

## Applying for a U.S. Student Visa (F-1 and J-1)

### You Need Several Documents to Apply for a Visa

Once you've received your admission letter from DePauw, you should expect to receive your I-20 form or DS-2019 in the month of May or June. The form I-20 or DS-2019 indicates that you have been offered admission to DePauw. It also gives you a "report date," or the date when you're expected to arrive at DePauw.

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- Form I-20 or DS-2019, which you received from DePauw.
- Application Form DS-160 which you can get by accessing this link [http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/forms/forms\\_1342.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/forms/forms_1342.html)
- A passport that is valid for at least the next six months (preferably longer).
- A passport-sized photo of yourself.
- A receipt that shows payment of the SEVIS fee, you should use a credit card to pay your \$200 [SEVIS fee](#). **Be sure to print your receipt; you will NOT be able to re-enter the online SEVIS system and print it off later.**
- A receipt that shows payment of the visa processing fee. How you pay the fee differs in each country, so make sure to check with your local U.S. embassy or consulate for details. In some countries, you may not be able to pay the fee at the consulate.

### Other Supporting Documents

- Academic records to date.
- Copies of scores from any standardized tests you've taken (SAT, TOEFL, IELTS, etc.).
- Letters of admission and scholarship awards from DePauw.
- Original financial documents, such as bank statements, tax documents showing your/your family's income, and statements from any investments that you plan to use to finance your education.
- Documents showing any scholarships or financial aid from other sources (governmental or organizational grants, outside scholarships).
- Evidence that you intend to return to your home country, anything that shows you have strong ties to your home country.

## The Interview

U.S. Embassies and Consulates in some countries are very busy and may have a long waiting list for visa interviews. It's a good idea to check with the consulate early in the application process, even before you receive an I-20, just in case your consulate has a waiting period. Some countries may have a months-long waiting period; others may be able to schedule interviews fairly quickly. The best way to succeed in your interview is to arrive well-prepared. Think about answers to the following questions:

- Why do you want to study in the United States?
- Why did you choose DePauw?
- Why did you choose this major? What jobs does this major prepare you for?
- How will studying in the United States prepare you for a career in your home country?
- What have you been involved in that shows your commitment to your home country?
- How will you pay for tuition and fees and living expenses in the United States for the duration of your studies? (Remember, you are not allowed to work in the United States except under special circumstances).

Remember, by U.S. law, it is the consular officer's job to find reasons to deny your visa. The consular officer is required to assume that you're trying to immigrate to the United States. You have the burden to prove that you are planning to return to your home country after finishing your studies.

## Arrival in the U.S.

Please be aware that when you arrive in the U.S., you will be given a Form I-94 Arrival/Departure Record either on the airplane or in the immigration area of the airport; this small, but important document is also a part of your required immigration documentation. You will need to know the address and phone number of where you will be living to complete this document. This information is available to you on e-Services, so be sure to print this information out and bring it with you. You will need to pass through immigration at your first entry in the U.S. You may encounter a long wait at immigration; please be patient and respectful. Please see the [Department of Homeland Security Fact Sheet](#) so that you can know what to expect when you arrive at a U.S. port of entry.

## Contact information

Please remember to keep all of your immigration documents with you. When entering the U.S, you will be required to present to a Customs and Border Protection(CBP) official the payment receipt of the Sevis I-901 fee, in addition to your passport and I-20 or DS2019. **Do not pack these documents in your check-in luggage.** If you need help, contact **Loutfi Jirari** at (765) 658-6697, **Aliza Frame** at (765) 658-4863 or **Public Safety** at (765) 658-4261, you may need to call someone about changing flight plans or if there is an issue at immigration.