

New Student Visa Information

Congratulations on your admission to Eastern Washington University! Now that you have received your I-20, you will need to obtain an F-1 visa for study in the United States. We have gathered some useful information on the visa process for you here.

Pay the SEVIS Fee

Visit www.fmjfee.com to pay the I-901 SEVIS fee **before** you make your visa interview appointment. Print the I-901 SEVIS fee payment receipt. You will need to bring this receipt with you to your visa interview.

Schedule your Visa Interview

Determine which embassy or consulate you will go to for your visa interview and what documents are required for your interview. You can do your research by going to the US Embassy website: www.usembassy.gov.

Many consulates and embassies allow you to book your appointment online. You will find instructions specific to the US Embassy or Consulate you will visit on their website.

Complete the Online Visa Application

The DS-160 online non-immigrant visa application form must be submitted prior to your visa interview. To access the form and to review the *Frequently Asked Questions* visit travel.state.gov. You may also be able to access the application form through the consulate or embassy website.

After you have completed the DS-160, print the confirmation page with the barcode. You will need to bring this confirmation page with you to your visa interview.

What to Bring for Your Visa Interview

It is important to gather all of the documents needed for your visa interview before you go to the embassy or consulate. You will need to check with the embassy or consulate in your area for a full list of required documents, but here is a list of commonly required documents to get you started:

- **Passport:** Must be valid for at least six months beyond your period of stay in the U.S.
- **I-20 form:** Signed by the P/DSO
- **I-901** SEVIS payment receipt
- **DS-160** application confirmation page
- **Letter of Admission** to Eastern Washington University
- **Financial documents:** Must show that you have sufficient funds to cover your expenses during your time in the U.S. Usually financial documents must be *originals* and issued by the bank or institution.

What to Expect in the Interview

In general, F-1 non-immigrant visa interviews are very short. The consular officer will ask questions to determine whether you are qualified to receive the visa and review the documents that you bring and any information in the government database.

The F-1 visa is a non-immigrant visa, which means that you will need to show that you intend to return to your home country after your program is completed. It is your responsibility to prove that you will return home after your program by showing Home Country Ties. The following are examples of Home Country Ties:

- Employment in your home country
- Family residing in your home country
- Community ties in your home country
- Property that you own in your home country

Note: A round-trip airplane ticket by itself may be insufficient to show Home Country Ties.

Fingerprinting: Ink-free, digital fingerprint scans will be taken as part of your application process. They are usually taken during your interview, but this may vary based on location.

Administrative Processing: In some cases, the consular office may require additional time to review your application. If your application is given *administrative processing* please contact EWU as soon as possible.

There is no definite timeframe for administrative processing and it is important to work with us while the consulate is conducting the review of your application.

Visa Approval: When the visa is approved, you may need to pay a visa issuance fee if one applies to your nationality. You will be informed how your passport with visa will be returned to you. You can also find information on picking up your passport on the US Department of State travel website: travel.state.gov.

Double-check: Check your visa carefully to make sure that it has the correct program and biographical information. If the information is incorrect, contact the consulate or embassy immediately.

Preparing to Travel

After you have been granted the visa, you can begin to prepare for travel. It is important to note that *there is no guarantee that you will be granted a visa*. We recommend that you DO NOT make final travel plans or purchase plane tickets until you know that you have been granted a visa.

Make at least two copies of all of your documents. Leave one copy at home with family or trusted friend and keep the other copy with you in a safe place. This is very important in case something happens to your original documents and you need to show your eligibility or status.

Keep the following contact information available in case you need to reach someone in an emergency:

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We look forward to meeting you at Eastern Washington University! Go Eagles!