1. **Why do I need to apply for an Extension of my program?**
   If you are unable to complete your program by the end date of your Form I-20 or Form DS-2019, you must complete an extension application to effectively extend your visa document.

2. **When do I need to complete the Extension Application?**
   ISSO must receive your extension application within 30 days of your current visa document expiration. ISSO will not be able to process an Extension Application after the expiration of a student’s visa document.

3. **Where can I get an Extension Application?**
   The ISSO Extension Application can be found at the ISSO website, or by following the link here: http://www.uml.edu/ISSO/completion-extension.aspx

4. **Who needs to sign it?**
   The form needs to be completed by your faculty advisor (grad coordinator, academic advisor, or thesis/dissertation/project advisor).

   PhD students requesting to extend their program beyond six years and for Master’s students extending beyond three years must obtain the signature of UMass Lowell’s Vice Provost for Education on the ISSO Extension Form, http://www.uml.edu/ISSO/completion-extension.aspx

5. **I have finished my required coursework but I want to do research. Can I apply for an extension?**
   Coursework students (both graduate and undergraduate) will not be permitted to extend their program if they will have completed their required coursework and credits by the expiration of their visa document.

   PhD and Master’s thesis students who have completed all required research and coursework credits will be permitted to extend their program if their dissertation/thesis advisor can confirm (via the completion of an Extension Application) that the student requires additional time to finalize their research, complete their dissertation/thesis, and defend it.

6. **I don’t know my defense date, what should I put here?**
   If a specific defense date is not yet known, a student’s thesis/dissertation advisor should offer their best estimate as to when they expect the student to be able to defend their paper. An ISSO advisor will follow up with the thesis/dissertation advisor if need be.
7. **My financial documents are attached can I have an Advisor view them now?**
   You are more than welcome to drop off your Extension Application at the ISSO front office at any time. Once the application is given to an advisor, they will reach out to you if they have any questions or concerns about your financial documents. If you would prefer to meet with an advisor in advance of formally filing your extension application with the ISSO, please come to the ISSO during any of our drop-in advising hours with your completed application.

8. **How do I know how much money to show in my account balance for a summer extension?**

   Students must show that they have sufficient financial support to cover not only the living expenses for the amount of time they are requesting to extend, but also for the tuition and fees associated with their respective registrations. Students with F-2 or J-2 dependents must also include additional funds to evidence continued support for their dependents, assuming they wish for their dependents’ visa documents to also be extended.

9. **I have a TA/RA how does that affect my financial statements?**
   If students are financially supported by a TA or RA, providing ISSO with a copy of their ongoing TA/RA contract will be sufficient to evidence financial support through the extension. If a TA or RA contract cannot yet be issued due to departmental constraints, students can obtain a letter from their TA/RA supervisor confirming their intent to continue to offer a TA/RA to the student.

10. **Will I get a new Extension I-20 for my spouse/dependents?**
    Yes. As the principal visa holder, if your visa document is extended, your dependents’ visa documents will also be extended. Please be sure to include financial documentation to evidence the ability to continue to support not only yourself, but your dependents as well, [http://www.uml.edu/ISSO/ISSO-Estimate-Expenses.aspx](http://www.uml.edu/ISSO/ISSO-Estimate-Expenses.aspx).

11. **Here is my signed extension form, now I need to fill out a Reduced Course Load (RCL) form too?**
    For students who will be on an RCL during the period for which they are requesting an extension of their program, yes, you must submit an RCL application to our office (found here: [http://www.uml.edu/ISSO/course-load.aspx](http://www.uml.edu/ISSO/course-load.aspx)). You do not have to submit an RCL application with your extension application, but ISSO must receive the RCL application prior to the start of the semester that you will be on an RCL for.
    You should familiarize yourself with the legal interpretation of completion date, [http://www.uml.edu/ISSO/completion-extension.aspx](http://www.uml.edu/ISSO/completion-extension.aspx). (As an example, students are not legally permitted to intentionally delay their completion date for the mere purpose of obtaining more time to look for employment.)