



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS

International Student Services Office

Change of Status to F-1

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ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To apply for a change of status to F-1, you must

- Be admitted to a degree seeking program with UT Dallas.
- You must be enrolled full time in the semester in which your F-1 status is approved.
- Currently be in a nonimmigrant status other than C, D, K, M, WT, WB, or J subject to the 212(e) foreign resident requirement.
- Have an unexpired I-94.

WHEN TO APPLY

Meet with an international advisor in ISSO or send an email to issocurrent@utdallas.edu to request a change of status application packet. USCIS processing times are highly variable and approval of a change of status can take 3-4 months or more. The following information should be considered to determine when to submit the change of status application:

- ISSO will issue a change of status I-20 up to five months prior to the semester start date of the F-1 status.
- There is a risk of denial if the semester start date on the change of status I-20 is more than 30 days after the end of your current status.
- Unmarried dependents must apply for the change of status before their 21st birthday.

INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION

Students changing their status to F-1 are required to attend one of the regularly scheduled international orientation sessions. Students cannot register for classes in the first full semester of their F-1 status until after attendance of an international orientation session. The scheduled dates for international orientations are located on the ISSO website at <http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international/new/orientation.html>.

APPLYING OUTSIDE THE U.S.

You can change your status by departing the U.S. and applying for an F-1 visa at a U.S. consulate.

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This method is faster.• You get your F-1 visa immediately.• You are eligible to work on campus after re-entering the U.S. in F-1 status.• Full time enrollment in consecutive semesters in a visa type other than F-1 can count towards eligibility for CPT and OPT.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a risk you will not be able to re-enter the U.S. if the visa application is denied.• Expensive (cost of travel).• Cannot enter the U.S. more than 30 days before the program start date on the I-20.• There is a higher risk of denial at a consulate in Canada if you are not a citizen of Canada. Mexico is not issuing change of status visas at this time.

Application Process for Outside the U.S.

- Submit all required documents to the ISSO.
- The ISSO will issue the I-20 within 5 business days.
- Return to the ISSO to sign the I-20.
- Pay the I-901 SEVIS Fee.
- Depart the U.S. and go to a U.S. consulate on your appointment date.
- Provide the ISSO with a copy of your stamped I-20, passport, F-1 visa and I-94 within 10 days of re-entering the U.S. in F-1 status.

Required Documents for Outside the U.S.

- Change of Status Request Form.
- UT Dallas Financial Affidavit.
- Local and foreign addresses.
- Bank statement, current within 6 months, with sufficient funds showing minimum amount listed on the Financial Affidavit (review *Bank Statements* section for more info).
- Dependent information, if any.

APPLYING INSIDE THE U.S.

You can remain in the U.S. and apply for a change of status with USCIS.

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You can legally stay in the U.S. while the application is pending.• You can enroll in courses while the application is pending if you are currently in a visa status that allows study.• Less expensive (no travel costs).• Full time enrollment in consecutive semesters in a visa type other than F-1 can count towards eligibility for CPT and OPT.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It takes 3-4 months (or more) to receive approval.• No work (including TA/RA) while pending.• Departure from the U.S. while change of status is pending invalidates the application.• You must make an appointment at a U.S. consulate to obtain an F-1 visa the next time you depart the U.S.

Application Process for Inside the U.S.

- Submit all required documents to the ISSO.
- The ISSO will issue the I-20 within 5 business days.
- Return to the ISSO to sign the I-20 and receive mailing instructions.
- Pay the I-901 SEVIS Fee.
- Mail the application to USCIS with a check or money order for the application fee along with a receipt for the I-901 SEVIS fee.
- In 2-4 weeks, you will receive a receipt notice from USCIS with your application case number.
- You will receive the stamped I-20 and an approval notice with an I-94 when the application is approved.

Required Documents for Inside the U.S.

- Change of Status Request Form.
- I-539 with ISSO address.
- UT Dallas Financial Affidavit.
- Bank statement, current within 6 months, with sufficient funds showing minimum amount listed on the Financial Affidavit (review *Bank Statements* section for more info).
- A copy of your I-94, front and back. If subject to Special Registration, include your FINS# and any other documents showing NSEERS compliance.
- A copy of your U.S. visa page.
- A copy of your passport: only page(s) with picture and expiration date. Passport must be valid at least 6 months into the future.
- Applicable required documents for specific visa categories.

Required Documents for Specific Visa Categories

B-1/B-2 visa holders should also submit:

- A letter explaining why you changed your intent from visitor to student.

F-2 visa holders should also submit:

- Proof of relationship to F-1 (if F-2 spouse, a copy of marriage certificate; if F-2 child, copy of birth certificate or similar government document).
- Proof of F-1's status (copies of I-94, F-1 visa, passport, I-20, status verification letter, transcripts).

H-4 visa holders should also submit:

- Proof of relationship to H-1 (if H-4 spouse, a copy of marriage certificate; if H-4 child, copy of birth certificate or similar government document).
- Proof of H-1's status (copies of I-94, H-1 visa, passport, last two pay stubs, employment letter on company letterhead).

H-1b and L-1 visa holders should also submit:

- Copies of last two pay stubs.
- Employment verification letter on company letterhead.

E-1/E-2 visa holders should also submit:

- Proof of relationship to primary E-1/E-2 (if E-2 spouse, a copy of marriage certificate; if E-2 child, copy of birth certificate or similar government document).
- Proof of E-1/E-2's status (copies of I-94, E-1/E-2 visa, passport, articles of incorporation, bank statement of E-1/E-2 business account).

L-2 visa holders should also submit:

- Proof of relationship to L-1 (if L-2 spouse, a copy of marriage certificate; if L-2 child, copy of birth certificate or similar government document).
- Proof of L-1's status (copies of I-94, L-1 visa, passport, last two pay stubs, employment letter on company letterhead).

Info Specific to Certain Visa Categories When Applying Inside the U.S.

Changing From B-1/B-2 to F-1

- It is a violation of your B-1/B-2 status to engage in any type of employment or register for credit bearing, degree seeking courses prior to approval of F-1 status.
- There is a high risk of denial if you apply for a change of status less than 60 days after entering the U.S.
- You must apply for the change of status before your B-1/B-2 I-94 expires.
- USCIS is currently denying applications if the B-1/B-2 I-94 expires more than 30 days before the program start date.
- If you are denied the change of status and your B-1/B-2 I-94 has expired, you are out of status and may be accruing days of Unlawful Presence.

Changing From F-2 to F-1

- It is a violation of your F-2 status to engage in any type of employment or register for credit bearing, degree seeking courses prior to approval of F-1 status.
- If your F-1 spouse or parent is your financial sponsor, it is recommended you show evidence of sufficient funds to support two F-1 statuses (your spouse's or parent's F-1 and your F-1) and that your name also appears on the bank statement.

Changing from H-1b to F-1

- You should apply for the change of status prior to ending H1-b employment. To avoid the risk of unauthorized employment, it is safest to quit working when you receive the change of status receipt notice from USCIS.
- If you have been laid off from your job you are considered out of status on the date of your termination and you need to file your change of status application as soon as possible. It will be up to the adjudicating officer at USCIS to allow a grace period.

Changing from H-4 to F-1

- It is a violation of your H-4 status to engage in any type of employment prior to approval of F-1 status.

BANK STATEMENTS

- Funds must be liquid assets, not investments.
- USCIS has indicated that bank statements from your home country are acceptable if translated into English and bank statements (even if obtained electronically) are preferred over Internet printouts.
- If funds are not in U.S. dollars, include an Internet printout of the value in U.S. dollars after calculating the rate of exchange.

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

Students in F-1 status must pursue a full-course of study every long semester in the degree program on the I-20 unless approved for reduced enrollment by an International Student Advisor. A full course of study is defined as:

- 9 minimum credit hours for graduate level.
- 12 minimum credit hours for undergraduate level.
- Only 3 hours of online courses can count toward the full-time requirement.
- If it is your last semester and you lack only one class to complete your degree, that course cannot be taken online.
- Full-time enrollment in summer is required if it is your first semester in F-1 status.
- More information about full-time enrollment requirements is located on the ISSO website at <http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international/current/>.

HEALTH INSURANCE

- The University of Texas System requires all students who are **not** Permanent Residents, US Citizens, or undocumented aliens to maintain approved health insurance coverage while enrolled at U.T. System Institutions.
- Students are assessed the health insurance fee **each semester** they register for classes.
- If a student has a comparable health insurance policy, they may apply for a waiver before Census Day via email or in the International Student Services Office.
- Additional information about health insurance requirements and the waiver procedure can be reviewed on the ISSO website at <http://www.utdallas.edu/insurance/> .

DEFERRAL of CHANGE of STATUS AFTER 60 DAYS

The SEVIS database will automatically cancel a change of status application if it is not approved within 60 days of the change of status program start date, even if the application is still pending. To avoid an automatic cancelation, we must defer a pending application to the next available semester. If the next available semester is summer, then full time enrollment in summer will be required. Change of status applicants who are currently in a non-study category will be deferred to the next available semester after the last day to enroll for classes.

WORK ISSUES

Students in F-1 status are eligible for the following types of work authorization:

- On campus employment
- Teaching Assistantship or Research Assistantship
- Curricular Practical Training and Optional Practical Training (to be eligible, you must be enrolled full time for one academic year and be in academic good standing with UT Dallas)

TUITION RATES

Changing visa categories could affect your tuition rate. Please review the Residency information on the UT Dallas website regarding questions about tuition rates.

ISSO CONTACT INFO

- Website: <http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international/>
- Email: ISSOcurrent@utdallas.edu
- The ISSO international advisors are available on a walk-in basis Mon-Thu 10:30-5:00 and Fri 10:30-4:00 or you can call 972-883-4189 to schedule an appointment.