
SEVIS and F-1 Student Visa Information

How do I obtain a student visa?

There are three (3) important steps to obtain your student visa:

1. Pay the SEVIS fee.
2. Contact your local United States Embassy or Consulate
3. Prepare for your interview

This document is meant to help you with the process!

Pay the SEVIS Fee

SEVIS is the official database that keeps a record of all international students who plan to study in the United States. The US Department of Homeland Security now requires that all students pay a \$200 SEVIS fee before making an appointment for the F-1 visa interview.

For information about how to pay the SEVIS fee, please see the enclosed form “SEVIS Fee Procedures.”

Contact your Local US Embassy or Consulate

After you pay the SEVIS fee, make an appointment at your local US Embassy or Consulate for your student visa interview. The following websites will help you to schedule your interview:

1. Visit <http://www.usembassy.gov/> for a list of all US Embassies or Consulates organized by region and country. Once you find the website for your local embassy or consulate, follow the instructions to complete your F-1 student visa application and to make your student visa appointment.
2. Find out how long is the wait time to schedule a student visa interview by visiting http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/wait/tempvisitors_wait.php.

Prepare for your visa interview

You will be required to meet with a US consular officer in order to obtain your student visa. Please see page 2 on the back of this document for some tips that will help you to prepare for your interview!

Do you need help?

If you need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the ELI Admissions Office at ud-eli@udel.edu. We are happy to help you!

Tips for the visa interview

The following tips are meant to help you prepare for your student visa interview:

1. Explain that your main purpose for coming to the U.S. is to study, not to work. *You must clearly show that you will be returning home after your studies.*
2. Show that you have strong reasons for returning to your home country (example: a job, family, long-range plans).
3. Practice your English before the interview—it will probably be in English.
4. Speak for yourself—do not bring others to the interview with you.
5. Explain how studying in the U.S. relates to your future back in your home country.
6. Make a good first impression, and keep your answers short and direct.
7. Have your documents well organized and clearly written. The officer must be able to look at your documents and know what they signify immediately.
8. Be prepared to answer questions regarding job opportunities in your country for when you return home from the United States.
9. If your wife or husband or children are remaining behind in your country, you must explain how they will manage when you are in the United States.
10. Have a positive attitude. Do not start an argument with the consular officer.

What to do if your visa is denied

If you are denied a visa, try to get the reason you were denied in writing. Ask the officer for a list of documents that he or she would suggest you bring back to the embassy or consulate in order to overcome the refusal.

Contact the ELI Admissions Office immediately at ud-eli@udel.edu for assistance and to discuss your options.