



*University Community (faculty, staff and students)*

SUBJECT (R*)	EFFECTIVE DATE (R)	PROCEDURE NUMBER
LEVEL TRANSFERS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: ONE GRADUATE LEVEL TO ANOTHER (WITHIN FIU)	December 2003	2513.005(v)

**PROCEDURE STATEMENT (R)**

Students on F-1 status changing from one graduate program level to another higher or lower graduate program must complete a Level Transfer. If a student is completing one graduate program and intending to pursue another graduate program, he/she must file an admission application with the Graduate Admissions Office (GAO). If student meets all academic and financial requirements, new I-20 will be issued by GAO and not International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS).

However, if student is abandoning a current graduate program to pursue another, he/she must request for the graduate program degree level change with the University Graduate School (UGS). In these cases, responsibility of issuance for the new I-20 falls under ISSS and not GAO. Any degree level changes that occur in Panthersoft (PS) but were not cleared/approved through UGS will be cancelled upon UGS or ISSS knowledge.

Degree level changes can occur/be processed only in between semesters and not in the middle of a semester.

I. Between completion of one graduate program and admission into a new (higher or lower) graduate program:

- a. The student downloads FIU School Transfer Form online, completes it and submits it to ISSS for completion. Alternatively, GAO may send the FIU School Transfer Form directly to ISSS for completion.
- b. ISSS Front Desk staff receiving the form must date-stamp and initial forms and pull student's ISSS file. He/she must then check/update enrollment summary of student and check on any degree completion. He/she then forwards the form and file to an ISSS Advisor.
- c. If student has maintained valid F-1 status and if student has a valid passport, then ISSS advisor completes the FIU School Transfer Form indicating student's SEVIS ID number, that he/she is in-status and eligible for the level transfer. ISSS Advisor should note on School Transfer Form that the new graduate program's I-20 must be issued within the 60-day grace period of completion of previous degree.

Completed form should be faxed to GAO and original sent by inter-office mail. A copy must be kept in student's ISSS file.

- d. GAO Admissions Counselor will issue new program's I-20 under "Change Educational Level" in SEVIS RTI. This new program record will be activated only upon completion of SEVIS registration (Periodic Reporting) for student for the admission term in the new graduate program.
- e. ISSS advisory must complete level transfer within 15 days of class start date and issue I-20. Remarks should read: "Level transfer completed {date}."
- f. If student has not maintained valid F-1 status, he/she must file for a reinstatement or leave and re-enter the country with a new SEVIS I-20 issued under a new SEVIS ID number.

II. Abandonment of one graduate program to pursue another (higher or lower) graduate program:

- a. Student must request the change by filing a "Change of Graduate Degree Program" with the University Graduate School (UGS).
- b. Once UGS approves the request, a copy of approved "Change of Graduate Degree Program" is sent to ISSS.
- c. ISSS Advisor who receives the "Change of Graduate Degree Program" should send a notification email (email template

provided to ISSS Advisors) to student informing him/her of the required procedures (including re-verification of funding) to obtain the new program's I-20 and that the I-20 must be requested and issued before start of the "Admit Term" as reflected in PS. Copy of email should be kept in student's ISSS file. ISSS Advisor should write clear and appropriate notes in student's ISSS file as well.

- d. ISSS Advisor issues the new I-20, amending completion date and costs, as appropriate. Copy of new I-20 and financial documents must be kept in student's ISSS file.
- e. Once new I-20 is issued, ISSS Advisor must send a notification email to student (email template provided to ISSS Advisors). ISSS Advisor should write clear and appropriate notes in student's ISSS file as well.

A student who does not complete a graduate degree level transfer in the appropriate procedure and in a timely manner is in violation of legal status in the U. S. and ineligible for any F-1 benefits. The university imposes no penalty for failure to complete the level transfer.

### **REASON FOR PROCEDURE (O\*)**

To comply with immigration notification procedure for students who are changing educational levels. This procedure was created pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(f)(5)(ii), 214.2(f)(8)(i), and 214.2(f)(8)(ii)(C); Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP); U. S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (USICE); University Graduate School; ISSS.

### **DEFINITION (R)**

Level Transfer - An immigration procedure that is required to be completed by a student who changes from one degree level to another (*i.e.*, from a Bachelor's to a Master's level) or from one program to another (*i.e.* from a Bachelor's to another Bachelor's).

### **RESPONSIBILITIES (O)**

Copy of FIU School Transfer form or UGS "Change of Graduate Degree Program" form must be kept in student's ISSS file. Copy of new SEVIS I-20 issued (either by GAO or ISSS) and any financial documents submitted must also be kept in student's ISSS file.

### **RESPONSIBLE UNIVERSITY DIVISION/DEPARTMENT (R\*)**

Division of Student Affairs  
Florida International University

### **RESPONSIBLE ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT (R\*)**

International Student and Scholar Services  
11200 S.W. Eighth Street, GC 355  
Miami, Florida 33199  
Telephone Number (305) 348-2421

The University Policies and Procedures Library is updated regularly. In order to ensure a printed copy of this document is current, please access it online at <http://policies.fiu.edu/>.

For any questions or comments, the "Document Details" view for this procedure online provides complete contact information.

**R\*=Required    O\*=Optional**