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F-1 STUDENT VISA APPLICATION PROCEDURE

1. I-20 Form

- When you receive the I-20 form from our school, sign and date item 11 on page 1.

2. Scheduling the Visa Interview

- Find the U.S. Consulate or Embassy near you and contact them to schedule an interview. <http://usembassy.state.gov>
- Make your appointment as far in advance as possible but usually no more than 90 days before the start date of your class. Start date = #5 on your I-20 form (1st date)

3. Visa Application Forms

<http://www.state.gov/m/a/dir/forms/visa/index.htm>

- **New DS-160:** [List of U.S. Embassies Using the Online Form](#)
- DS-156 Nonimmigrant Visa Application Form
- DS-157 Supplemental Nonimmigrant Visa Application Form (males between 16 and 45)
- DS-158 Contact Information and Work History for Nonimmigrant Visa Applicant

PLEASE NOTE: The new online DS-160 replaces all of the following forms: DS-156, DS-157, DS-158, and DS-3032.

4. Visa Application Fee

- Follow the instructions on your local U.S. Embassy or Consulate's website to pay the \$131 visa application fee.

5. SEVIS* Fee

- You will need to pay the \$200 fee **before** your interview.

To pay online (credit card): <http://fmjfee.com>

- Complete the I-901 form by providing credit card information for the payment.
- Copy your name exactly from the I-20 form.
- Print a copy of the online receipt (I-797 form) and bring it with you to your interview.
- You **MUST** pay the SEVIS fee 3 or more business days before your interview.

To pay by mail:

<http://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/I-901.pdf>

- Complete the I-901 form.
- Copy your name exactly from the I-20 form.
- You will need a check or money order **drawn on a U.S. bank**. Confirm that your bank can do this or go to a foreign subsidiary of a U.S. bank.
- Make the check payable to "The Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement."
- Mail the I-901 form and check or money order to the address written on the I-901 form.
- It is advisable to send the check and form by registered mail, with a return receipt requested.
- Keep copies of the check and I-901 form for your records.
- A receipt (I-797 form) will be mailed to you three days after your payment is received.
- Take your I-797 form to your interview.

6. Visa Interview

Bring the following items to your visa interview:

- Your passport (the expiration date must be at least 6 months later than your arrival date in the United States)
- I-20 form and acceptance letter from the International Language Institute
- SEVIS receipt (I-797), see **5. SEVIS Fee**
- Confirmation page of online DS-160 application **OR**
- Completed Visa application forms
 - DS-156
 - DS-157 (males 16-45)
 - DS-158
- 2 passport photos if not uploaded with your online DS-160 application. Go to this site for the format:
<http://travel.state.gov/pdf/Photo%20Guide%2010-01-04.pdf>
- a receipt for the visa application fee
- Financial evidence – bank statement/ other documents
 - You must show how you will pay for your school and living expenses during your stay in the United States.
- Proof you will return to your country
 - U.S. immigration law requires that all applicants for nonimmigrant visas demonstrate that they have social, familial, work, or other compelling circumstances that will obligate them to return to their home countries after a temporary visit in the United States.
 - Examples of compelling ties could be employment, home or business ownership, continued university enrollment, and spouse or children. Commonly submitted documentation includes salary statement, job letter from employer, insurance papers showing when work at the company was started, property deeds, and personal and company tax returns showing earned income and tax paid.

You may enter the United States 30 days before the start date written on your I-20 form. You may **not** enter the United States after the start date on your I-20. Please contact us if we need to defer your start date.

Please always check with your [U.S. Embassy or Consulate](#) for the most up-to-date visa application process, forms and fees.

Good luck! Please contact us if you have any questions regarding this information. We would be happy to help you.

*SEVIS is a web-based immigration system created to monitor international students in the United States. On October 27, 2008, a new fee of \$200 went into effect for all F-1 visa applicants.