



## **Steps to apply for a change of immigration status while in the United States**

### ***Step I.* WRITE A COVER LETTER.**

The letter should:

- Explain what you are applying for (i.e. change from F-1 to F-2)
- Explain why you are applying
- List all of the contents of your envelope

***Step II.* READ INSTRUCTIONS & COMPLETE I-539 FORM** (May be downloaded from USCIS website or obtained from the International Programs Center)

Complete all questions and attach all required documents

### ***Step III.* INCLUDE WITH THE LETTER OF EXPLANATION & THE I-539 THE FOLLOWING ITEMS**

- Copy of your I-94 (Front & Back)
- Copy of latest visa
- Copy of passport
- Original documents necessary for the new status (e.g. all pages I-20 or DS-2019 if changing to a student or dependent F or J visa)
- Current proof of finances to support you in the new status
- \$300 check made payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security"
- A receipt for the SEVIS I-109 Fee. Effective September 1, 2004, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) now requires the collection of one-time SEVIS I-901 FEE of \$200 from F-1 students. An F-1 student must remit the fee directly to DHS by completing form SEVIS I-901 electronically using the internet or by mail. You must pay the SEVIS I-901 fee before filing your application for change of status. While USCIS will be able to electronically verify your payment, we recommend that you send a copy of the receipt for your SEVIS I-901 fee payment with your application. Therefore, it is best to file your application for a change of status after you have a SEVIS I-901 fee receipt.

**Note that if you are applying for a change to or from a dependent status (F2/J2), then you will also need to include copies of:**

- Primary's (spouse or parent) I-94 card (front and back)
- Primary's visa (spouse or parent)
- Primary's passport (spouse or parent)
- If applying as a spouse, provide marriage certificate with certified English translation
- If applying as a child, provide birth certificate with certified English translation

***Step IV.* BRING YOUR COMPLETED PACKET TO THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS CENTER FOR REVIEW AND MAILING**

***Step V.* PROCESSING**

The change will take approximately 4 months to be approved. When it has been approved, you will receive an approval notice in the mail and, if changing to F or J status, the newly stamped I-20 or DS-2019 will arrive in a separate mailing. If you do not receive this document within a few weeks after receiving the approval, you can check the status of your application by visiting the following website <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis> or call U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), their contact information is found on the website listed above.