

# **Second Approvers Procedure Manual**

A Guide to the Second Approver Role in Sunapsis Processes for  
Rutgers University Staff and Faculty regarding International Student  
Requests

Provided By:

Rutgers Global - International Student and Scholar Services

New Brunswick

RBHS-Newark

180 College Ave.

65 Bergen Street, GA-72

ISSS-Students@global.rutgers.edu

ISSS-RBHS@global.rutgers.edu

848-932-7015

973-972-6138

[global.rutgers.edu](http://global.rutgers.edu)

## Table of Contents

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Introduction</b>                              | <b>2</b> |
| What is a Second Approver?                       | 3        |
| Frequently Asked Questions                       | 4        |
| Academic Program Changes for Graduate Students   | 5        |
| Academic Training                                | 6        |
| Curricular Practical Training (CPT)              | 7        |
| Extension of Program                             | 8        |
| Optional Practical Training (OPT)                | 9        |
| Readmission/Re-enrollment at Rutgers             | 10       |
| Reduced Credit Load                              | 11       |
| Temporary Absence While Maintaining Registration | 12       |

## Introduction

**Sunapsis** is an international case management software utilized by Rutgers Global - International Student and Scholar Services to *manage* the records of all Rutgers international students and scholars, *document* day-to-day interactions with our population, ensure consistency with the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), *track* students' and scholars' visas, automatic *auditing* of data, *communicate* important information, and *provide comprehensive online services* for our students and scholars, as well as our campus partners.

A key component of the Sunapsis system is **e-forms**. **E-forms have allowed us to streamline our processes and replace our paper forms for student requests with a more efficient, convenient electronic request system.** Our office has been paperless since 2018. Our goal is to be able to provide you with better tools to assist students with their various requests and make it *easier and quicker* for Rutgers staff and faculty to provide us with the information we may need to facilitate our services for students.

This procedure manual will provide you with an **overview of the processes/requests** available to students in the Sunapsis system, **what to anticipate** receiving electronically, and a guide on **how to complete** these requests.

As always, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## What is a Second Approver?

E-forms have two main components: Client Forms and Second Approver Forms. Client Forms are what the students fill out. For Rutgers, **Second Approvers are: Academic Deans/Advisers, Graduate Program Directors, or Registrars.**

*For processes that require additional information and/or approval* of the request from an academic official, the student will first indicate who the appropriate academic official is (name and email address) in their client e-form. This will prompt an email to that staff member, which provides a link to the Second Approver e-form for that request. Hopefully you will find the Second Approver e-forms to be clear and easy to complete.

When a second approver submits the e-form, our office receives an alert and we can continue processing this request.

At any time, you can contact our office with the student's name and RUID and we can take a look at the status of the e-form. Of course, if you have any questions and concerns, let us know.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What if I get an e-form and I don't think I should have?**

Sometimes students are not sure who is the most appropriate staff member for a request. If you believe you were not the appropriate person to receive this e-form, please respond to the email letting us know. If you know who *should have* received the email, that information would be great! We can redirect the e-form to the appropriate person.

### **What if I didn't get an e-form and think I should have?**

Sometimes students are not sure who is the most appropriate staff member for a request, they might provide an incorrect email address, or a department might have a different approach to who should process this request. If you are aware of a student who is working on one of our e-form requests and you are expecting an email, please contact us with the student's name (and RUID, if possible). We can always redirect an e-form to a new Second Approver.

### **What if I'm uncomfortable with the information being asked for in this e-form?**

Hopefully the type of information we are asking for isn't new, and is always academic in nature. However, if you ever have concerns about the information being requested of you, please don't hesitate to contact us.

### **What if this student never talked to me about this request before?**

We have a warning in each e-form that the student should discuss this request with their academic official before submitting it, but students may sometimes be in a rush for a process. You should be able to review the information the student gave to us in their portion of the e-form by clicking the link at the top of the e-form, but if you ever need more background or need us to connect you with the student, just let us know.

### **What happens after I submit this e-form?**

When you hit the submit button, the student will get an email letting them know we have received some information from you. Our office will also get a notification in the Sunapsis system and a staff member will review the information you provided. If we have any further questions or the information you provided contradicts the information or plans the student indicated, we will reach out to you by email.

### **What if I want to make changes to the e-form after I have submitted it?**

Because your submission allows our office to move forward with processing the student's request, it is important that you let us know as soon as possible if the information you've submitted to us changes. Some processes are easier for us to undo than others, but please do your best to only provide us with accurate information as students' legal status in the US can be impacted by these processes.

## Academic Program Changes for Graduate Students

### Context

This process is for international graduate students who are changing their academic program and/or degree level. The student's F-1 SEVIS record will need to be updated to reflect this change. Rutgers Global - ISSS will need confirmation from the student's new (if applicable) Graduate Program Director, as well as proof of funding provided by the student.

<https://global.rutgers.edu/academic-status-and-changes/change-programmajor-or-degree-level>

### Second Approver Role

The student will initiate the "Academic Program Changes for Graduate Students" e-form group via the RGlobal portal. They will be asked to indicate the name and email address of their (new, if applicable) Graduate Program Director. This will generate an automatic email to the Graduate Program Director, who will serve as the "second approver". This email will include a link to the Second Approver portion of the e-form.

When the second approver clicks this link, a new window will open and should auto-populate the login information provided in the email. Once the second approver is successfully logged in, at any point, they can click the link at the top of the e-form to review any information the student had submitted on their portion of the e-form.

We will be looking for confirmation of the new academic program and anticipated completion date, as well as whether the student has any Rutgers funding.

Once the second approver inputs the requested information regarding this student, they can hit submit and Rutgers Global - ISSS will receive a notification in the Sunapsis system.

## Academic Training

### Context

Academic Training (AT) is an optional, additional training experience for J-1 students. AT must be directly related to the student's field of study and authorized by the program sponsor in writing before a student is permitted to commence employment. Regulations require the academic training program to be evaluated for effectiveness in achieving its goals and objectives. AT is authorized for a specific job; it is not a blanket work permission in one's field of study. AT can be authorized as pre-completion, before finishing program requirements, post-completion, or a combination of the two.

<https://global.rutgers.edu/international-scholars-students/students/current/employment/J-1>

### Second Approver Role

The student will initiate the “Academic Training” e-form group via the RGlobal portal. They will be asked to indicate the name and email address of their academic official, generating an automatic email to the person listed, who will serve as the “second approver”. This email will include a link to the Second Approver portion of the e-form.

When the second approver clicks this link, a new window will open and should auto-populate the login information provided in the email. Once the second approver is successfully logged in, at any point, they can click the link at the top of the e-form to review any information the student had submitted on their portion of the e-form.

We will be looking for how this specific Academic Training opportunity is related to the student's academic program and how it will be evaluated.

Once the second approver inputs the requested information regarding this student, they can hit submit and Rutgers Global - ISSS will receive a notification in the Sunapsis system.

## Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

### Context

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is practical work experience for F-1 students either required of all students in a specific degree program or, alternatively, listed in the course catalogue as offering credit that directly counts towards degree credit requirements. This might include for-credit internships and cooperative education programs. It may also include independent study or graduate research.

Academic units determine whether to incorporate practical training into the curriculum & stipulate when students may pursue practical training. Students in programs without the option of practical training for credit aren't eligible for CPT.

CPT is available only prior to completion of the academic program. CPT employment may not delay completion of the academic program. Undergraduate students must have declared their major prior to applying for CPT.

<https://global.rutgers.edu/international-scholars-students/students/current/employment/practical-training/cpt>

### Second Approver Role

The student will initiate the “Curricular Practical Training” e-form group via the RGlobal portal. They will be asked to indicate the name and email address of their Academic Official, generating an automatic email to the person indicated. This email will include a link to the Second Approver portion of the e-form.

When the second approver clicks this link, a new window will open and should auto-populate the login information provided in the email. Once the second approver is successfully logged in, at any point, they can click the link at the top of the e-form to review any information the student had submitted on their portion of the e-form.

We will be looking for confirmation of how the student's practical training/employment opportunity is integral to their academic program.

Once the second approver inputs the requested information regarding this student, they can hit submit and Rutgers Global - ISSS will receive a notification in the Sunapsis system.



## Extension of Program

### Context

If a student will not complete their degree requirements and graduate by the end date noted on their Form I-20/DS-2019, they must request an extension of program before their F-1/J-1 status expires. Failure to extend this document prior to the expiration will jeopardize your legal status.

Students are eligible to apply for an extension of program if the delay in completing program requirements has been caused by compelling academic reasons (such as a change of major/research topic or unexpected research problems) or medical reasons (documented by a licensed medical practitioner)

Students are ineligible to apply for an extension of program if they are not making “normal progress” toward completion of your academic program; or if they are on academic probation or academic suspension.

<https://global.rutgers.edu/academic-status-and-changes/extension-of-program>

### Second Approver Role

The student will initiate the “Extension of Program” e-form group via the RGlobal portal. They will be asked to indicate the name and email address of their Academic Official, generating an automatic email to the person indicated. This email will include a link to the Second Approver portion of the e-form.

When the second approver clicks this link, a new window will open and should auto-populate the login information provided in the email. Once the second approver is successfully logged in, at any point, they can click the link at the top of the e-form to review any information the student had submitted on their portion of the e-form.

We will be looking for confirmation that the student has a compelling academic reason to extend their legal status in the US. training/employment opportunity is integral to their academic program.

Once the second approver inputs the requested information regarding this student, they can hit submit and Rutgers Global - ISSS will receive a notification in the Sunopsis system.

## Optional Practical Training (OPT)

### **Context**

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is practical work experience for F-1 students directly related to their field of study and commensurate with their level of study. OPT enhances or enriches an academic or curricular experience.

OPT can be authorized as pre-completion, before finishing program requirements, post-completion, or a combination of the two. Pre-completion OPT may only be part-time while school is in session, if the student has not yet completed all required coursework.

<https://global.rutgers.edu/international-scholars-students/students/current/employment/practical-training/opt>

### **Second Approver Role**

The student will initiate the “Optional Practical Training” e-form group via the RGlobal portal. They will be asked to indicate the name and email address of their Academic Official, generating an automatic email to the person indicated. This email will include a link to the Second Approver portion of the e-form.

When the second approver clicks this link, a new window will open and should auto-populate the login information provided in the email. Once the second approver is successfully logged in, at any point, they can click the link at the top of the e-form to review any information the student had submitted on their portion of the e-form.

We will be looking for confirmation on when the student completed or will complete their coursework requirements and their (non-coursework) degree requirements, if applicable. Accuracy for these dates is critical!

Once the second approver inputs the requested information regarding this student, they can hit submit and Rutgers Global - ISSS will receive a notification in the Sunapsis system.

## Readmission/Re-enrollment at Rutgers

### **Context**

If an international student has left Rutgers previously, their SEVIS record was likely closed (terminated) because they were not maintaining it with a full-time registration. In order for them to return to the US, they must receive a new I-20 or DS-2019 from our office. In order to receive an I-20/DS-2019, the students must first be readmitted to an academic program at Rutgers.

<https://global.rutgers.edu/international-students-scholars/students/current/academic-status-and-changes/returning-to-rutgers>

### **Second Approver Role**

The student will initiate the “Readmission to Rutgers” e-form group via the RGlobal portal. They will be asked to indicate the name and email address of their Academic Official, generating an automatic email to the person indicated. This email will include a link to the Second Approver portion of the e-form.

When the second approver clicks this link, a new window will open and should auto-populate the login information provided in the email. Once the second approver is successfully logged in, at any point, they can click the link at the top of the e-form to review any information the student had submitted on their portion of the e-form.

We will be looking for confirmation that the student has been readmitted to an academic program and information on when they are expected to complete their degree requirements. This will impact how much funding the student is expected to show.

Once the second approver inputs the requested information regarding this student, they can hit submit and Rutgers Global - ISSS will receive a notification in the Sunapsis system.

## Reduced Credit Load

### Context

F-1 and J-1 students are required to pursue a full course of study every fall and spring semester. However, there are cases when regulations consider a student to be pursuing a full course of study even though student is not actually registered for a full-time credit load. Regulations define four broad circumstances in which F-1 or J-1 students who are registered for less than a full-time credit load are considered to be maintaining legal status by meeting the full course of study requirement. Those circumstances are: completion of study in current term, academic difficulties in first year, graduate students who have completed formal coursework but have non-coursework requirements, or students waiting for coursework not offered in current term.

<https://global.rutgers.edu/academic-status-and-changes/full-course-studyreduced-credit-load>

### Second Approver Role

The student will initiate the “Reduced Credit Load” e-form group via the RGlobal portal. They will be asked to indicate the name and email address of their Academic Official, generating an automatic email to the person indicated. This email will include a link to the Second Approver portion of the e-form.

When the second approver clicks this link, a new window will open and should auto-populate the login information provided in the email. Once the second approver is successfully logged in, at any point, they can click the link at the top of the e-form to review any information the student had submitted on their portion of the e-form.

We will be looking for confirmation that the student has a legitimate academic reason to be considered in full-time status with less than the typically-required credit load. Maintaining full-time registration is a core requirement of student’s legal status, so it is important we have confirmation from their academic official for this exemption.

Once the second approver inputs the requested information regarding this student, they can hit submit and Rutgers Global - ISSS will receive a notification in the Sunapsis system.

## Temporary Absence While Maintaining Registration

### Context

Students interested in participating in field research or a study abroad program can maintain their legal status in the US and keep their SEVIS record active by following this process. These students need to be considered enrolled at Rutgers in a full-time credit load (or be authorized for a reduced credit load) each fall and spring semester they are away.

<https://global.rutgers.edu/academic-status-and-changes/intl-students-temporary-absence>

### Second Approver Role

The student will initiate the Temporary Absence While Maintaining Registration e-form group via the RGlobal portal. They will be asked to indicate the name and email address of their Academic Official, generating an automatic email to the person indicated. This email will include a link to the Second Approver portion of the e-form.

When the second approver clicks this link, a new window will open and should auto-populate the login information provided in the email. Once the second approver is successfully logged in, at any point, they can click the link at the top of the e-form to review any information the student had submitted on their portion of the e-form.

We will be looking for confirmation that the student's academic unit is aware of their plans and that we can consider the student to be maintaining their Rutgers registration/enrollment for the duration they indicate. Maintaining full-time registration is a core requirement of student's legal status, so it is important we have confirmation from their academic official for this situation.

Once the second approver inputs the requested information regarding this student, they can hit submit and Rutgers Global - ISSS will receive a notification in the Sunapsis system.