

## Preparing For Your Visa Interview

This information is for individuals who plan to enter the United States for the first time to study in F-1 or J-1 visa status. For information on bringing dependents to the U.S., returning to continue studies, or renewing your visa, or for more details on how to apply for a student visa, refer to the applicable U.S. Department of State website below:

F-1 Student Visas: [http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types\\_1268.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1268.html)

J-1 Exchange Visitor Visas: [http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types\\_1267.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1267.html)

### STEPS

1. **Obtain your Form I-20/Form DS-2019** from the school you plan to attend.
2. **Contact your local U.S. consulate or embassy** to ask how to get an F-1 international student visa or J-1 exchange visitor visa. A list of consulates and embassies can be found at: <http://usembassy.state.gov/>.
3. Pay the **SEVIS Fee**. See the *SEVIS Fee Fact Sheet* for detailed information and instructions.
4. **Schedule an interview.** Follow the U.S. embassy/consulate's instructions to schedule an interview to apply for your student/exchange visitor visa. It is important to apply for your visa as far in advance as possible. Many embassies/consulates recommend that appointments be made no more than 90 days from the intended date of travel, but some can make earlier arrangements for interviews.
5. Prepare and bring the required documentation to your **visa interview**. Confirm with the embassy/consulate what documentation is required. Below is a general check-list:
  - a) Passport valid for at least six months
  - b) Form I-20 (sign the form under *Item 11*) or Form DS-2019 (sign the form at the bottom of page 1)
  - c) School acceptance letter
  - d) Completed and signed visa application forms (see the travel.state.gov website)
  - e) Photograph(s) in the prescribed format (see the travel.state.gov website)
  - f) Receipt(s) for visa fee(s)
  - g) Receipt for SEVIS fee. If you have not received an official receipt in the mail showing payment and you paid the fee electronically, the consulate will accept the temporary receipt you printed from your computer. If you do not have a receipt, the consulate may be able to see your payment electronically if your fee payment was processed at least 3 business days before your interview.



- h) Financial evidence that shows you have sufficient funds to cover your tuition and living expenses during the first year of your program (i.e. original Wellesley College Declaration/Certificate of Finances)
- i) Any information that proves that you will return to your home country after finishing your studies in the U.S. This may include proof of property, family, or other ties to your community.

In addition to the information that is provided to you by Slater International Center in regards to obtaining the F-1 non-immigrant visa, below is a list of some useful websites that may provide more information before your visa interview.

- **EducationUSA**  
<http://www.educationusa.info/pages/students/visa.php>
- **U.S. Visa Policies and Procedures**  
[http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa\\_1750.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html)
- **Visa Denials and Why They Happen**  
[http://www.travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/denials/denials\\_1361.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/denials/denials_1361.html)

If you have any questions, please contact the Slater International Center by emailing [kpabon@wellesley.edu](mailto:kpabon@wellesley.edu) or calling (781) 283-2084.