Change of Status to F-1 (Student) Status

*Please be aware the procedures outlined below are suggestions from the Office for International Programs. The change of status application is your personal application, signed by you.

Most non-immigrants are eligible to request a change to F-1 (student) status if they have lawfully maintained their current status, but you should consult the Office for International Programs (OIP) before you begin the process. The approval for a change of status can take 3-4 months or longer. Individuals changing from B-1/B-2 to F-1 may not begin their studies until a change of status has been approved by the USCIS. Assistantship employment may not begin until an F-1 student receives the Approval Notice USCIS, but you may ask OIP for help if expedited processing is necessary.

Please note: you cannot leave the U.S. while your application is being processed. If you do leave, your application will be considered ‘abandoned’ and it will be denied.

Document Checklist:

- Receipt for $200 SEVIS fee payment [https://fmjfee.com/i901fee/desktop/index.jsp?view=desktop]
- Completed Form I-539 [https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/form/i-539.pdf]
- Completed Form G-1145 [https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/form/g-1145.pdf]
- Check or money order payable to “U.S. Department of Homeland Security” for the filing fee. Please check the USCIS website for the current fee. [https://www.uscis.gov/i-539]
- Copy of valid passport identification page
- Copy of visa stamp
- Copy of I-94 record [www.cbp.gov/i94]
- ORIGINAL Form I-20 from Loyola for Change of Status
- Financial documentation (preferably dated within the last 2 weeks.) Examples include:
  - original bank statements (2 or 3 months)
  - original bank letter
  - proof of assistantship and/or tuition waiver
  - I-134 Affidavit of Support with sponsor’s bank letter/statement [http://www.uscis.gov/i-134]
  - Proof of enrollment in classes and receipt for payment if you have already enrolled
- Personal letter requesting change of status. The letter should explain why you did not enter the U.S. initially in F-1 status, why you are now requesting the change to F-1 status, how studying in the U.S. will benefit you or be better than studying the same subject at home, and the hardship you will experience if the petition is denied. (If you are a B-1/B-2 also include explanation of when and how you decided to apply to school. Include a statement that you will not begin your studies until your case is decided.)
In addition to the basic documents listed above, F-2s and J-2s will need:

- If J-2, copy of spouse’s DS-2019
- If J-2, copy of spouse’s waiver or “no objection letter” from Department of State
- If F-2, copy of spouse’s Form I-20
- Copy of spouse’s financial support documents
- Copy of spouse’s Form I-94
- Proof of marriage, i.e. marriage certificate translated into English and notarized, or passport page indicating relationship

In addition to the basic documents listed above, J-1s will need:

- Copy of DS-2019 (front and back)
- Copy of waiver or “no objection letter” from Department of State, if applicable

(J-1 and J-2 visa holders who are subject to the two year home residence requirement (Section 212(e) are not eligible for a change of status while in the United States, unless a waiver is granted by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)

In addition to the basic documents listed above, H-4s will need:

- Copy of I-797 H-4 approval, if applicable
- Copy of H-1 passport, visa, and I-94
- Copy of H-1 I-797 approval
- Proof of marriage, i.e. marriage certificate translated into English and notarized, or passport page indicating relationship
- Copy of H-1 current proof of employment

For USPS Delivery:

Department of Homeland Security  
United States Citizenship and Immigration Services  
Dallas Lockbox  
P.O. Box 660166  
Dallas, TX 75266

FedEx, DHL, UPS:

Department of Homeland Security  
USCIS  
Attn: I-539  
2501 S. State Highway 121 Business  
Suite 400  
Lewisville, TX 75067

Once you received your change of status approval notice from USCIS, please submit a copy of the approval to OIP so that we can update your file accordingly.