Procedures to apply for Change of Status to F-1
International Student and Faculty Office
Northern Illinois University

1. Please provide our office with a letter of financial guarantee from your bank or from the bank of your sponsor. This must be on bank letterhead, stating that you or your sponsor has the necessary funds to support you during your first academic year on F-1 status at NIU. The ISFO Office will inform you of the current costs. If the bank account is not yours, in addition we need to have a letter from the account holder stating that he or she is willing to provide these funds to you for your studies. If you have a graduate assistantship award from NIU, please include a copy of the award letter. **IF YOU ARE A GRADUATE STUDENT YOU WILL DO THIS WITH THE GRAD SCHOOL**

2. Once we receive that document, along with confirmation of your enrollment at NIU, we will be able to issue you a Form I-20. **Graduate students will receive their I-20s from the Graduate School**

3. Please complete Form I-539, which is available at this website: [http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-539.pdf](http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-539.pdf)

4. Please pay the I-901 fee, which supports the SEVIS system. You will need to have your new I-20 with you when you do this. When you pay online, using a credit card, you will be able to print a receipt. This receipt must be enclosed with your application to change status. To pay the fee, please go to this address: [https://www.fmjfee.com/index.jhtml](https://www.fmjfee.com/index.jhtml)

5. Please gather the following documents:
   - proof of your enrollment at NIU, or proof of your admission to NIU
   - the completed I-539
   - the receipt for the I-901 fee payment
   - photocopies of your identification page and your visa page from your passport
   - photocopy of your passport expiration page, if that is shown separately from your identification page
   - photocopy of your current I-94, (If you have the old card, give us the copy of front and back. If you have entered the US after April 2013, give us the online print out from [https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov](https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov))
   - photocopies of any previous Forms I-797 (**Approval Notice’s Only**: ex if you have changed your status in the United States previously)
• proof that you continue to maintain your current status (if you are currently a dependent it would be proof that you and your spouse or guardian maintains their status)
• personal letter requesting change of status; this should explain why you did not enter the US in F-1 status, and why you now seek F-1 status.
• Money order for $290 made payable to "Department of Homeland Security"
• copy of the financial document mentioned in #1 above
• if you have ever been in J-1 or J-2 status, copy of the Approval Notice of the waiver of your two-year home residency requirement

6. Please put all these documents together with the new original I-20 (please retain a copy for your files). Please make a copy of this full petition for your personal files and then send the documents to the following address:

**Please note that if you are changing from F-2 or B-2 status to F-1, you must not enroll for any courses at NIU until your Approval Notice arrives.**