

Now that you have been admitted to Western New England University, you must begin considering your immigration requirements. If you are currently outside of the U.S. and do NOT have a U.S. student visa (or your visa has expired), you will need to apply for one. Below are the steps most commonly used during the visa application and interview process.

F-1 Students can also view our Applying for A Visa video series [here](#). The process for J-1 students/scholars will be similar so this video series can be helpful for you as well.

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Application Process

1. Make an appointment with your local U.S. embassy or consulate to apply for your visa.
 - a. Please note that each consulate may require different (or additional forms) than what is listed below. Check each consulate's website when making your appointment to determine what additional forms may be needed.
 - b. You may schedule your interview at any U.S. Embassy or Consulate but it is usually best to schedule it in your home country.
 - c. [Apply for a U.S. Visa](#)
2. **Complete the following forms:**

You may apply online at:

 - (a) [DS-160 Non-immigrant Visa Application Form](#) (can be completed online as well)
 - *Additional forms may be required
 - (b) If your I-20 or DS-2019 has been issued to start a new program of study, you will also need to pay the [SEVIS fee](#).
 - a. A list of fees can be found [here](#). (Note that these are subject to change at any time).
 - b. Dependents (spouses and children) are free since they fall under your SEVIS fee.
 - c. Pay the fee and allow time for processing before you appear at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate. You will **not** be able to pay the fee at the Port of Entry.
 - d. If you are transferring schools, extending your program, 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 fee again.

Students from Canada: Canadian Citizens do not need visas to study in the U.S but you need to obtain an I-20 or DS-2019 from Western New England and pay the [SEVIS fee](#).

1. When you receive the I-20 or DS-2019 you will be registered with SEVIS. You will be assigned a SEVIS number and are required to pay the [SEVIS fee](#).
2. When you enter the U.S., you will need to provide the Port of Entry Officer:
 - a. Proof of identity and citizenship (your Canadian passport)
 - b. The original I-20 (or DS-2019)
 - c. Proof that you have paid your [SEVIS fee](#)
 - d. Proof that you have the funds to pay for the school that you plan to attend
 - e. Proof of your ties to Canada

Students from Bermuda: Citizens of Bermuda do not need visas to study in the U.S but you need to obtain an I-20 or DS-2019 from Western New England and pay the [SEVIS fee](#).

1. When you receive the I-20 or DS-2019 you will be registered with SEVIS. You will be assigned a SEVIS number and are required to pay the [SEVIS fee](#).
2. When you enter the U.S., you will need to provide the Port of Entry Officer:
 - a. Proof of identity and citizenship (your Bermuda passport)
 - b. The original I-20 (or DS-2019)
 - c. Proof that you have paid your SEVIS fee
 - d. Proof that you have the funds to pay for the school that you plan to attend
 - e. Proof of your ties to Bermuda
 - f. If you would still like to apply for a visa, follow the link below, or check with your local consulate: [Consulate General of the United States in Bermuda](#).

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Visa Interview: Before, During, and After

Before:

Now that you have your I-20 or DS-2019 and have scheduled your visa appointment, you must gather the following documents:

1. Your original passport, valid for at least six months
2. Acceptance letter from College or University
3. I-20 or DS-2019
4. Completed [visa application](#)
5. Two 2 inch X 2 inch (or 5.08 cm X 5.08 cm) photographs in the [prescribed format](#)
6. Receipt for the [SEVIS fee](#) before your interview
7. Financial evidence showing you have sufficient funds to cover tuition, fees, living expenses, etc.
8. Any information that proves you will return to your country after your finishing your studies: proof of property, family, or other ties to your community
9. Transcripts, diplomas, degrees, etc. from schools you attended
10. If you are a scholar, the consulate may request your CV/Resume and/or a list of your publications.
11. You must bring the receipt of [SEVIS fee](#) payment with you to the visa interview

Arrive at the US Embassy or Consulate where your appointment is scheduled. Persons with incomplete applications will **not** be admitted.

REMEMBER: electronic equipment, cell phones, bags, sprays, perfumes, liquids, backpacks, bottles, food, sealed envelopes, sealed packages, and dangerous items are **NOT** allowed inside the consulate/embassy.

During:

1. When you arrive at the consulate, you may need to stand in a queue outside the consulate.
2. As soon as you enter the consulate, you will go through a security check, which may include a full body metal detector scan.
3. After the security check, you will be directed to the waiting lounge area. Keep your documents ready. When your name is announced, you will be asked to proceed to a particular window number.
4. The interviewer will be behind a glass window, and you will be able to speak through a microphone on the glass window. Be sure to complete your interview in English.
5. Questions you may be asked:
 - a. Who you are
 - i. Practice your story! Who are you? Why is studying in the U.S. so important to you? How will it help you achieve your goals?
 - b. Why do you want to come to Western New England University?
 - i. Think back to why you decided to apply here. What was unique about our program? What interested you about our program? You can also reference our website for more information. For graduate engineering students, review the faculty brochure provided in your acceptance packet.
 - c. What do you want to do with your degree?
 - i. When you return to your home country, what are you going to do with your degree? What company do you want to work for? Why? What Western New England University research project are you interested in and how will it help your community? What will you personally contribute to your community?
 - d. How are you going to fund it?
 - i. You will present your documents to the Visa Officer but be able to explain them. Where is the money coming from?

- e. What are you doing after you complete your program?
 - i. See #4 but also explain your intent. It is ok to say you want to earn your Western New England University degree and participate in OPT, but what is your plan after that? The F-1 and J-1 visa is a non-intent visa meaning your intention is to return to your home country after you finish your program and OPT. Saying your long-term goal is to remain in the U.S. to work after OPT, can harm your chances of getting a visa because then your intent is to remain. The number one reason for denials is failure to demonstrate your intent to return home.
- 6. Ink-free, digital fingerprint scans will be taken as part of your application process. They are usually taken during your interview, but this varies based on location.

After: Approval or Denial

1. If the interviewer approves your application, you will know immediately. The officer will say "Your visa is approved" or something similar.
2. If your visa is denied or put on hold, you will be informed accordingly. You will be given a denial letter with the reason you were denied.
 - a. If put on hold (called Administrative Processing), the average time to wait is 60 days. This typically occurs when your name has been flagged for similarity to another person or they need to do additional security checks.

NOTE: Students/Scholars wanting to enter the U.S. on another visa should confirm that they can legally study or research using that visa before entering the United States. Please be advised that if you enter on a B visa, you will NOT be able to pursue a course of study. Dependents on an F-2 visa will be allowed to engage in part-time study. J-2 dependents have no study restrictions.

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Arriving in the US: when, where, how?

When:

F-1 and J-1 visa holders may not enter the U.S. earlier than 30 days before the start date of the I-20 (F-1) or DS-2019 (J-1) document.

When traveling, always put your documents in your carry-on luggage! If you check your baggage and it is lost or delayed and you lose your documents, you will not be able to enter the U.S.

How:

Documents needed to show upon arrival at U.S. Boarder & Customs:

1. Passport (valid for at least 6 months into the future) with a valid nonimmigrant visa
2. Original Form I-20 or DS-2019
3. Evidence of financial resources
4. Students: Proof of admission to Western New England University
5. Scholars: Letter of Invitation from your Western New England University faculty sponsor

Where:

There are many nearby airports that you can fly into:

	<u>Distance from WNE</u>
• Logan International Airport - Boston, Massachusetts	[133.8 km/83.2 mi]
• Albany International Airport - Albany, New York	[122.9km/76.4mi]
• Bradley International Airport – Windsor Locks, Connecticut	[19.7 km/12.2 mi]
• New York City Airports (La Guardia or JFK), New York City	[219km/136 mi]

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