Applying for a Student Visa

Understanding Student Visas:

The U.S. Department of State issues visas in a U.S. embassy or consulate abroad. A visa allows a foreign citizen to travel to U.S. and request permission from a U.S. immigration officer to enter the United States. A visa does not guarantee entry into the U.S.

AOMA is authorized to host nonimmigrant students studying in the U.S. with an F-1 visa. An F-1 visa is the most common type of visa for those who want to study in the United States at an accredited U.S. college or university.

Before you can apply for an F-1 visa, you will first need to apply to, and be accepted by AOMA. If accepted, you will receive a certificate of eligibility, allowing you to begin the visa application process.

How to apply for a F-1 Student Visa:

Step 1: Certificate of Eligibility
Receive your Form I-20A-B, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status-For Academic and Language Students. Check to make sure that your date of birth (DOB) and name are correct and match your passport. If there is a mistake, please contact a school official immediately. Sign your Form I-20.

Step 2: SEVIS Fee
Pay the required SEVIS I-901 fee and retain a receipt of payment. You are REQUIRED to present receipt this payment during the visa interview.

The SEVIS I-901 fee can be paid online at www.fmjfee.com/j901fee/index.jsp.

For information about additional payment options, please visit: www.ice.gov/sevis/factsheet/090104_pymnt_fs.htm

Step 3: Apply for Visa
Complete your Nonimmigrant Visa Electronic Application, Form DS-160 online at https://ceac.state.gov/GENIV/.

As visa processing times can vary depending on the U.S. Embassy or Consulate at which a student is applying, it is advisable that students apply for their visa well advance of the program start date. Embassies and consulates are able to issue student visas 120 days or less, in advance of the registration date for your course of study.

Step 4: Schedule a Visa Interview
Contact the U.S. Embassy or Consulate near you to schedule an appointment for a visa interview. To learn how to schedule an appointment for an interview, pay the application processing fee and review embassy specific instructions, visit the website of the Embassy or Consulate near you: www.usembassy.gov.

Step 5: Prepare For and Attend Visa Interview
Assemble the materials REQUIRED for the visa interview:

- Original Form I-20A-B, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status-For Academic and Language Students, signed by both you and your school official
- Online Nonimmigrant Visa Electronic Application, Form DS-160
• A passport valid for travel to the United States and valid for at least 6 months beyond the intended period of stay
• One (1) 2 inch x 2 inch photograph meeting all nonimmigrant photograph requirements
  o For list of photo requirements, please visit: www.travel.state.gov/visa/visaphotoreq/visaphotoreq_5334.html
• A MRV fee receipt showing payment of visa application fee
• The SEVIS I-901 fee receipt

You should also be PREPARED to show the following items during a visa interview:

• Original transcripts and diplomas for previous institution(s) attended
• TOEFL or other English-language exam score
• Financial evidence demonstrating you or your sponsor’s ability to pay tuition and living expenses for course of study
  o If you or your sponsor is a salaried employee, please be prepared to bring tax documents and original bank books and/or statements.
  o If you or your sponsor owns a business, please bring business registration, licenses, etc. and tax documents as well as original bank books and/or statements.
• Proof of relationship to dependents (ex. marriage license, birth certificates)

Dependents:

Your spouse and/or unmarried, minor children who intend to reside with you during your study may apply for F-2 visas. To apply for an F-2 visa, AOMA must first issue an individual Form I-20 for any dependents. Once received, your spouse must sign their individual Form I-20, while you must sign the Form I-20 of your minor children. Follow the instructions above when applying for an F-2 visa. During your visa interview, you may be asked to provide proof of relationship.

Additional Resources:

Please visit the following websites for other helpful information about applying for an F-1 visa:

  U.S. Department of State
  www.travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1268.html

  Education USA (sponsored by the U.S. Department of State)
  www.educationusa.info

  Study in the States (sponsored by U.S. Department of Homeland Security)
  www.studyinthe(states.dhs.gov/students