SMU | INTERNATIONAL STUDENT & SCHOLAR SERVICES

Tel: 214-768-4475 Fax: 214-768-1051 Email: isss@smu.edu

CHANGE OF STATUS THROUGH THE ELECTRONIC IMMIGRATION SYSTEM (ELIS)

All requests for change of status while in the United States by any alien or foreign national require an application to the office of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). An International Services Specialist will help you with filing and preparing the application. If you have maintained lawful nonimmigrant status, you may apply for a change of status. If you are an M-1, C,D, K, J-1 physician, J-1 subject to the 2-year home return visa holders, or a WT & WB visitor, you are *not eligible* for a change of status within the United States.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA (To be completed by the student)

Family Name	First/Middle Name
SEVIS ID Number	SMU ID Number
Current Degree	Current Program Completion Date

Has any of your personal information changed (U.S. address, phone number, etc.)? □ Yes □ No
If so, please update your information in Access immediately.

Please follow the steps listed below:

- □ **Make an appointment with an International Services Specialist. This appointment should last approximately one hour. During this appointment we will submit your electronic application for change of status.**
- □ **Create an account on the ELIS website. Go to www.uscis.gov and follow the links to submit an I-539. Your account must be created *prior* to your appointment with an International Services Specialist.**
- □ **Please compile soft copies of the following documents for your change of status application and bring it with you on a USB drive as well as a credit card for application payment when you come for your appointment:**
  - **I20 request completed by an Admission Officer (Original, hard copy only).**
  - **Credit Card for SEVIS fee payment of $200.00**
  - **Original financial documentation dated within 6 months, showing enough funds to cover one year of tuition, living expenses, and health insurance for you and dependents (original, hard copy of document required).**
  - **Letter explaining the reasons you want to change your status and why it would be an extreme hardship to travel in order to change your status.**
  - **Passport identity pages, visa, and I-94 (front and back)**
  - **Dependent's immigration documents, if applicable**
  - **Credit card for electronic payment of the I-539 application fee for the Department of Homeland Security. Please check the USCIS website for the exact amount (www.uscis.gov).**
  - **Any additional documents that are required according to your current visa status type on the chart attached to this form.**

By signing below, I affirm that I understand the consequences of my request. If I have any questions, I will contact an ISSS International Services Specialist immediately.

Print Name:_____ Signature:_____ Date:___/___/___

International Services Specialist:	Signature	Date

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CHANGE OF STATUS ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

F2 to F1

- ☐ Copy of F-1's I-20 listing you as a dependent
- ☐ Copy of marriage or birth certificate proving the relationship to F1
- ☐ Copy of F-1's immigration documents (visa, passport, I94)
- ☐ Copy of F-1's transcripts
- ☐ Copy of Admission Letter

H4 to F1

- ☐ Copy of H-4 Approval Notice
- ☐ Copy of H-1's immigration documents (approval notice, visa, passport, etc)
- ☐ Copy of employment from H-1 sponsor
- ☐ Copy of transcripts, if currently a student
- ☐ Copy of Admission Letter if just admitted

H1 to F1

- ☐ Copy of H-1 immigration documents (approval notice, visa, passport, etc)
- ☐ Copy of letter of employment
- ☐ Copy of Transcripts if currently enrolled
- ☐ Copy of Admissions Letter if just admitted

J1/J2 to F1

- ☐ Copy of transcripts if enrolled
- ☐ Copy of waiver if subject to 212(e)
- ☐ If a J-2, please include a copy of J-1 immigration documents

E or L to F1

- ☐ If a dependent, provide a copy of primary visa holder's documents (passport, visa, I-94, and letter of employment)

F1 to F2

- ☐ Copy of immigration documents (passport, visa, I-94, I-20)
- ☐ Copy of transcripts
- ☐ Copy of primary visa holder's documents (passport, visa, I-94, I-20)
- ☐ Copy of primary visa holder's transcripts

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May I begin attending classes before my application has been approved?

All applicants may be able to begin attending class after their change of status application has been submitted and while waiting for approval, *except* for individuals who have entered the United States on a B-1, B-2, or F-2 visa. Also, individuals who have entered with a WT or WB visa waiver from a waiver country are *not* eligible to being attending classes. It is strongly recommended that all other visa holders consult with an immigration attorney to verify their eligibility to enroll in classes while their change of status is pending.

May I begin campus employment such as an assistantship while waiting for the change of status approval?

No. If eligible (see above), you may only attend classes full-time while your application is pending,

What happens if my application is denied?

If the application is denied, students may be required to leave the US on short notice, interrupting their program of study at an inconvenient or academically disadvantageous time. If students have maintained their previous visa status, they may be allowed to continue to reside in the U.S. as their previous visa status.

Can I travel while my application for change of status is pending?

No. Leaving the U.S. while an application for change of status is pending is considered an abandonment of petition. Contact your International Advisor for your options if you must travel out of the U.S. during this period.

Remember: When you change your status in the United States, your visa in your passport does not change. Visas may only be obtained outside the United Status at a U.S. embassy or consulate. If you status is changed to F-2 and you depart the United States, you must obtain an F-1 visa from a U.S. embassy or consulate outside the United States before re-entering the United States.