



Cultural Center for Language Studies

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Reinstatement to F-1 Status

As a student in F-1 status, you are expected to comply with immigration regulations. If you fail to comply with these regulations, you will be "out of status". When you are out of status, you are no longer eligible for recertification of your I-20 for re-entry to the US, or any other benefits of F-1 status.

The following are considered violations of your F-1 status:

- Failure to attend the school whose I-20 you used to enter the United States
- Failure to report to CCLS for initial registration in SEVIS upon arrival
- Failure to maintain full-time registration
- Failure to maintain F-1 status (refer to your handbook and Maintaining Student Status Form)
- Failure to request a transfer from /to CCLS in a timely fashion
- Failure to apply for a Program Extension *before the completion date on your I-20*, if you need more time to complete your current program

Reinstatement allows you the opportunity to regain valid F-1 status and have the mistakes you made corrected by USCIS. You may be eligible for reinstatement only if you:

- Are currently enrolled in a full-time program of studies
- Can establish that the violation of status resulted from circumstances beyond your control
- Have not engaged in unauthorized employment
- Have not been out of status for more than 5 months
- Can document sufficient financial resources to pursue a full-time course load
- Do not have a history of repeated violations
- Are not deportable from the US on any other grounds

Reinstatement of status may be obtained by leaving the USA and returning on new I-20 form or by applying for reinstatement with USCIS in the USA.

1. Depart the USA and return with a new SEVIS record and I-20:

You must obtain a new SEVIS record and I-20 from CCLS or the school you plan to attend; depart the USA and seek reentrance. Have current financial records on hand to present to the immigration official at the port of entry.

If your F-1 visa has expired, you will need to obtain a new F-1 visa before returning to the USA.

2. Apply for reinstatement while remaining in the USA:

The application for reinstatement is made by you directly to USCIS. CCLS officials cannot approve your application. Only USCIS can reinstate your status.

Please consider the following when applying for reinstatement:

- USCIS will consider your reasons for going out of status and whether or not they think you can maintain status if reinstated.
- Your F-1 benefits (employment) are suspended while your application is pending. If you are currently employed on campus or in an internship that was previously authorized, you must stop working immediately and cannot resume until your reinstatement is approved.
- The application may take anywhere from 2 to 9 months to be approved or denied. You must stay in the U.S. while USCIS is considering your application. If you leave the country while the application is pending, it will be considered abandoned, and you will not receive a refund for any fees paid.

Instructions for the reinstatement application:

1. Set up a USCIS account at <https://www.uscis.gov/i-539> (save your login/password/security question information somewhere safe so that you can access your account again later)
2. Contact your International Advisor at CCLS about what documents are needed for your new SEVIS record and I-20 form.
 - a. You will upload a scanned copy of your new I-20 to your USCIS application
3. Provide a copy of the Financial Support Certificate form and supporting bank letter or bank statement to your International Advisor (required for the I-20). The form has the amount of funding you must show USCIS printed on the form.
 - a. You will upload scanned copies of the financial documents to your USCIS application
4. Pay the SEVIS fee (\$350) if you have exceeded 5 months of the status violation. CCLS will send you a digital copy of the receipt. If you do not need to pay the fee, you will still upload a copy of the receipt from the last time you paid the fee.
 - a. You will upload this document to your USCIS application
5. Written statement including the following information:
 - a. The reason why you went out of status
 - b. What you'll be doing to make sure you stay in status if reinstated (in this case, you will attend classes at CCLS and maintain status with good attendance and grades)
 - c. Why being reinstated to F-1 status is important to you and your academic goals
 - d. You will upload this letter to your USCIS application
6. Scan in your documents showing current visa status (F-1 visa stamp, I-20, I-94 digital entry record, and F-1 visa stamp on your passport or whatever applicable documentation you have; for instance, form I-797 Change of Status Approval).
 - a. You will upload these scans to your USCIS application
7. Scan in the biographical page of your passport showing your picture, biographical information, signature, passport expiration date as applicable.
 - a. You will upload this to your USCIS application
8. If you are a new student, scan in a copy of your acceptance letter. If you are a continuing student, request a transcript and letter of enrollment and scan those documents.
 - a. You will upload these scans to your USCIS application
9. If you are including dependents (spouse or child/children) in this application, scan in their documents following the same process as in numbers 7 and above.
 - a. You will upload these scans to your USCIS application
10. Have a credit card available to pay the \$370 application fee and \$85 biometric services fee.
11. Once you have completed your application, print the PDF summary of the application before submitting it to USCIS. Review the application for any mistakes.

12. Once you are confident that your application is complete and correct, submit the application for adjudication.

Please be aware that your international advisor cannot access your USCIS application. **It is your responsibility to check your application status online weekly and notify your international advisor when a decision is made.** Failure to do so may result in immigration status issues, including cancellation of your reinstatement

If your request for reinstatement is approved, you are once again eligible for the benefits of F-1 status. If the application is denied, you will be notified and required to leave the US.

Reinstatement Processing time

It may take 3 months or longer for the application to be adjudicated. You must continue to study full time while the application is pending to show intent to be a student in good standing.