

## OVERVIEW

This guide is for students enrolled at Florida Poly holding a non-F-1 visa or other non-immigrant classification seeking to change to the F-1 visa. There are two options to apply to change, they are 1) travel and re-entry and 2) changing status while in the United States (US); this guide is for travel and re-entry. If you seek to change your status while staying in the US, please view the [Change of Status to F-1 Visa in the US Guide](#).

All students seeking to change their status are recommended to consult with an immigration law professional regarding processes and regulations. This guide is for informational purposes and not intended as legal advice. You must consult an immigration attorney if you require assistance or have questions about this process.

Students must meet the requirements to change their status, while maintaining their current status, and complete the required **CANVAS course** prior to being issued the I-20.

**IMPORTANT:** If you are currently approved for Florida residency for tuition purposes, you will no longer be eligible for this classification once you are enrolled under the F-1 visa. This means you will be billed at the non-resident tuition rate, effective your first semester as a F1 student.

## HOW TO APPLY TO CHANGE TO F-1 – Travel & Re-entry Option

Once students are issued their Initial I-20 they must depart the US and then apply for the F-1 visa at a US embassy or consulate abroad, preferably the local consulate in their home country. Students cannot re-enter the US until their F1 visa is approved and issued.

- This process is usually faster than changing status in the US and requires less paperwork.
- You will also obtain the visa and the status but should keep in mind the possibility of a delay in your visa processing time and the expense of travel and ticket.

**NOTE:** [Canadian](#) and [Bermuda](#) Citizens are **not** required to apply for an F-1 visa. Once they are issued the I-20 they are registered in SEVIS database and assigned a SEVIS number, when crossing the border to enter the US, they must provide the following items to the officer at the port of entry: passport, I-20, proof SEVIS fee is paid, financial evidence of ability to pay estimated costs of attendance, and proof of ties to Canada.

### Steps to Apply:

- Obtain your Initial I-20 from ISS.
- Pay the SEVIS Fee [online](#).
- Apply for the F-1 visa [online](#) (**Exception:** Canadian and Bermuda citizens)
- After obtaining your visa, re-enter the US no more than 30 days prior to the start date on your I-20.
- Notify ISS of your arrival and submit copies of your F-1 visa and [I-94 Arrival/Departure Record](#).