CHANGE OF STATUS TO F-1

Before Applying for a Change of Status, Please Note:

- The normal processing time for a change of status is 5-12 months and cannot be expedited.
- You must apply for the change of status before your current status expires.
- You must attend KSU full-time for the first available semester after your change of status is approved. This is true even if the summer semester is the first available semester. As full-time in the summer is very rigorous, we suggest that as much as possible you plan for your change of status to occur for the fall or spring semesters.
- If you travel outside the U.S. while your change of status application is pending, your application will be considered abandoned.
- Changes of status do not provide the student with an F-1 *visa*, only the *status*. Therefore, should you receive change of status approval and then depart the U.S., you will need to apply for an F-1 visa at a U.S. embassy before you will be able to re-enter the U.S. to resume your studies.
- F-1 benefits do not become effective until your change of status is approved, and some benefits do not apply until 30 days before the start of the I-20 program.
- If USCIS approves your application more than 30 days before the I-20 program start date, you must ensure you do not violate their F-1 status during that time. An example of a violation would be engaging in employment, including on-campus employment, more than 30 days before the program start date as listed on your Form I-20.
- There may be a gap in driver's license validity if there is a gap between statuses.
- Please see the special notes below regarding F-1 change of status for certain visa types.

Notes for Certain Visa Types

- **B-2:** You are not allowed to begin studying until your change of status is approved.
- **C, D, K, M, and Visa Waivers/ESTA:** You may not change status to F-1 from within the U.S.
- **F-2:** You may only study part-time while in F-2 status and must be F-2 for the entire semester.
- **H-1B and L-1:** USCIS must receive your application prior to your last day of paid work.
- **J-1**: If you have a 212(e) residency restriction that has not been waived, you may not change status within the U.S.

---Change of Status Application Process on Reverse---

STEP ONE: Complete and Compile the Following:

- ☐ **Filing Fee** in the form of a check or money order payable to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for the appropriate amount. Check USCIS's website for the current amount: https://www.uscis.gov/i-539. Include fees for any dependents filing with you as well, as appropriate.
- ☐ **Form G-1145** e-Notification of Application/Petition request: https://www.uscis.gov/g-1145. This form enables you to receive a text and email when USCIS receives your application.
- ☐ **Cover letter** addressed to USCIS requesting the change of status. Explain why the change is needed and why you entered the U.S. with a different status. It is suggested that the letter explains that you did NOT have a pre-conceived intent to study in the U.S. and describes your plans to return home after your studies. Please remember that the F-1 visa is a *non-immigrant* visa and is not for work purposes.
- ☐ **Form I-539** Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status: https://www.uscis.gov/i-539. If your dependents are filing with you, complete the I-539A Supplemental Information as well, as appropriate.
- ☐ **Original proof of financial support** for the first year of studies. See the current costs on our website at https://dga.kennesaw.edu/isss/f-1/cost_to_attend.php. Financial documents should be in English or with a certified translation and should be in U.S. dollars or have a currency conversion attached.
- ☐ **Copy of valid passport and visa.**
- ☐ **Copy of I-94** Arrival/Departure card showing your current status. In most cases you can obtain this from https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov.
- ☐ **If you are on a dependent status**, a copy of documents to prove that the primary status holder is in legal status. Include marriage certificate, if applicable.
- ☐ **If you have dependents**, a copy of their passports, visas, and I-94 card Arrival/Departure cards.

STEP TWO: Request and Receive I-20

- ☐ **Request** your Form I-20 with the Change of Status Requested notation from the International Student and Scholar Services Office. Please note that the I-20 request process requires you to submit copies of your current immigration documents to determine change of status eligibility.
- ☐ **Sign** the I-20 in blue ink.
- ☐ **Pay** the SEVIS I-901 Fee. You may pay this fee online at www.FMJfee.com with a credit card or you may pay it at any Western Union Quick Pay Center. You will need your SEVIS ID # and the School SEVIS Code to make payment. Both are found on the I-20.
- ☐ **Include** a copy of the signed I-20 and I-901 fee receipt with your change of status application documents.

STEP THREE: Submit the Application

- ☐ **Make copies** of all application documents for your personal records.
- ☐ **Mail** the application with tracking to the appropriate address: https://www.uscis.gov/i-539-addresses

STEP FOUR: Update the International Student and Scholar Services Office (ISSSO) When:

- ☐ You **receive notices** from USCIS, including requests for evidence (RFEs).
- ☐ Your **application is still pending** past the semester start date and you need to update your I-20.
- ☐ Your **application is approved or denied**.

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