

Congratulations on your decision to study in the United States. After receiving your official acceptance to Broome Community College, you will need to begin preparing for your arrival to the United States as an F-I student. One of the more important aspects of this preparation is obtaining your F-I Student Visa. This handout is designed to assist you, as a first time student, to understand the process and guide you through it successfully.

STEP 1:

Contact your local U.S. Consulate or Embassy to ask about how to get an F-I student visa. A list of Consulates and Embassies can be found at <http://usembassy.state.gov/>.

STEP 2:

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-I 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.

STEP 3:

Complete the forms listed below. These forms can be found on the internet or at your local Embassy/Consulate.

- (a) DS-156 Nonimmigrant Visa Application Form
- (b) DS-158 Contact Information and Work History for Nonimmigrant Visa Applicant
- (c) if you are a male between the ages of 16 and 45, DS-157 Supplemental Nonimmigrant Visa Application.

STEP 4:

Pay the visa application fee by following instructions on your local U.S. embassy or consulate's web site.

STEP 5:

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 \$100 SEVIS fee. The fee is processed when it is received by DHS. Mailing the SEVIS fee does not constitute payment. If you mail your payment rather than pay on the Internet, it can take a considerable amount of time for payment to be received and for you to receive a receipt by return mail. Please take that into consideration when deciding on your payment method. For more information on the fee, please refer to the handout "*SEVIS Fee Requirement: F-I Students*".

To Pay By Mail

- (a) Get a Form I-901 "Fee Remittance for Certain F, J, and M Non-immigrants."
 - Download the form from www.FMjfee.com OR
 - Ask for the form by phone at 1-800-870-3676 (inside the US)
- (b) Complete the Form I-901. Be sure to write your name exactly how it appears on your I-20 form.
- (c) Prepare a check, international money order or foreign draft (drawn on US banks only) in the amount of \$100 USD, made payable to "The Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement."
- (d) Mail the completed I-901 and payment to the address listed on Form I-901.
- (e) 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

- (a) Find the Form I-901 at www.FMJfee.com
- (b) Complete the form online and supply the necessary Visa, MasterCard or American Express information.
*Be sure to write your name exactly how it appears on your I-20 form.
- (c) Print a copy of the online receipt.
- (d) Be sure to make copies of your receipt, and keep it with your other important immigration documents

To Pay By Western Union's "Quick Pay" Service

This option is available in any country where Western Union offers Quick Pay service.

- (a) The Western Union office collects the SEVIS I-901 fee in local currency, along with the needed Form I-901 data, and electronically transmits the payment and data to the Department of Homeland Security.
- (b) The Western Union office then issues a receipt that serves as immediate proof of payment for a visa interview at a U.S. consulate or for admission at a U.S. port of entry.

Western Union's Quick Pay form must be completed in exact detail, following instructions developed by DHS and Western Union. These detailed payment instructions, including samples of properly completed Quick Pay forms, are posted on the Web at: http://www.ice.gov/graphics/sevis/i901/wu_instr.htm.

You must bring the receipt of fee payment with you to the interview.

PLEASE NOTE: If you are 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 \$100 SEVIS fee.

STEP 6:

Prepare and bring to your visa interview the following:

- (a) A passport valid for at least six months
- (b) Form I-20 (sign the form under *Item II*)
- (c) School admission letter
- (d) Completed visa applications (DS-156, DS-158, and, if applicable, DS-157)
- (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.

Remain calm and answer all the Visa Officer's questions to you openly and honestly.

STEP 7:

If you have any questions, please contact Beverly Plowucha, your International Student Advisor, at Plowucha_b@sunybroome.edu or 607-778-5210.