Applying For Reinstatement

If an international student fails to maintain their status, or if there is some question as to whether they have, and their designated school official (DSO) terminates their Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) record, the student must file for reinstatement with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) or depart the United States immediately.

In general, to be eligible for reinstatement, the student must:

- Not be out of status for more than five months at the time of filing or show the exceptional circumstance that prevented filing in that time frame.
- Not have a record of repeated or willful violations of regulations.
- Not have worked without authorization.
- Be pursuing or intend to pursue a full course of study in the immediate future at your school.
- Not be deportable for any reason other than failing to maintain F-1 or M-1 status.
- Be able to show that:
  - Circumstances beyond the student’s control caused the status violation.
  - Student fell below a full course load for a reason the DSO could have used to authorize a reduced course load, and the student would experience extreme hardship, if the student fails to get reinstatement.

Reinstatement Process:

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| 1    | DSO    | • Recommends reinstatement in SEVIS.  
       |        | • Prints and signs the Form I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status, issued for reinstatement. |
| 2    | Student | • Signs Form I-20 issued for reinstatement.  
       |        | • Completes and mails Form I-539, Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status, to USCIS with fee and supporting documents.  
       |        | **Note:** The Form I-539, Instructions for Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status, lists the required documents to submit with the Form I-539.  
       |        | **Filing Fee:** $370 (Subject to change – check [www.uscis.gov/i-539](http://www.uscis.gov/i-539))  
       |        | **Note:** If the student has been out of status for more than five months, he or she must also:  
       |        | • Pay the SEVIS I-901 fee again.  
       |        | • Explain why the reinstatement application could not be filed sooner. |

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| 3    | USCIS  | • Accepts/rejects the application.  
|      |        | • Makes a decision and mails it to the student.  
|      |        | **Note:** USCIS may request additional information. USCIS will send all correspondence related to the application to the mailing address on the Form I-539. |
| 3a   | SEVIS  | • SEVIS automatically emails the decision to the DSO who requested the reinstatement and to the PDSO.  
|      |        | • If approved for reinstatement to a continuing program, SEVIS changes the status of the record to Active. |
| 4    | Student| • If approved for reinstatement to a new program, the student enrolls for the program, as indicated on the Form I-20.  
|      |        | • If approved for reinstatement to a continuing program, the student resumes a full course of study, if he or she has not already done so.  
|      |        | • If denied, the student follows the instructions in the denial notice. |
| 4a   | DSO    | • If approved for reinstatement to a new program, the DSO must follow the registration processes for the initial session at the school.  
|      |        | • If approved for reinstatement to a continuing program, the DSO must register the student within 30 days and make sure the session dates are correct.  
|      |        | **Note:** SEVIS will terminate the record for failure to enroll, if the Initial or Next Session Start Date is past the regulatory deadline. |
| 4b   | SEVIS  | If denied, SEVIS closes the reinstatement request. |

**Reference:**

- [https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/2016/07/how-should-f-or-m-student-file-reinstatement](https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/2016/07/how-should-f-or-m-student-file-reinstatement)
IMPORTANT: DO NOT SUBMIT your USCIS online application for reinstatement UNTIL you have received the Reinstatement I-20 from the Office of International Student and Global Scholar Services (ISGSS).

Before receiving the I-20 for Reinstatement from our office, you must submit the required documents in a PDF file for review:

1) Thoroughly read the Lewis Reinstatement Application (see pages 1 and 2 of this document)
2) Completed Form i-539 (if you are applying online, please send a completed snapshot of your application found on the last part of the online USCIS application but do not submit the online application yet)
   a) Instructions for filing the I-539 can be found here.
3) Affidavit of Financial Support
4) Bank Statement or other Proof of Funding for 1 year or the length of time it will take you to complete your program.
5) Copy of your current i20
6) Copy of your passport & visa
7) Copy of your most recent i-94
8) A letter from you requesting reinstatement to F-1 student status. The letter must explain your situation and truthfully states that failure to maintain status was due to any or all of the reasons listed below:
   a) Circumstances beyond the student’s control caused the status violation.
   b) Student fell below a full course load for a reason the DSO could have used to authorize a reduced course load, and the student would experience extreme hardship, if the student fails to get reinstatement.
9) Supporting documentation (for example, a letter of support from a faculty advisor familiar with the circumstances of your case)
10) Current transcript and transcripts from other U.S. schools previously attended
11) New I-20 from ISGSS requesting Reinstatement (will be provided after items 1-7 are completed)
12) Here is the USCIS website where you will create your online account, submit the completed documents, and pay the processing fee: https://www.uscis.gov/feecalculator

You will need to complete an i539 Application for Reinstatement and then send that to ISGSS for review before we can issue the Reinstatement I-20 that you will need for your application to USCIS. The USCIS fee to USCIS for reinstatement is $455 ($370 filing fee + $85 required biometrics services fee) and that can be paid online after all application materials have been prepared, reviewed, and submitted through USCIS’ online system. Click here for more information from DHS on the Reinstatement Process.

Questions? Email isgss@lewisu.edu.