



Office of the Registrar
Designated School Official for
Nonimmigrant Matters

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CHANGE OF STATUS TO F-1

Overview of Change of Status to F-1

- An F-1 student is a nonimmigrant who is pursuing a full course of study to achieve a specific educational or professional objective, at an academic institution in the United States.
- A student acquires F-1 status using Form I-20, issued by the U.S. school which the student is attending/ planning to attend.
- If approved for a Change of Status while in the U.S., you will have valid F-1 status. This means that if you later travel outside the U.S. while in F-1 status, you will have to apply for F-1 visa at a U.S. consulate in order to be able to return to the U.S.

Student Information

Last Name (Surname)	First Name	Middle Name
(_____)	_____	_____
Preferred Contact Phone Number	E-Mail Address	Student ID Number

Checklist of Required Documentation

- Completed Form I-539 (available at www.uscis.gov) Do not sign or date the form until your appointment with our office.
- Copy of the entire Form I-20 with your signature on item #11. (You will receive this during your appointment with our office)
- A one page cover letter requesting the change of status from your current status to F-1. This letter should include a brief explanation regarding why you wish to change to F-1 status. You should also list the documentation you are including in your application.
- Evidence of financial support. This is most commonly the Certification of Finances form with an accompanying bank statement or a government sponsored Financial Guarantee. Also include evidence of support from Marywood University (if applicable).
- Copy of the admission letter from Marywood University.
- Copy of the receipt indicating payment of the SEVIS I-901 fee. Please note that the SEVIS fee is separate from the application fee. Both fees must be paid. You may submit the SEVIS fee at www.fmjfee.com.
- Copy of your I-94 information printed from: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/request.html>
- Copy of your passport ID pages including your photo, passport expiration date, and passport number.
- Copy of your current visa page (except Canadians).
- Check or money order made payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security for the stated application fee (see form I-539).

Student Certification

I affirm that I have read and understand the request information and instructions and certify that the information I have provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Student

Date

Office Use Only

Initials: _____

Date Processed: ____/____/____

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Print and review Form I-539 found on the USCIS website referenced on the reverse of this form.
- Fill out the reverse of this form and submit it when you meet with our office.
- Fill out Form I-539 found at www.uscis.gov (see below for more information).
- Schedule an appointment with our office to review your application and supporting documents. You will also receive a new Form I 20 noting your request for a change of status.
- After our office has reviewed your application and supporting documents, send it to USCIS via express mail using the address found in the directions for form I-539.
- In three to four weeks, you will receive a receipt notice from USCIS stating that your application is under review.
- In 60 to 90 days from the date the application is received by USCIS, you will receive your approval notice, I-797 (if approved).

GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETION OF FORM I-539

All information should be typed before the form is printed.

- Part 1: Biographical Information
- Part 2 (1): Check box "B" and write F-1 for the status you are requesting.
- Part 2 (2): Check box "A".
- Part 3 (1): The date entered here will match the expiration date on your Form I-20.
- Part 3 (2-3): Normally, the answer to both items is "No".
- Part 4: Answer each question. If you answer "Yes" to any question, you must provide a detailed account of the circumstances on a separate sheet of paper.
- Part 5: DO NOT sign the form until your appointment with our office. Your application and supporting documents will be reviewed for accuracy and completeness.

CONDITIONS GOVERNING CERTAIN NONIMMIGRANT CLASSES

If you are currently in F-2 status | Source: 8 CFR (Code of Federal Register) § 214.2(f)(15)(ii)

- F-2 spouse may not engage in full time study.
- Part-time study for F-2 spouse is permitted only to the extent that it is "avocational or recreational" in nature.
- F-2 children may only engage in full-time study at the K-12 level (kindergarten through 12th grade).

If you are currently in B-1/B-2 status | Source: 8 CFR (Code of Federal Register) § 214.2(b)(7) and §248.1(c)

- Individuals in B1/B2 status are prohibited from "enrolling in a course of study" until after USCIS approves their change of status application.

If you are currently in any other status (e.g. H, J, L, E, etc.)

- If your current status allows full-time studies in the U.S., you may start classes before your change of status application is approved. However, you are not allowed any on- or off-campus employment under F-1 status until after your application is approved. For example, if you have an assistantship, you won't be able to start it until after you receive your F-1 status.

TRAVELING AND REENTERING THE UNITED STATES

The alternative method of changing to F-1 status is through travel and re-entry, which may be preferred over the in-country change of status in certain situations. In this case, you would depart the U.S. and then apply for an F-1 visa at a U.S. embassy or consulate abroad, preferably the local consulate in your home country. If the F-1 visa application is approved and the F-1 visa is issued, then you can re-enter the U.S. using your F-1 I-20 form and F-1 visa. At the Port of Entry, you will receive an admission stamp with the notation "F-1 D/S" or an I-94 card with the same notation that confirms F-1 status.

Please note that Canadian citizens are exempt from the requirement of having an F-1 visa to re-enter the U.S. in F-1 status. But travel and re-entry (with a new I-94 card) are still required for Canadian citizens to obtain F-1 status.