

# Applying From Abroad

## Applying for an F-1 Visa from abroad

- Apply to IIFA English Learning Center by filling out and submitting an online application form
- Our school will determine whether you meet the admission requirements and are financially able to support your studies and cost of living
- If all requirements are met, IIFA admits the student and issues a Form I-20 for the student
- The DSO of IIFA will send a signed copy of Form I-20 to the student
- You must pay the SEVIS I-901 fee (For more information, see the SEVP website at [www.ice.gov/sevis](http://www.ice.gov/sevis))
- You must apply to one of the following:
  - The local U.S. consulate or embassy for a visa
  - The U.S POE (Point of Entry), if you are a citizen of a visa-exempt country

If you apply at a local U.S. consulate or embassy, you will need to bring the following items to the interview:

- A signed Form I-20 issued by the school you plan to attend
- A completed application Form DS-156, and a Form DS-158. Both forms must be completed and signed. Some applicants may also need to complete and sign Form DS-157. Children will need a separate form even if they are included in the parent's passport.
- A passport valid for at least six (6) months after the proposed date of entry into the United States
- One (1) 2" x 2" photograph
- A fee receipt to show payment of the visa application fee; a visa issuance fee if applicable; and a separate SEVIS I-901 fee receipt

Due to the differing personal and academic backgrounds of each prospective student, consular officers may ask applicants applying for the same type of visa for different documents. The following guidelines are general and may differ based on the applicant.

All applicants should be prepared to provide:

- Transcripts and diplomas from previous institutions attended;
- Financial evidence showing that the prospective student or sponsor has sufficient funds to cover tuition and living expenses during the period of intended study. For example:
  - If the student/sponsor is a salaried employee, the applicant should bring income tax documents and original bank records/statements
  - If the student/sponsor owns a business, the applicant should bring registration, licenses, etc., and tax documents, as well as original bank records/statements

Applicants with dependents must also provide proof of relationship to their spouse and/or children (e.g. marriage and birth certificates)

DOS prefers that families apply for F-1 and F-2 visas at the same time, but if the spouse and children must apply separately, they should bring a copy of the student's passport and visa, along with all other required documents.

Each U.S. embassy and consulate has a website linked to <http://usembassy.state.gov/>. The website will have information on how to apply for a student visa and how to make an interview appointment.

**You may enter the U.S. 30 days prior to the program start date. If you cannot arrive by the program start date listed in Form I-20, you must contact our school. We will issue another I-20 Form with the deferred start date.**

### **Documentation Required for Entry into the United States:**

Upon arrival at U.S. POE, you must present the following:

- A Form I-20, signed by a DSO, from the school the student will attend
- A valid visa containing the SEVIS ID and the name of the school the student will attend (unless the student is visa exempt)
- Financial documentation as evidence of ability to pay tuition and living expenses
- A valid passport
- Proof of payment of the SEVIS I-901 Fee

### **Form I-515 Entry Process:**

Occasionally, students forget to bring all of the required documents to present at the POE. For example, a student may not have proof they paid the SEVIS I-901 Fee prior to arrival or a student's Form I-20 may lack the signature of a DSO. The inspecting CBP officer has the option to deny the student entry into the United States or allow the student to enter by issuing a Form I-515.

Form I-515 allows for a deferred inspection of a prospective nonimmigrant student's entry into the United States.

The student should read the instructions on Form I-515 carefully and mail it to the address listed on the form. If the student does not provide the required documentation within 30 days, they must leave the country.

**When there is evidence that the student entered the U.S. but failed to report to school by the program start date, the student is considered Out of Status and the student's SEVIS record is terminated.**

When a student is unable to enter the U.S. and fails to contact the school to request a deferral of the program start date and misses the program, the student must obtain a new Form I-20.

When a student enters the U.S. but does not report or enroll in a full course of study, the student record will be terminated within 30 days of the program start date.