Change to F1 status

This handout should only be used as a guide on how to apply to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for a change of status. If you have questions about applying for a change to F-1 student status, we recommend that you consult with an experienced immigration attorney so s/he may review your application before submitting it to the USCIS.

ALL individuals applying for a change to F-1 student status MUST first meet the following requirements:

✓ MUST be admitted to DePaul University for a degree program or to the English Language Academy (ELA)
✓ MUST have an original DePaul University SEVIS I-20 document issued by the office that processed your admission
✓ MUST have original, current financial documents verifying availability of adequate funds to cover tuition and living expenses. Bank letters and/or statements must not be older than 6 months

**PRIMARY DOCUMENTS**

ALL individuals applying for a change to F-1 student status MUST submit the following documents to USCIS:

- Copy of DePaul University SEVIS I-20 document (all three pages)
- CLEAR copy of current financial documents verifying you have adequate funds to cover expenses for one academic year
- Copy of I-94 card (small white card in passport or printed electronic I-94: https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov)
- CLEAR copy of pages containing the following in your passport: name, bio-data, photograph, passport number and expiration date, and most recently issued visa (if any)
- A completed I-539. Complete the attached form. Complete the supplement only if you have a dependent spouse and/or child. Make sure that the address you list in the application is valid for at least the next 6 months since USCIS will send their response back to the address listed on Form I-539. You may also download this form from the USCIS website at http://www.uscis.gov
- $290 Money Order payable to DHS (Department of Homeland Security). Please note: personal checks are NOT accepted by DHS).
- SEVIS Fee Receipt As of September 1, 2004, anyone issued an “Initial Attendance—Change of Status Requested” SEVIS I-20 must show proof of payment of the $200 SEVIS fee upon submission of their Change of Status application. For more information on paying the SEVIS fee, please see http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/index.htm.
- Evidence of Eligibility - you must also submit additional documents to show that you have lawfully maintained your current non-immigrant status. See below for your current status and submit all of the additional corresponding documents required.

**EVIDENCE OF ELIGIBILITY**

B-1 or B-2

- Personal letter indicating reason for change of status request
  
  *If you are already attending classes at DPU as a full-time student, you may not be eligible for a change of status application. Please consult with an experienced immigration attorney.*

E-1

- CLEAR copy of document showing you are a dependent (son / daughter) of your parent
- Original letter and from your parent’s employer verifying employment and/or last pay stub
- CLEAR copy of your parent’s I-94 card (front & back of the I-94 - small white card in passport or printed electronic I-94: https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov)
- CLEAR copy of pages containing the following in your parent’s passport: name, bio-data, photograph, passport number and expiration date, and most recently issued visa (if any)
  
  *If your parent has already quit his/her job or been terminated, please consult with an experienced immigration attorney.*

F-2

- CLEAR copy of your Marriage Certificate (English translation)
- Original letter from your spouse’s school verifying spouse is maintaining status
- CLEAR copy of your spouse’s I-20 document showing your name listed under dependent on page 3 of I-20
- CLEAR copy of your spouse’s I-94 card (front & back of the I-94 - small white card in passport or printed electronic I-94: https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov)
- CLEAR copy of pages containing the following in your spouse’s passport: name, bio-data, photograph, passport number and expiration date, and most recently issued visa (if any)
H-1B
- Original letter from your employer verifying employment and/or last pay stub
- CLEAR copy of the H-1B Approval Notice (if applicable)
  *If you have already quit your job or have been terminated, please consult with an experienced immigration attorney.*

H-4
- CLEAR copy of your Marriage Certificate (English translation)
- Original letter from your spouse’s employer verifying employment and/or last pay stub
- CLEAR copy of your spouse’s H-1B Approval Notice (if applicable)
- CLEAR copy of your spouse’s I-94 card (front & back of the I-94 - small white card in passport or printed electronic I-94: [https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov](https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov))
- CLEAR copy of pages containing the following in your spouse’s passport: name, bio-data, photograph, passport number and expiration date, and most recently issued visa (if any)
  *If your spouse has already quit his/her job or been terminated, please consult with an experienced immigration attorney.*

J-1
- CLEAR copy of your DS2019 document
  *If you are subject to the 2-year home-country physical presence requirement, you are not eligible to request a change of status unless you have received a waiver from the U.S. State Department.*

L-1
- Original letter from your employer verifying employment and/or last pay stub
- CLEAR copy of the L-1 Approval Notice (if applicable)
  *If you have already quit your job or have been terminated, please consult with an experienced immigration attorney.*

L-2
- CLEAR copy of your Marriage Certificate (English translation)
- Original letter and copy from your spouse’s employer verifying employment and/or last pay stub
- CLEAR copy of your spouse’s L-1 Approval Notice (if applicable)
- CLEAR copy of your spouse’s I-94 card (front & back of the I-94 - small white card in passport or printed electronic I-94: [https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov](https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov))
- CLEAR copy of pages containing the following in your spouse’s passport: name, bio-data, photograph, passport number and expiration date, and most recently issued visa (if any)
  *If your spouse has already quit his/her job or been terminated, please consult with an experienced immigration attorney.*

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**Do not send your original passport.** You should mail your application by certified mail with return receipt to the following address:

**USCIS**
P.O. Box 660166
Dallas, TX 75266

We recommend that you make a copy of your entire application for your own records. **Expect to wait about 90-120 days** for a decision from USCIS to arrive at the address that you listed on the I-539 form. Processing time will depend on the workload of the USCIS. When you receive an answer from USCIS, please come into our office with your processed/stamped SEVIS I-20, approval notice, and I-94 card. We will make copies of the documents to add to your student file and update our records.

**TRAVEL**
You must not travel outside of the U.S. until you receive an answer to your change of status application. If you leave the U.S. before USCIS decides on your case, your application will be considered abandoned. If you travel outside of the United States after DHS approves your change to F-1 status, you will need to apply for an F-1 visa to be stamped in your passport while you are overseas.

**OBTAINING F-1 STATUS THROUGH TRAVEL:** If you would like to learn about the process of obtaining an F-1 visa from a U.S. consulate or embassy, please call the OISS at 312.362.8376 to make an advising appointment.

If you have questions about applying for a change to F-1 student status, we recommend that you consult with an experienced immigration attorney so s/he may review your application before submitting it to the USCIS.

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*DePaul University, OISS, 1 E. Jackson Boulevard, DePaul Center, Suite 9300, Chicago, IL 60604
312-362-8376, Fax: 312-362-8018, oiss@depaul.edu, [www.oiss.depaul.edu](http://www.oiss.depaul.edu)*