

## F-1 Student Visa Application Procedures

Following is a step-by-step description of the F-1 student visa application procedures. Please carefully read the instructions and visit the websites listed or contact us if you need any assistance.

### 1 Form I-20

You must sign and date item 11 on page 1 of the Form I-20 .

### 2 Schedule the Visa Interview

Contact the U.S. Consulate or Embassy in your area and follow their instructions to schedule an interview for your F-1 visa interview. A list of U.S. Consulates and Embassies can be found at <http://usembassy.state.gov>  
It is important to apply for your student visa as far in advance as possible, but many consulates recommend that you make the appointment no more than 90 days before the planned date of your travel.

### 3 Complete the Visa Application Forms

You can download the necessary forms (*in pdf format*) on our website at <http://brandoncollege.com/visa.html>

- a) DS-156 Nonimmigrant Visa Application Form
- b) DS-157 Supplemental Nonimmigrant Visa Application Form (*only for males between age 16 and 45*)
- c) DS-158 Contact Information and Work History for Non-immigrant Visa Applicant

### 4 Pay the Visa Application Fee

Follow the instructions on your local U.S. Embassy or Consulate's website to pay the visa application fee.

### 5 Pay the SEVIS Fee

SEVIS is a web-based Immigration system for maintaining information on international students. Your Form I-20 was issued in the SEVIS system and has a unique SEVIS ID number in the upper right corner of page 1.

If your Form I-20 was issued on or after September 1, 2004, and is marked for **initial attendance** (see item 3 on your Form I-20), you will need to pay a \$100 SEVIS fee.

If you are transferring schools or have paid this fee and been denied a visa within the last twelve months, you do not need to pay the SEVIS fee again.

### To Pay Online



- a) go to <http://fmjfee.com>
- b) complete the **Form I-901** online and provide the necessary credit card information to pay the \$100 USD SEVIS fee. Important: write your name exactly as it appears on your Form I-20!
- c) print a copy of the online receipt **Form I-797**  
Make copies of your receipt and keep it with your other important immigration documents.

*Important! The fee must be paid online **at least three business days prior to the interview date** to ensure that the payment can be deposited and recorded in SEVIS. The interviewing officer at the Consulate or Embassy will confirm that the fee has been paid by accessing the SEVIS system.*

### To Pay By Mail



- a) complete the **Form I-901**. You can download it on our website at <http://brandoncollege.com/visa.html>  
Important: write your name exactly how it appears on your Form I-20!
- b) prepare a **check** or **international money order** (drawn on a U.S. bank only) in the amount of \$100 USD. Many foreign banks can issue checks or money orders drawn on a U.S. bank. Ask your own bank or go to a foreign subsidiary of a U.S. bank. The check must be made payable to: "**The Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement**".
- c) mail the completed Form I-901 and the check or money order to the address listed on Form I-901. We recommend that you send it by registered mail, with a return receipt requested. Please keep copies for your own records.
- e) a **receipt (Form I-797)** will be mailed to you within 3 business days of receipt of your payment.

### 6 Visa Interview

Here is a checklist of all documents you need to prepare and bring to your visa interview:

- your passport (*must be valid for at least six months from your arrival date in the U.S.*)
- Form I-20
- Letter of Acceptance from Brandon College
- Completed Visa Application Forms
  - DS-156
  - DS-157 (*only for males between age 16 and 45*)
  - DS-158
- two 2x2-inch passport photographs in the correct format: [http://travel.state.gov/visa/tempvisitors\\_info\\_photo.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/tempvisitors_info_photo.html)
- a receipt for the visa application fee
- a receipt for the SEVIS fee (Form I-797)
- financial evidence (bank statement, etc.) that shows you have sufficient funds to cover your tuition and living expenses during the period you intend to study.
- 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, letter from your employer or school, etc.

During the interview, remain calm and answer all the visa officer's questions openly and honestly.

### When can you enter the United States?

After you receive the F-1 visa, you can enter the U.S. up to 30 days before the starting date on your I-20, but no later than that date. Contact us immediately if you need to change the starting date.

### What is the Form I-94?

The Form I-94 (white!) is your proof of entry and it shows that you have been lawfully admitted to the U.S. This form is distributed on the airplane prior to landing in the U.S. Please complete it in English and in all CAPITAL letters. If you make a mistake, ask a flight attendant for a new form. When you arrive at the airport, an Immigration Officer will stamp the notation **D/S** (Duration of Status) on the card, indicating that you may stay in the U.S. until you have finished your studies.

