Students who are studying at the University of Illinois at Springfield in a status other than F-1 may be eligible to change to F-1 visa status. A change of status can be filed with USCIS with the assistance of the Office of International Student Services.

Change of status can be accomplished in two ways: 1) leaving the U.S., applying for an F-1 visa while abroad and re-entering the U.S. and 2) applying for a change of status within the U.S. and receiving a new I-94 card indicating F-1 status. Change of status within the U.S. takes approximately 3 months to accomplish. Applicants from B-2 and F-2 status may not start classes until the change of status has been approved.

When applying for a change of status within the country, individuals must prove that they are “In Status” currently (i.e. not in violation of their current status) and that they are eligible for the status that they are requesting. Additionally, students must pay all required government fees, complete an online application process, and upload scanned copies of documents into the application.

Student who are already admitted to online programs in another status will also be required to change their major from the online program to the on-campus program (change of curriculum form found at http://www.uis.edu/registration/forms/) and will also be required to submit the required immunization form found at http://www.uis.edu/healthservices/

Change of status applications are done via an online system called ELIS. Prior to accessing the ELIS system at https://elis.uscis.dhs.gov/ we recommend that students prepare the following documents and scan them onto a flash drive. All documents should be scanned individually at less than 6 megabytes per file and a resolution of 300 DPI, and named clearly. For example,

1. Documents that prove current status for someone in F-2 status might include
   a. I-94 card front and back (scanned and named “my I-94 card”)
   b. F-2 visa (scanned and named “my F-1 visa” etc.)
   c. Passport main page
   d. F-2’s I-20
   e. Relationship to the primary F-1 (birth certificate for a child of an F-1, or marriage certificate for spouse)
   f. Evidence that the primary F-1 is in good standing (F-1’s I-20, copy of transcript or course registration, etc.)

2. Documents proving eligibility for F-1 status, such as
   a. New I-20 from UIS Admissions office (scanned and named “my new I-20’’)
   b. Financial documentation
   c. Admission letter
   d. I-901 receipt (when students get an I-20 in the mail, they receive information about paying a SEVIS fee, or I-901 fee, by going online to www.fmjfee.com (approximately $200). Students are reminded to print a copy of their I-901 receipt before logging out of that system.

3. We also recommend that students write a one-page letter to Immigration describing their situation – for example, when and why they entered the U.S. in a different status and why they want to change to F-1 now.
Once all the documents are scanned and named appropriately, students need to access the ELIS system at [https://elis.uscis.dhs.gov/](https://elis.uscis.dhs.gov/), create an account, and begin answering the questions posed to them. At the end of the question section, they will be asked to upload all the scanned documents and pay the change of status fee (approximately $290). It is recommended that they find a category to upload each of the documents listed above.

Some of the questions asked in ELIS are a little tricky and may take careful consideration. One such question is the exact physical address of the University. The physical address of UIS is “One University Plaza, Springfield, Illinois 62703-5407.”

When the application has been completed and sent electronically, remember to print the receipt. It will take approximately 3 months for immigration to process the application. Upon approval of the application, USCIS will send a new I-94 card with the new status and ending date printed on it. At this point bring your immigration documents to the Office of International Student Services at HRB 52 so that we can update your status in the UIS mainframe and activate your student status in SEVIS.

With this and with all other student immigration issues, please maintain frequent communication with our office and feel free to contact us with any questions. Advisors are available most business days during business hours at (217) 206-6678 or in HRB 52.