
Change of Status: B-2 Tourist to F-1 Student

A nonimmigrant B-2 visitor for pleasure may wish to change to F-1 student status if the following applies:

1. The visitor has a B-2 visa bearing the notation “prospective student.” Consular officers are authorized to write “prospective student” on a B-2 visa issued to a person admitted to a particular school and has a Form I-20 from that school but intends to enter the United States more than 90 days before classes begin. A person with a B-2 visa marked “prospective student” should routinely be able to obtain a change to F-1 status.
2. Conditions in the preceding paragraph may apply, but the consular officer has neglected to write “prospective student” on the B-2 visa.

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 [FMJfee.com](https://fmjfee.com) for full details.
- Copy of the front and back of the Form I-94 card or printed copy of the electronic I-94 card and copy of admission stamp
- Copies of the pages in your passport that include biographical information, passport picture and passport expiration date
- If “prospective student” is not stamped on your B-2 visa, include a letter explaining why you are entitled to change to F-1 status

Meet with an Immigration Coordinator in the Office of International Affairs to review the above documents.

Note: It may take three to six months to get a response from USCIS. Therefore, if you have been offered a graduate assistantship, you may consider writing on the outside of your envelope “Assistantship Pending.” You will not be able to attend classes or receive compensation for any work performed before the change of status from B-2 to F-1 has been approved.