

U.S. Student Visa Process for International Students

A Step-by-Step Guide to the F-1 Visa Application
Presented by Nichols College International Programs Office



We will cover the following:

- What is a U.S. Student Visa-(F)?
- Step-by-step application process
 - Required documents
 - Visa interview tips
- What happens after my interview?
- Common issues and how to avoid them

What is an F1 Visa?

- I will issue an I-20, which is the document you need to apply for a F-1 Visa
- Non-immigrant visa for full-time students
- For academic or language training programs
- Issued by U.S. embassies or consulates abroad
- You must first be accepted to a SEVP-certified school, which Nichols is



Step 1:

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status
OMB NO. 1653-0038

SEVIS ID: N0004720633

SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME	GIVEN NAME	Class of Admission	
PREFERRED NAME	PASSPORT NAME	F-1 ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE	
COUNTRY OF BIRTH	COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP		
DATE OF BIRTH	ADMISSION NUMBER		
FORM ISSUE REASON	LEGACY NAME		
SCHOOL INFORMATION			
SCHOOL NAME		SCHOOL ADDRESS	
SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL		SCHOOL CODE AND APPROVAL DATE	
PROGRAM OF STUDY			
EDUCATION LEVEL	MAJOR 1	MAJOR 2	
PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY	ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTES	EARLIEST ADMISSION DATE	
START OF CLASSES	PROGRAM START/END DATE		
FINANCIALS			
ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FOR: 9 MONTHS		STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR: 9 MONTHS	
Tuition and Fees			
Living Expenses			
Expenses of Dependents (0)			
Other			
TOTAL		\$	\$
REMARKS			
SCHOOL ATTESTATION			
I certify under penalty of perjury that all information provided above was entered before I signed this form and is true and correct. I executed this form in the United States after review and evaluation in the United States by me or other officials of the school of the student's application, transcripts, or other records of courses taken and proof of financial responsibility, which were received at the school prior to the execution of this form. The school has determined that the above named student's qualifications meet all standards for admission to the school and the student will be required to pursue a full program of study as defined by 8 CFR 214.2(f)(6). I am a designated school official of the above named school and am authorized to issue this form.			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		DATE ISSUED	PLACE ISSUED
SIGNATURE OF:			
STUDENT ATTESTATION			
I have read and agreed to comply with the terms and conditions of my admission and those of any extension of stay. I certify that all information provided on this form refers specifically to me and is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I certify that I seek to enter or remain in the United States temporarily, and solely for the purpose of pursuing a full program of study at the school named above. I also authorize the named school to release any information from my records needed by DHS pursuant to 8 CFR 214.3(g) to determine my nonimmigrant status. Parent or guardian, and student, must sign if student is under 18.			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
SIGNATURE OF:		DATE	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN	SIGNATURE	ADDRESS (city/state or province/country)	DATE

- Apply and be accepted by Nichols College.
- Provide necessary documents to Admissions counselor who forwards to me. This includes passport, financial documents etc.
- I will send you a Form I-20 (Certificate of Eligibility)
- Review your I-20 for accuracy (Name, program dates, SEVIS ID)

Step 2:

Pay the SEVIS fee

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status
OMB NO. 1653-0038

SEVIS ID: N0004720633

SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME	GIVEN NAME	Class of Admission
PREFERRED NAME	PASSPORT NAME	F-1
COUNTRY OF BIRTH	COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP	

- Visit: fmjfee.com
- The cost is \$350 (Keep the receipt)
- Required before scheduling your visa interview
- Use SEVIS ID from your I-20

Step 3:

Complete the DS - 160 Form



The image shows a screenshot of the U.S. Department of State's online visa application form (DS-160). The header features the U.S. Department of State logo and the text "U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE" and "ONLINE APPLICATION FOR NONIMMIGRANT VISAS". Below the header, the form is titled "Nonimmigrant Visa Application". The "Applicant Information" section includes a "Photo Upload" area with a sample photo and the text "SAMPLE PHOTO FROM WWW.IHHHELP.COM". Below the photo is a barcode. The "Personal, Address, Phone, and Passport Information" section contains various fields for personal details, including name, date of birth, gender, marital status, education, employment, and passport information. The form is partially filled out with sample data.

- Fill out the online visa application form at ceac.state.gov
- Upload a recent photo; preferably a passport photo
- Save confirmation page with barcode
- Use this confirmation to book your visa interview

Step 4:

Schedule a Visa Interview



- Visit your local U.S. Embassy/Consulate website.
[Here's a link](#)
- Pay visa application fee (\$185)
- Book earliest available appointment
- Prepare required documents
- Make social media accounts public

Step 5:

Required Documents



- Valid passport (6+ months beyond program start)
- Form I-20
- DS-160 Confirmation page
- SEVIS fee receipt
- Visa application fee receipt
- Admission letter
- Financial documents (bank statements or other proof)
- Transcripts & test scores

Step 6:

Tips for a Successful Interview



- Be honest and confident
- Speak in English
- Explain your academic goals clearly
- Show strong ties to your home country
- Demonstrate financial ability to study in the U.S.
- Answer the questions they ask

After the Interview



- You may be approved, denied, or need additional documents
- You may see a denial immediately in your account, but you may not be denied. Wait a few days a check again.
- Approved: Your passport will be returned with a visa inside
- Check visa for accuracy
- Prepare for arrival to U.S.

Arrival in the U.S.



- Present passport, visa, and I-20 at the border
- Expect questions about your program
- You may arrive up to 30 days before your program starts
- Report to me when you arrive (I am your PDSO or Principle Designated School Official)

Common Mistakes to Avoid



- Not paying SEVIS fee
- Incomplete DS-160 or missing documents
- Weak financial support documents
- Giving vague or inconsistent answers at the interview

Resources



- [Study in the States](#)
- [U.S. Embassies and Consulates](#)
- [SEVIS fee Payment](#)
- [CEAC DS160 Form](#)



I'm here to help you!

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