
Immigration Laws Affecting Enrollment of F-2 and M-2 Dependents

Changes to immigration laws effective January 1, 2003 require that non-immigrants in F-2 or M-2 status (dependent spouse or child of an F-1 or M-1 international student) interested in pursuing a “course of study” at a college or university must be approved for a Change of Status to F-1, J-1 or M-1 student status by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) **BEFORE** they may enroll in or begin attending classes. **Any enrollment in academic or vocational classes (either part-time or full-time) before the F-2 or M-2 Dependent has been approved for Change of Status to F-1 International Student will be considered to be a violation of F-2 or M-2 non-immigrant status.**

USCIS defines a **course of study** as “a focused program of classes, such as a full-time course load leading to a degree or some type of certification. Casual, short-term classes that are avocational or recreational in nature and are not the primary purpose of the person’s presence in the United States, such as a *single English language or crafts class*, would not constitute a ‘course of study’. Courses *with more substance* or that *teach a potential vocation* are considered to be part of a ‘course of study’ and thus require approval of student status.” Prior to being approved for F-1 status, An F-2 or M-2 spouse or child may only enroll in one class that is avocational or recreational in nature.

USCIS has the right to contact the school to verify when the F-2 or M-2 dependent enrolled or began their studies. If an F-2 or M-2 dependent is found to be in violation of their status, there are serious potential consequences including:

- Denial of Change of Status to F-1
- Ineligibility for future immigration benefits from USCIS
- Cancellation of any valid visa contained in the person’s passport
- Denial of future visa applications and Adjustment to Permanent Residence
- Deportation

All non-immigrants are responsible for the maintenance of their own immigration status. This information is being provided solely as a courtesy to prospective students in F-2 or M-2 Dependent status. The College of DuPage is not required to restrict, limit or prohibit the ability of F-2 or M-2 Dependents to enroll. Furthermore, College of DuPage is not liable for the student’s failure to comply with the terms of their immigration status.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this regulation, or if you wish to change your status to F-1 international student, please contact the International Admission Specialist at (630) 942-2979 or by e-mail at intladm@cod.edu.