

Two Ways Of Gaining A New Nonimmigrant Status

Option 1: Travel and Reentry -

Leave the U.S., apply for a new visa at a U.S. consulate, and reenter the U.S. with the new visa. This process is usually faster than changing status in the U.S. and requires less paper work.

Option 2: Change Status in the U.S. -

Submit an application to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for a change of status. This option allows you to change your status while remaining in the U.S. With this option you may gain the new status but you will not receive a new visa; visas are only issued outside the U.S. when you travel back to your home country. This will allow you to stay in the U.S. during processing. However, this process can be very slow (four to eight months).

IMPORTANT:

- This change of status application is to change your immigration status: IT DOES NOT GRANT YOU A VISA. The next time you travel outside the U.S. you will be required to go to a U.S. consulate or embassy abroad to apply for an F-1 visa.
- F-1 on-campus employment is not authorized until the change of status has been approved by the USCIS
- You and your primary F-1 visa holder must still be maintaining status on the date that you file the change of status application.

To receive a BSU issued I-20 indicating “Change of Status” submit the following to your DSO by email: internationaloffice@bowiestate.edu:

1. **A detailed letter** requesting change of status to F-1 explaining why you did not apply for a student visa before you entered the U.S. and why your intentions have changed since entering the U.S. *You should also include the dates you entered the U.S. and the date you were admitted to Bowie State University.*
2. **Completed and signed [Form I-539](#)** (go to <https://www.uscis.gov/i-539>, complete online and print)
3. **\$370.00 Filing fee** - payable by check or money order made to the *Department of Homeland Security*
4. **\$85 biometric services fee** for you and each co-applicant - payable by check or money order made to the *Department of Homeland Security*
5. **Original I-94** (go to <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov> to find most recent I-94)
6. **Copy of passport page** with the expiration date & photo
7. **Proof of SEVIS fee payment.** This fee is paid online at <https://www.fmjfee.com/>). Retain the receipt to mail with your change of status application
8. **Copies of financial documents** (including sponsor affidavit) that is no more than 6 months old in the form. If your sponsor is a U.S. citizen, he/she will need to complete a form I-134, Affidavit of Support www.uscis.gov/i-134
9. **Copy of current status visa / stamp**
 - a. If your current status is F-2 or H-4 you must provide proof of F-1 or H-1B status
 - i. Copy of F-1 or H-1B visa in passport
 - ii. Copy of F-1 or H-1B I-94
 - b. If current status is B-1/B-2 “prospective student” copy of notation in passport is required. If you do not have this notation, you must wait 30 - 45 days after your entry date to U.S. before you can file for a change of status with USCIS

You are responsible for mailing your change of status packet to:
USCIS P.O. BOX 660166 DALLAS, TX 75266

Please Note: If you are currently a B1/B2 visa type you are NOT permitted to enroll in classes until your status is officially