



Cornell University International Students and Scholars Office

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Changing Your Immigration Status

Once you have entered the U.S. in a particular visa status, such as F1, your plans may change and you may decide to change your visa status. There are two ways to change your visa status.

- 1) One way is to travel out of the U.S. apply at a U.S. consulate for a new type of visa stamp and then re-enter the U.S. in the new visa classification. [NOTE: Since Canadians do not need visa stamps, a Canadian would simply have to pay the SEVIS fee as explained on the handout attached to your I-20 or DS-2019 and then make a new entry in to the U.S. with the new immigration documents. You must receive a new I-94 card with the new status recorded on it.]
- 2) The second way is to send an application to a U.S.C.I.S. service center while remaining within the U.S. If you change your visa status this way, the next time you travel out of the U.S., you would still need to go to a U.S. consulate, apply for and obtain the visa stamp appropriate to your new visa classification. Additionally, you can **NOT** apply while remaining in the U.S. if either:
 - you are a J-1 visa holder who is subject to the two year home residence requirement or
 - you came in to the U.S. using the visa waiver program.

If you are subject to this two year rule or you came in to the U.S. using the visa waiver, you must travel out of the U.S. to change your status or get a waiver of the requirement. Come to the ISSO to discuss this with an advisor.

Instructions for sending the application to the service center (option #2 above):

Below is a list of the different status changes you might be seeking. Ask an ISSO advisor for the handout on a specific change, or check for the information on our web site at:

<http://www.isso.cornell.edu/immigration/f1/cos.php>

B-2 to F-1
F-1 to F-2
F-2 to F-1
H-1 to F-1
J-1 to F-1
F-1 to J-1