



F-2 to F-1 Visa Student Immigration Procedures

BEFORE YOU RECEIVE YOUR MILLIGAN UNIVERSITY I-20

- **ADMISSION:** You must be accepted for Admission by the degree program you wish to study at Milligan. Admission requirements vary by program and there may be special requirements for international students such as providing proof of English proficiency and having transcripts translated and/or evaluated by an evaluation service. Admission procedures can be found here:
 - Undergraduates: www.milligan.edu/admissions/apply/international-students/admissions@milligan.edu
 - Graduate: www.milligan.edu/gps/gps@milligan.edu
 - Emmanuel Christian Seminary: <https://ecs.milligan.edu/admission/ecsadmissions@milligan.edu>
- **PROOF OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT:** The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service requires that international students show proof that adequate financial resources are available to meet educational and living expenses. Therefore you must prepay your first semester balance to Milligan University before we issue the I-20.
- **AFFADAVID OF SUPPORT:** You must submit a notarized Affidavit of Support with the required financial documentation proving adequate support for one full year in your program. The form can be found at www.milligan.edu/admissions/apply/international-students/.
- **PASSPORT:** You must submit a copy of your valid passport.
- **I-20:** You must submit a copy of your current I-20.
- **MOU:** You must submit the signed International Student Memorandum of Understanding. Signing this form involves being familiar with the International Student Handbook. The form and handbook can be found at www.milligan.edu/admissions/apply/international-students/.

*Canadian students are not required to obtain an F-1 visa.

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- Pay SEVIS/ I-901 fee at <https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.html>
- **Seek a “change of status” using one of the options listed below. Please be mindful of the time needed for each option**
- Plan travel to the US (if needed)
- Submit Enrollment Confirmation & Residency Form
- Submit Vaccination Records including Tuberculosis Skin Test

OPTIONS FOR CHANGING TO F-1 STATUS

Obtain your I-20 from the Milligan University Admissions Office from admissions counselor

Choose one option to obtain F-1 status: "Travel and Reentry" or "Change Status in the U.S."

Option 1: Travel and Reentry

- Travel to your home country and apply for the F-1 visa at the local U.S. Embassy or Consulate. You can enter the U.S. with your I-20 and F-1 visa no earlier than 30 days before the I-20 program start date.

Option 2: Change of Status in the U.S.

- Submit your change of status application to United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Mail a paper application to the USCIS Lockbox.

Required documents:

- Form I-539
- \$290 fee: check or money order payable to “U.S. Department of Homeland Security”
- Original I-94 card or photocopy of admission stamp and paper printout of I-94 record
- Photocopy of the visa page and identification page in your passport
- Photocopy of your previous I-20 listing you as the dependent of your F-1 spouse or parent
- Photocopy of your spouse's or parent's I-20 and I-94 card (front and back)
- Photocopy of the signed I-20 issued in your name by the school you plan to attend; Milligan University Admissions will issue your I-20
- Evidence of financial support
- Detailed letter requesting and explaining the need to change status
- Photocopy of proof of payment of SEVIS fee For full instructions, mailing address, and the form please visit <https://www.uscis.gov/i-539>

Please note: You cannot begin full-time enrollment until you are in F-1 status, so it may be best to travel to your home country, apply for an F-1 visa, and reenter the U.S. in F-1 status to ensure that you will obtain F-1 status before your classes begin. USCIS regulations prohibit beginning a full course of study and working on campus until the change to F-1 status is approved. F-1 status cannot begin earlier than 30 days before the start date on your I-20. **Should you choose to change your status by staying in the US (submitting the I-539 form), please note that processing time can take 4-6 months, and you must be able to maintain your current F-2 status until 30 days before the I-20 start date.** If your F-2 status will expire prior to 30 days

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before your I-20 start date, your application will most likely be denied. Even though you are allowed to stay in the U.S. while the application is pending, if your application is likely to be denied, it will be better for you to travel to your home country, obtain an F-1 visa, and reenter the U.S. in F-1 status. Once you have been notified that your status change has been approved through the I-539 form, please notify your Admissions Counselor at Milligan.

AFTER YOU ARRIVE AT MILLIGAN UNIVERSITY

- Check-in with Becky Robertson **as soon as you arrive on campus** at the Registrar's Office located on the first floor of Derthick Hall. For this meeting remember to bring the following documents
 - passport with F-1 visa
 - I-94 "Arrival/Departure" card
 - I-20 form
- Attend International Students Luncheon, Orientations, and/or Welcome week sessions as instructed. (Date & Time to be communicated via email)
- Get student ID made at IT Department at McMahan Student Center
- Useful information on maintaining your status can be found here
<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/maintaining-your-status>

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