

Change of Nonimmigrant Status

(To change your current visa status {B2, H1, H4, L1, L2, etc...} to an F-1 Visa)

~ Effective July 1, 2007 ~

What the student **MUST** submit to USCIS:

- Letter of explanation.**
(Your letter should mention your exact arrival date in the U.S. as well as the reason why you have now decided to apply for a change-of-status to a student visa. Your letter should be written with as much detail as possible as to demonstrate to USCIS that you did not have a pre-conceived intention to study in the U.S.)
- Original SEVIS Form I-20 AB** of the school that you will be attending.
(The entire original form I-20 plus an additional page 1 of the original form I-20. Complete the bottom of page 1 before sending)
- Form I-539:** "Application to extend/change non-immigrant status". [Fill in completely and sign]
(You may download form at <http://uscis.gov/graphics/formsfee/forms/i-539.htm>)
- Original Form I-94**
- Photocopy** of financial statements
(Use same documents you presented for admissions)
- Photocopy** of passport identification page and current (B2, H1, etc...) visa page.
- Fees** requirement:
 1. **USD\$300.00** filing fee. [Money order or personal check payable to **Department of Homeland Security**]
(If you are submitting a personal check, your name and address must be printed on the check by your bank. USCIS will not accept checks without any name/address printed on.)
 2. **USD\$100** SEVIS fee*. [Receipt of SEVIS fee paid in advance]
(See reverse side for SEVIS fee instruction)

Send by CERTIFIED MAIL to:

**U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
California Service Center
P.O. Box 10539
Laguna Niguel, California 92607-1053**

Important Notes

- ☞ Send all of the above by 'certified mail, return receipt requested' a minimum of 30 days before the expiration date of your Form I-94 and preferably before the start of the validity date of the Form I-20.
- ☞ Retain copies of materials submitted to USCIS for your records.
- ☞ The next time you travel outside the U.S., you must visit the American Embassy/Consulate to obtain a F-1 visa if you plan to return to the U.S. to continue your studies.

***You MUST inform/update the International Student Programs office by submitting a photocopy of Form I-797 – Notice of Action – from USCIS. All change-of-status applicants (except "B" & "F-2" visa holders) MUST begin enrolling in full-time status and tuition fee will be charged at the rate (including International Student Health Insurance) as International Student immediately! The International Student Programs cannot guarantee the approval of your petition. Decision is made by USCIS.**

☞ **For "B" and "F-2" visa holders ONLY!**

B & F-2 visa holders may not begin studying until change-of-status to F-1 approved by USCIS.

SEVIS Fee Requirement

Beginning September 1, 2004, a new United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) rule goes into effect. This rule requires F-1 visa applicants to pay a one-time fee of \$100 to supplement the administration and maintenance costs of the Student and Exchange Information System (SEVIS), and for all immigration services whereby an "Initial Attendance" Form I-20 was issued by the school.

WARNING! ...If you are in the United States and apply for a change-of-status, you are subject to this fee. If you do not pay it, your application will not be processed.

- ☞ Fee Payment is required if the applicant is:
"An Alien in the United States seeking a change of status to F-1, F-3, J-1, M-1 or M-3.
- ☞ Fee payment **not** required if applicant is:
"A nonimmigrant who has applied for a change-of-status in the United States on an F, M and J classification, had the initial application for the change of status denied for a reason other than failure to pay the SEVIS fee, and is applying for a motion to re-open the case within 12 months of the original denial."

SEVIS Fee* Payment Methods:

- ☞ **To Pay By Mail** – Please allow at least 2 to 3 weeks for mailing, processing of check and receiving of receipt.
 1. Obtain a Form I-901 "Fee Remittance for Certain F, J, and M Nonimmigrants."
 - ◆ Download the form from <http://www.ice.gov/graphics/sevis/>
 - ◆ Request the form by phone at 1-800-870-3676 (inside the US)
 2. Complete the Form I-901. Be sure to write your name exactly as it appears on your I-20 form.
 3. Prepare a check, international money order or foreign draft (*drawn on US banks only*¹) in the amount of US\$100, made payable to "The Department of Homeland Security"
 4. Mail the completed I-901 and payment to the address listed on Form I-901.
 5. *A Form I-797 receipt notice should be mailed within 3 days of processing the fee. Be sure to make copies of your receipt, and keep it with your other important immigration documents*

¹Many foreign banks are able to issue checks or money orders drawn on a U.S. bank. You may therefore obtain a check from: 1) a bank chartered or operated in the United States; b) a foreign subsidiary of a U.S. bank, or c) a foreign bank that has an arrangement with a U.S. bank to issue a check, money order, or foreign draft that is drawn on a U.S. bank

- ☞ **To Pay Online** – A faster method!
 1. Find the Form I-901 at www.fmjfee.com.
 2. Complete the form online and supply the necessary Visa, MasterCard or American Express information.
**Be sure to write your name exactly as it appears on your I-20 form.*
 3. Print a copy of the online receipt.
 4. Be sure to make copies of your receipt, and keep it with your other important immigration documents

***SEVIS fee must be paid in advance since a receipt from SEVIS is needed to be included in your packet sent to USCIS for change-of-status.**