

INSTRUCTIONS FOR OBTAINING THE F-1 STUDENT VISA

Students are encouraged to apply for their visa early to provide ample time for processing.

F-1 visas for new students can be issued up to 365 days before the start date of a course of study. However, per the Department of Homeland Security, you will not be allowed to enter the United States more than 30 days before your program start date. Consider this date carefully when making travel plans to the U.S.

Contact the local U.S. Consulate or Embassy to ask about how to get an F-1 international student visa. A list of Consulates and Embassies can be found at <https://www.usembassy.gov/>.

Pay a SEVIS I-901 fee for each program of study. Students must provide a receipt of this payment at the time of their interview at the US Embassy/Consulate. To make a SEVIS payment, go to <https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/>.

Complete an online Nonimmigrant Visa Application Form DS-160, which can be found at <https://ceac.state.gov/genniv/>. Follow the instructions to apply and pay the associated fees.

If students are transferring schools, extending their program, applying for an F-2 dependent visa, or have paid this fee and been denied a visa within the last twelve months, they do not need to pay the SEVIS fee

Preparing for the visa interview:

- (a) Visit Education USA, a branch of the U.S. Department of State, which is a tool for students to gather information on visas and the interview process. Education U.S.A has an office in your home country, or you can go online at, <https://educationusa.state.gov/>.
- (b) Be prepared for basic questions that the Consulate may ask:
 - What do you plan to study while you are at Frostburg?
 - What steps have you taken towards this degree?
 - What are you going to do with your degree after you graduate?

Bring to the visa interview the following:

- (a) A valid passport (Must not expire within six months)
- (b) Form I-20 (sign the form under *Item 11*)
- (c) School admission letter
- (d) Completed Form DS-160
- (e) Photo requirements are included in the following link: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/photos.html>
- (f) A receipt for the Form DS-160 application fee
- (g) A receipt for the SEVIS I-901 fee
- (h) Financial evidence that shows you have sufficient funds to cover your tuition and living expenses during the period you intend to study
- (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

Remember to remain calm and answer all the Visa Officer's questions openly and honestly