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ISSI form 213: Applying for a student (F-1) visa and reporting to the ISSI

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APPLYING FOR A STUDENT (F-1) VISA AND REPORTING TO THE ISSS

This instruction sheet will help you to better understand the necessary procedures to obtain a student visa. Please feel free to contact us (iss@iue.edu) if you have any further questions after reading this information.

Nonimmigrant student visa:

A nonimmigrant visa is the proof of assessment conducted by the official at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate that certifies a person may seek admission to the U.S. for a specific purpose. Therefore, you will be required to submit certain required documents at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate to explain the purpose of your visit to the U.S. Your Certificate of Eligibility (I-20 Form) is necessary to obtain an F-1 student visa to attend school in the United States. This visa permits you to enter the United States for the purpose of studying at a Northeastern. For detailed information please refer to the website: http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_12.html#apply

Apply for F-1 Student Visa

You may be accepted by several different institutions and may receive more than one I-20 Form. If you are intending to attend Northeastern University, then you will be required to submit the SEVIS-90 fee and apply for a student visa. Applicants for a student visa should generally apply at the U.S. Embassy/Consulate in their home country. Students are encouraged to apply for their visa as soon as they receive the I-20 Form to provide ample time for visa processing. Note that U.S. Embassies/Consulates are able to issue F-1 entry visas up to 120 days in advance of a program's reported start date provided on the I-20 Form. In most countries, student visa applications must appear in person for interview. However, each U.S. Embassy/Consulate has its own interview policies and procedures regarding student visas, thus student should contact the U.S. Embassy/Consulate for specific application instructions. For the current listings of U.S. Embassies and Consulates a broad web recommendation the following link from the U.S. Department of State: <http://usembassy.state.gov>

Required Documentation

- " Certificate of Eligibility for nonimmigrant visa (I-20 Form) issued by Northeastern. Your assigned SEVIS ID number is in the upper right corner of page #1 of I-20 Form. Check to see that all information is correct and sign the form on line #11. If under the age of 18, a parent or guardian also must sign. Please note: the spelling of your name and your date of birth must be exactly the same as what appears in your passport.
- " Only the Nonimmigrant Visa Electronic Application Form DS-160 (<http://travel.state.gov/visa/forms/420.html>) Please note that after you have completed the DS-160 online, you must print a hard copy of the DS-160 Bar code page, then visit the U.S. Embassy/Consulate website where you will find an additional country-specific instructions.
- " Valid passport. Your passport must be valid for at least six months after your proposed date of entry to the United States.
- " One photo that meets the detailed information available at http://travel.state.gov/visavisap/hotreq/visap/hotreq_53.html
- " Proof of the SEVIS fee payment. The SEVIS fee is usually paid online and must be paid before you apply for your visa.
- " Visa Application Fee. Please check with the U.S. Embassy/Consulate for the fee amount and how it must be paid. You will need to provide a receipt showing that the visa application processing fee has been paid, when you come for your visa interview.

Additional applicant must be prepared to provide

- " Admission letter
- " Financial evidence that shows you have sufficient funds to cover your tuition and living expenses during the period you intend to study. A minimum, you must prove that you have sufficient funds for at least one year of study as reflected on the I-20 form.
- " Transcript and diploma from previous institutions attended
- " Scores from standardized tests required by the educational institution (e.g. TOEFL, SAT, GRE, etc.)

The following websites have additional information and tips on how to prepare for your visa interview:

Information on Apply for a Visa: <http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa175.html>

10 Point Start Reminders when applying for a nonimmigrant visa: <http://www.nafsa.org/reference/defaults.aspx?id=8643>

Frequently Asked Questions about the SEVIS-90 Fee: <http://www.wice.gov/sevis/901/fact.htm>

IMPORTANT: No advance purchase of a return ticket should be made until a visa has been issued.

For a list of a proxy internet Visa Process Time visit: http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/wait/wait_463.html

Note that the processing times do not include the time that may be required for security clearance. Please refer to Potential Delays in Visa Issuance for more information regarding security clearances <http://travel.state.gov/>

SEVIS I-90 Fee: New student(s) (F1) with an I-20 Form are subject to a SEVIS fee for the maintenance of this electronic record. A SEVIS fee payment receipt must be included with most visa applications. Students may pay the fee through the Internet by using a credit card and completing the online Form I-90 form through the mail by submitting a completed I-901 form and a check or money order. For detailed information please refer to the website www.wmfe.com. Please note, if you pay the fee by credit card, you will be able to print the receipt immediately. If you pay by check or money order, then you must wait for the receipt to be mailed to you. Student should also be prepared to present the SEVIS \$90 fee payment receipt at the U.S. Port of entry. Canadian citizens must pay the SEVIS fee before entering the United States. F-2 dependent are not required to pay the SEVIS fee.

Accompanying family members (F2 visa holders.) Spouse and/or children (under age 21) will receive his/her own SEVIS-generated I-20 Form, with their/his own SEVIS ID number. However, it is the F-1 principal who signs the I-20 Form. The F-2 visa may be obtained by presenting to a U.S. Consulate the dependent's I-20 Form and proof of adequate funding for support of the family members. Proof of marriage for spouse and a birth certification for each child are required for F-2 visa applications. You are also required to complete a separate visa application form for each child, even if they are included on a parent's passport. It is preferred that families apply for F-1 and F-2 visas at the same time, but if the spouse and children must apply separately at a later time they should bring copies of the F-1 student visa holder's passport with the F-1 visa stamp, a valid his/her I-20 Form along with all other required documents.

Canadian citizens do not need to apply for an F-1 visa, but they are required to have an I-20 Form and pay the SEVIS \$90 fee before entering the U.S. to study in order to enter the U.S. If an F-1 student status, Canadian citizens must present to the immigration inspector at the U.S. Port of Entry the following documents: the I-20 Form, valid passport proof of SEVIS \$901 fee payment, and supporting financial documentation for his/her study in the US and the admission letter. If you intend to enroll at Northeastern, please be certain to use the I-20 Form issued by Northeastern.

After the visas are granted and processed, check your passport to be sure you obtained an F-1 visa stamp, and that a dependent's obtained an F-2 visa stamp. Also, be certain that the original I-20 Form was returned to you. You must have the original with you when you arrive at the United States. Sometimes, the document is returned to you in a sealed envelope, which must be presented to the immigration inspector when you arrive (in this case do not open the envelope).

Do not enter the U.S. in Visitor status (B1/B2, WT, or WB), a status which does not permit to study in the U.S.

Entering the United States

According to immigration regulations, F-1 student visa holder scans a sealed admission to the U.S. Port of Entry as part of a program sponsor's duty to assist on the I-20 Form (item # 5). During your trip to the U.S. San air travel agent will distribute I-94 Arrival/Departure forms prior to arrival in the U.S. The immigration officer will stamp your I-20 and I-94 forms upon entry. Since you have a student visa stamp in your passport be sure to obtain a white I-94 form; no take the I-94 W form. At the U.S. port of entry, you will be required to present passport, I-20 Form, I-94 form, and customs form to a representative of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The immigration officer will stamp your I-20 Form and I-94 card. D/S (Duration of Status) indicates that you have now F-1 status in the U.S. For the length of time indicated on your I-20 Form as long as you are maintaining full-time enrollment at the school that is issued your I-20 Form. The officer will give you a portion of the I-94 card and a self-stamp in your passport as proof of your status. Be sure that you are I-94 card indicates the proper status before exiting the immigration area.

Reporting to North Eastern and the ISS

The ISS has a MANDATORY ORIENTATION PROGRAM for all new, transfer, and student who are changing educational level within Northeastern. Therefore an international student should plan to arrive to the U.S. no later than his/her program's report date (see item # 5 on your I-20 Form) and report in person to the ISS during scheduled Immigration Clearance sessions, as outlined in the ISS Orientation schedule.

Please note, that you must complete an online Immigration Clearance Form <http://www.wnortneastern.edu/iss/schedule.html> before attending an Immigration Clearance session. Once you have completed the form you will receive an email confirmation that you have completed the process. Please print these materials and bring them with you to Clearance session along with your passport, I-94 card, and I-20 Form. Obtaining a Smart photo with you wherever you can display the email.

If you fail to complete the form online or bring a confirmation print-out or email with you, then you will delay your ability to complete Immigration Clearance and that will be a better register for classes just your access schedule, receive your I-94 card, etc.

Completing immigration clearance is essential for completing your University enrollment and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security regulations. Failure to register your documents with the ISS in a timely manner may result in the loss of your lawful F-1 status.

During the ISS Orientation all undergraduate students will meet their academic advisor to receive important information about our course registration and attendance and other important information. A pre-registration session. Graduate students also will be contacted by orientation sessions for graduate students.

Please note: if you are enrolling on campus by the program's report date, you must register before the next available date by contacting Undergraduate Admissions (undergraduate student) or your admitted Graduate Schools (graduate student).