.S. nonimmigrant visas should only schedule visa interview appointments at U.S. Embassy or Consulate in their country of nationality or residence
 - Should be able to demonstrate residence in country where applying
- Prepare for longer wait times and more limited appointment availability

as of 10/17/25

The role of visas in eligibility for...

- **Entering the Country**

- A valid visa stamp is required. This is your “ticket” for entry. Can expire in U.S. without affecting F-1 or J-1 **status**.

- **Remaining in the Country**

- Must maintain F-1 or J-1 **status**. This is determined by U.S. entry record (I-94), valid I-20 or DS-2019, and adherence to rules and regulations (full time enrollment, employment with valid authorization, etc.). Not determined by visa stamp.

What we know so far

Proposed Regulations on Duration of Status

- On **August 28, 2025**, DHS/ICE proposed rule to end “duration of status” for F, J and I nonimmigrants in the Federal Register
 - **Fixed-Date Admissions:** F and J visa holders would be admitted to the U.S. for a specific end date (max 4 years), not "duration of status" (D/S); grace period reduced from 60 to 30 days.
 - **Mandatory Extension Process:** Extensions (e.g., for program changes, OPT, transfers) would require filing Form I-539 with USCIS, including a fee, biometrics, and possible interview.
 - **English Language Program Limit:** Students in English language training programs would be limited to 24 months of study.
 - **Restricted Academic Changes:** Limits on transferring schools or changing academic programs; graduate students cannot change their degree objective.
 - **No Reverse or Lateral Study Paths:** F-1 students would be prohibited from enrolling in a program at the same or lower academic level after completing one.

as of 10/17/25

What we know so far

What happens next?

- Public comments on the proposal were due September 29, 2025 (15,000+ comments received)
- Comments on forms impacted by the proposal due October 27, 2025
- This is in proposed rule stage: rule would not become final until after DHS reviews public comments, submits final rule for OMB review, and then publishes a final rule in the Federal Register
- No definitive timeline of final rule publication, but some experts are predicting December 2025 or January 2026
- Dedicated ISEO workgroup in place to measure impacts and formulate plans in partnership with campus stakeholders should this go into effect

Academic Continuity Options

If you are unable to get to or return to the United States, or need to leave the country:

- **Communicate with your department** about what academic continuity options may be right for you
- Your graduate coordinator will be a good first point of contact
- Some factors that guide the available options include:
 - Type of program (master's, MFA, PhD, etc.)
 - Progress through program
 - How much on-campus presence is needed

Unfortunately, students who are abroad are not able to be employed by the university.

Academic Continuity Options

Example Considerations to Guide Options:

- Anticipated duration of the delay to return to the US. *If extensive, would a [Leave of Absence \(LOA\)](#) be appropriate?*
- Progress/Year in Program. *If nearing completion, are there options to work with your program/advisor to accelerate your degree completion?*
- Alternative Enrollment Options. *Does your graduate program have “R” designation course options for remote study?*
- Stage of the Quarter. *Are you eligible to request an [Incomplete](#) from your instructor(s)?*

Additional questions?

Type them into the Q&A feature

- We'll answer as many as we can, time permitting.
- You can also reach out to ISEO by visiting iContact.ucsd.edu

A dramatic sunset over the ocean with a paraglider in the sky. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a golden glow across the water and sky. The sky is filled with dark, heavy clouds, and the ocean is dark with white foam from the waves. A paraglider is visible in the upper right sky. The foreground shows a rocky coastline. The text "Thank you for joining us!" is overlaid in large white letters.

Thank you for joining us!