



How to Apply for an F-1 or J-1 Student Visa

(You can only apply for a visa outside the U.S.)

Please use the information below as a general guide. For specific guidance from the U.S. government regarding visa application procedures, please go to: http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1268.html.

Step 1: Obtain your new SEVIS Form I-20 (for F-1 visa) or SEVIS Form DS-2019 (for J-1 visa) from DePaul University which will contain your SEVIS ID number located in the upper right-hand corner of the document; you will need this number in order to complete the next steps listed below.

Step 2: Complete Form DS-160. Go to: http://travel.state.gov/visa/forms/forms_4230.html. U.S. Embassies and Consulates worldwide are currently shifting to usage of the universal Form DS-160. However, some Consulates are still using old versions of this form; check the particular Consulate at which you will interview for your visa to determine which version of the form is required.

Step 3: Pay the SEVIS I-901 fee (<https://www.fmjfee.com>) and Visa Application and Visa Issuance fees; go to: http://travel.state.gov/visa/fees/fees_3272.html to learn about the difference between a Visa Application fee and a Visa Issuance fee. For an overview of visa fee information, go to: http://travel.state.gov/visa/fees/fees_1341.html. Be sure to keep your receipts. Please note: all applicants for an F-1 visa must pay a visa application fee, regardless of whether the visa is granted. Visa issuance fees are only charged to citizens of certain countries, based on reciprocity agreements between the U.S. and the applicant's country of citizenship.

Step 4: Go to: <http://usembassy.state.gov/> to find appointment scheduling procedures for the Embassy or Consulate at which you will apply. Review the list of items and estimated processing times required by that particular post. Schedule an appointment for a visa interview.

Take the following items to your visa interview:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Original SEVIS Form I-20 or SEVIS Form DS-2019 issued by DePaul University.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Financial documents which show adequate funds to pay tuition and living expenses for at least the first year of your studies. If you have a sponsor, s/he will need to provide you with an affidavit of financial support promising to support you and proof of sufficient funds to do so.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Passport valid for at least six months past your anticipated arrival in the U.S.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Two passport-size photographs that meet the specifications described at: http://travel.state.gov/visa/visaphotoreq/visaphotoreq_5334.html .
<input type="checkbox"/>	Documents which help establish your "non-immigrant intent". Carry documentation that shows you have strong reasons to return home after finishing your studies. Such documents might show evidence of home or business ownership, or a job that awaits your return, and/or strong family ties.



If you are currently in the U.S. and wish to apply for a visa “renewal” while traveling abroad you will also need:

- A recent signature from your OISS advisor on your current SEVIS Form I-20 or SEVIS Form DS-2019.
- An OISS letter stating that you are currently maintaining lawful non-immigrant student status. To request such a letter, please go to: <http://oiss.depaul.edu/docs/docrequest.pdf>.
- An official DePaul University transcript. For more information, go to: <http://sr.depaul.edu/Transcripts/index.asp>.
- For additional information on re-entering the U.S., please go to: <http://oiss.depaul.edu/Travel/index.asp>.
- Receipts for all visa and SEVIS fees you have paid.

Step 5: Once you arrive at a U.S. port of entry (e.g. U.S. airport), remember to have all your documents ready so you may make a successful entry into the U.S. Remember that you must use your F-1 visa along with your SEVIS Form I-20 (or J-1 visa along with your SEVIS Form DS-2019) to enter the U.S. If you have another visa stamp in your passport (e.g. a tourist visa), you must be careful not to use that visa to enter the U.S. It is not allowable to use the B-1/B-2 visa (for use by visitors coming for business or tourism) to enter the U.S. and then study in a full course of study.

Schedule an appointment with your OISS advisor if you wish to:

1. Travel to a country other than your own and your visa stamp is expired. Many U.S. embassies will NOT issue visas to “third country nationals” (TCNs). However, if you wish to travel to Canada, Mexico, or parts of the Caribbean, you may be eligible for “automatic revalidation of an expired visa.”
2. Invite your husband, wife, or child to join you in the U.S. You will need original marriage and birth certificates along with official translations, and each dependent will need his/her own SEVIS Form I-20 from DePaul University.
3. Renew your visa while on Optional Practical Training (OPT). In addition to the items listed on the first page; you will also need to present your Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card and proof of current employment during the visa interview. Please speak to your OISS advisor before traveling outside of the U.S. during your post-completion OPT period. This is particularly important if your visa is expired because there is an increased risk of being refused a visa for re-entry while on OPT.