



## Dartmouth College • Office of Visa and Immigration Services

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### **F-1 Visa Application, Fee payments and Consular Interview**

This information is for internationals who plan to enter the United States for the first time to study full-time at a U.S. College or University. For information on bringing family members to the U.S., returning to continue your studies, or renewing your visa, or for more details on how to apply for a student visa, refer to the U.S. Department of State website, at:

[http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types\\_1268.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1268.html)

### **STEPS**

1. Contact the Office of Visa and Immigration Services (OVIS) at Dartmouth College to request a Form I-20, which you will need to apply for an F-1 student visa at a U.S. Consulate (**Note regarding Canadian citizens:** Canadians do not need to go to a U.S. embassy, or to apply for and receive a U.S. F-1 visa, as they are visa exempt. They do, however, still need the I-20 form, and must pay the SEVIS fee in order to enter the U.S. They should present the form, a letter of admission to the academic program, and financial documents to the immigration officers at the port of entry to the U.S.)
2. Contact your 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 <http://usembassy.state.gov/>. The U.S. State Department offers a website on the visa application process as well: [http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa\\_1750.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html)
3. After you receive an I-20 form from the school that you want to attend, follow the U.S. Embassy/Consulate’s instructions to schedule an interview for your F-1 student visa. It is important to apply for your student visa as far in advance as possible. Many consulates recommend that appointments be made no more than 90 days from the intended date of travel, but some can make earlier arrangements for interviews.
4. Complete the required U.S. visa application form(s), available from the Consulate or Embassy, or online, at: [http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/forms/forms\\_1342.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/forms/forms_1342.html) Be sure to check with your consulate as to which forms you are required to complete and submit, as some consulates are using only an online form now, called a DS-160. Others are still using the old DS-156, DS-157, and DS-158 forms.
5. Pay the visa application fee. This is NOT the same as the SEVIS fee – see below. In addition, check to see if you must pay any reciprocity fees by following instructions on your local U.S. embassy or consulate’s web site. See this website for information on possible additional reciprocity fees for citizens of your country: [http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/fees/fees\\_1341.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/fees/fees_1341.html) .
6. If your I-20 was issued on or after September 1, 2004, and is marked for “initial” attendance (see #3 on your I-20 form), you will also need to pay the SEVIS fee. Please refer to the Office of Visa and Immigration Services fee sheet for the appropriate amount to submit.

#### **To Pay the SEVIS fee by mail:**

- (a) Download the instructions and Form I-901 “Fee Remittance for Certain F, J, and M Non-immigrants” from <http://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/I-901.pdf>  
OR
- (b) You may ask for the form by phone at 1-800-870-3676 (inside the US)
- (c) Complete the Form I-901. Be sure to write your name exactly how it appears on your I-20 form

- (d) Prepare a check, international money order or foreign draft (drawn on US banks only) in the appropriate amount in USD, made payable to “The Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement”
- (e) Mail the completed I-901 and payment to the address listed in the instructions for Form I-901
- (f) A Form I-797 receipt confirmation letter should be mailed within 3 days of processing the fee. Be sure to make copies of this receipt letter, and keep it with your other important immigration documents

To Pay Online

- (g) Go to the online payment website at <https://www.fmjfee.com/index.jhtml>
  - (h) Complete the form online and supply the necessary credit card information. Be sure to write your name exactly as it appears on the I-20 form.
  - (i) **Print a copy of the online receipt. (VERY IMPORTANT)**
  - (j) Keep a copy of your receipt with your other immigration documents
7. **You should bring the receipt of fee payment with you to the interview, and /or if you are Canadian, when you go to the U.S. border or port of entry.** If you have lost the receipt, the Officer should be able to view your payment history in his or her database.
  8. If you are transferring schools, extending your program, applying for an F-2 dependent visa, or have paid this fee and been denied a visa within the last twelve months, you do not need to pay the SEVIS fee.
  9. While you should check with the U.S. consulate to make sure you bring with you all required documents, the following is a list of items that are usually required: **Note:** Canadians need to present all of the following to the port of entry officer except for the completed visa applications listed in (d):
    - (a) A passport valid for at least six months into the future
    - (b) Form I-20 (sign the form under *Item 11* after reading the back of the form, “Instructions to Students”)
    - (c) School admission letter
    - (d) Completed visa applications (unless completed online – if so please check with the Consulate about whether a printed copy is required as well)
    - (e) Two 2”x 2” photographs in the prescribed format (see the travel.state.gov website)
    - (f) A receipt for the visa application fee
    - (g) A receipt for the SEVIS fee. If you have not received an official receipt in the mail showing payment and you paid the fee electronically, the consulate will accept the temporary receipt you printed from your computer. If you do not have a receipt, the consulate may be able to see your payment electronically if your fee payment was processed at least 3 business days before your interview.
    - (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.
  10. Be sure to answer all the consular officer’s questions honestly.