REINSTATEMENT TO LEGAL F-1 STATUS

BASIC DESCRIPTION: Reinstatement is needed if you violate your full-time student status. Violation of student status makes you illegal and may lead to removal from the U.S. If your violation is not severe, there is a chance of being reinstated. It will take normally 90-120 days to receive a response. If you are denied reinstatement, you may have to leave the U.S., but you usually can return if you travel with an “initial attendance” I-20, a valid visa, and passport. In some cases, students may prefer to travel and not apply for reinstatement. If you want to consider choosing to travel, more details can be covered at the time of your appointment with an ISSS Counselor.

APPOINTMENT CHECKLIST:

- All your I-20’s, passport, and I-94.
- Complete I-539 (Parts 1, 2, 4, 5 and, if applicable, Supplement 1 for dependents.) The form is either attached or can be downloaded at http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-539.pdf.
- Personal letter to DHS. Describe your violation. You must state: (1) how your violation of status resulted from circumstances beyond your control or that failure to be reinstated would result in extreme hardship, (2) your filing for reinstatement is your immediate action (within 5 months from when violation occurred), and (3) you are currently pursuing or intend to pursue a full course of study at UH. For example:

  Date
  Dear DHS Officer:
  I am applying for reinstatement because I (state your violation) during the ___________ semester(s). This happened because (provide the reason especially emphasizing any circumstances beyond your conscious control). I am taking full-time hours this semester (or always have taken full-time hours) (or plan to be full-time next semester).

  If I am not reinstated, it will result in extreme hardship because (list a reason).

  Sincerely,
  Your name

  Note: You may want to bring the letter in MS Word format on a USB flash drive so the counselor can make suggestions about the letter.

- Evidence of financial support. Examples:
  - RA's, TA's, & Fellowships: Complete an RA/TA Verification form (available at ISSS).
  - Funds from a sponsor or personal account: Bring a current bank statement or a letter on official bank letterhead not older than 2 months. If your sponsor is not your parent and is either a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, he/she will need to complete form I-134 Affidavit of Support. This form is available at the Front Desk of ISSS or can be downloaded at http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/I-134.pdf.
  - Scholarships: Verified with a letter from your college or supplying agency. It should also state if you are eligible for resident tuition.

  Please black out Social Security Number and bank account number(s) on any documents.

- Transcripts from all academic institutions attended in the U.S.
- A money order or cashier’s check payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security for $370. No personal checks!

  Pay a SEVIS fee of $200 if your violation is older than 5 months. You may use form I-901 and obtain a receipt verifying payment. You can pay the fee with a credit card and print out a receipt online. The website for paying the SEVIS fee is: www.FMJfee.com. You may also pay through Western Union. Details are on our website.

MAILING CHECKLIST (We recommend that you mail the application certified mail with a return receipt or with delivery confirmation):

- Personal letter of request.
- Completed and signed Form I-539.
- Copies of all previous I-20’s.
- Transcripts from all schools attended in the U.S.
- A new SEVIS I-20 that will be issued by ISSS for “Reinstatement.”
- Proof of financial support. If the monies are from a foreign bank, they must state US dollars or you can provide a printout from a currency exchange rate converter on the internet (e.g., follow the link to Finances on our website: http://uh.edu/oisss).
- Copy of passport that is still valid for 6 months into the future and copy of visa page.
- I-94 card or print out from www.cbp.gov/I94.
- Receipt of SEVIS fee of $200 if applicable.
- A money order or cashier’s check payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security for $370.
- ISSSSO will provide a mailing label and envelope.