

Change of Status Checklist

The UAH International Student Advisors are happy to assist you with a change of status to F-1 student or F-2 dependent. There are two options to obtain a change of immigration status.

1. Change of status through travel:

Once the admissions office admits a student to UAH, an “initial attendance” I-20 can be issued. This I-20 will allow a student to travel home and request an F-1 visa. A student changing to F-1 status will be required to pay the SEVIS I-901 fee prior to the visa interview. Once a student is issued the visa and re-enters the U.S. with their I-20 they have effectively changed their non-immigrant status. The travel option, although it may be costly, allows the student to control when the change of status will be processed and will help a student to ensure that they will have the legal ability to begin classes in the semester they are admitted. A student who already intends to travel at some point before they begin their studies should talk to an international student advisor about being issued an I-20 to change their status using this process.

2. Change of status by USCIS adjudication:

An application must be prepared and sent to the USCIS processing center. After a complete application (checklist below) is submitted to an international student advisor, your documents will be reviewed and mailed to the Texas Service Center. We will also coordinate correspondence with the USCIS as needed. Processing times for a change of status request can vary. Expect that the decision will take between 2-4 months.

The following documents must be submitted to our office to apply for Change of Status:

- Completed I-539 form
- Cover letter addressed to the Department of Homeland Security.
 - Briefly introduce yourself, state the reason you are applying for a change of status, and indicate how you will support yourself financially in F-1 status. You may include any other information you wish; however, the letter should be brief. Don't forget to include your signature and the date.
- Original** I-20 form issued by UAH for the Change of Status. Keep a copy for your records.
- Receipt for payment of \$200 SEVIS fee (if you are changing to F-1). This fee should be paid online after receiving the I-20 form. The payment can be paid at <http://www.fmjfee.com>. Print the on-line payment receipt and keep a copy for your records.
- Photocopy of passport photo page and visa.
- Original** I-94 card. Please keep a copy for your records.
- Original financial documents showing your ability to pay for study at UAH. (UAH affidavit of support and bank statement from your sponsor or an assistantship/scholarship offer letter.) This set of documents is different from the set submitted to the admissions office.
- If you are currently in a dependent status (F-2, H-4, etc.) you must provide documents regarding your primary status holder. Include copies of the primary's passport, visa, I-94, as well as other pertinent documents (letter from H1-B employer, official transcript from F-1's school, etc.)
- Check for \$290 made payable to Department of Homeland Security.** This must be a personal check or a certified check. A money order is not recommended.
- Other documents may be required based on your individual situation. Please schedule an appointment with Mona Foroughi (256)-824-2748 or Reva Bailey (256) 824-3592 to discuss your Change of Status application.