

## Change of Status: J-1 to F-1 Visa Type

There are two methods for changing your visa status:

1. Exit the United States, and while abroad apply for the new visa type (Recommended)
2. Remain in the United States and File form I-539

### Eligibility

- Student applying for F-1 status must be in good standing and must not have expired
- Not subject to the 2-year home-country physical presence requirement, or has received a waiver of this requirement
  - To find out if a two-year residency is required, look for a “check mark” in the box next to the phrase “subject to the two-year rule” on the DS-2019.
- Passport must be valid for the entire requested period of stay for the new visa status
- Granting an extension will not unbalance the current exchange agreement

### Application Process for Students Submitting for I-539

Applicants may also file for this immigration benefit using USCIS ELIS. This is an online filing system that can greatly reduce the amount of time need to process your request. [www.uscis.gov/uscis-elis](http://www.uscis.gov/uscis-elis)

- **Complete form I-539 (Application for Change of Nonimmigrant Status)**
  - Download Form: <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-539.pdf>
  - Download Form Instructions: <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-539instr.pdf>
- **Money Order or personal check**
  - \$370.00 made payable to “US Department of Homeland Security”
- **Form I-20**
  - An I-20 can be obtained by applying for admission to SUU.
- **Original Financial Documentation**
  - This is the same financial information that you used when applying for admission to SUU
- **Copies of your immigration documents:**
  - Current and all past DS-2019's
  - Passport and visa stamp
  - Front and back of your I-94 (This needs to be an original, not a copy. You will receive a new I-94 once a decision is made regarding your application.)
    - To retrieve a copy of your I-94, visit: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/>
- **Dependent Applications**
  - If you currently have dependents here on J-2 visas, each individual will need to submit applications providing the same information listed above, as well as a copy of the original marriage certificate (or birth certificate for children) with a notarized translation of the certificates.
- **Personal Statement (Optional)**
  - Addressed to USCIS requesting your change of status and explaining why you entered the United States and why/how your circumstances have changed, thus requiring a new visa type.
- **Set an appointment with an SUU Alternate Responsible Officer (ARO) to review your information**
- **Send completed application via certified mail to:**
  - U.S. Department of Homeland Security
    - U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
    - California Service Center
    - P.O. Box 10129
    - Laguna Niguel, CA 92607-1053
  - Make copies of everything in your application packet for your records before sending to USCIS.

For more information about this process, visit: <http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Resources/C2en.pdf>

**Please inform International Student & Scholar Services immediately after you have been notified of the outcome**

### QUESTIONS

Please contact International Student & Scholar Services at (435)586-1995 or [internationalaid@suu.edu](mailto:internationalaid@suu.edu) if you have questions or need further information.