Change of Status: F-2 Dependent to F-1 Student

To change your status while in the United States from an F-2 dependent to an F-1 student, you will need to be admitted to a full-time academic program at a school that can issue you a Form I-20. In addition, your F-1 spouse must be in the United States and in status when you are requesting this change.

**Note:** If you are traveling outside the United States, you can accomplish the change of status upon reentry if you take your Form I-20 and financial documents with you and obtain an F-1 visa at a U.S. Consulate. Upon obtaining the F-1 visa, you can enter the United States as an F-1 student.

As an F-2 visa holder, you are not eligible to be a full-time student. However, you are able to take courses on a part-time basis. Therefore, if you wish to study full time, you must apply for a change of status from F-2 to F-1. F-2 visa holders also may not receive wages or compensation of any kind until the F-1 status is approved.

Your request for a change of status to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) should consist of the following:

- Completed Form I-539 with the processing fee. Checks and money orders should be made payable to the Department of Homeland Security. For the most current fee information, visit uscis.gov and scroll down to “Forms and E-Filing” to find the appropriate fee.
- Receipt for paying SEVIS I-901 Fee. Go to FMfee.com for full details.
- Copies of F-2 and F-1 form I-20s, signed and dated
- Copy of the front and back of the Form I-94 card or printed copy of electronic I-94 card and copy of admission stamp
- Financial verification
- Copies of your spouse’s valid Immigration forms: I-94, I-20
- Copies of the pages in each individual’s passport that include biographical information, passport picture and passport expiration

Meet with an immigration coordinator in the Office of International Affairs to review the above documents.

**Note:** If you have been offered an assistantship, please include and highlight in your letter: “Please grant expedite: Assistantship pending.” Also, write on bottom left corner of the envelope “Expedite: Assistantship pending.”