

IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES OF BEING ISSUED A VISA

Requirements for US Embassy Interview

Be sure to bring the following with you to the visa appointment:

- Make sure you have a valid travel signature
- passport
- required photo(s)
- visa fee or proof of visa fee payment
- Federal SEVIS Fee payment receipt
- U.S. non-immigrant visa application forms (fillable online)
- Hunter acceptance letter
- Hunter SEVIS I-20 or SEVIS DS-2019
- test scores and academic records (official transcripts)
- Enrollment verification letter (from One Stop office, 217 HN)
- proof of English proficiency (TOEFL scores)
- proof of financial support (bank statements from any financial sponsors)
- evidence of ties to your home country
- any other documents required by the embassy or consulate (<http://www.ustraveldocs.com/>)

*** Strategies for the Visa Interview:**

You are well advised to consider the following matters prior to your visa appointment, as you may be asked about each item.

1. Academics: Be definite and clear about your educational plans.

2. English: Anticipate that the visa interview will be conducted in English.

3. Ties to Your Home Country: Demonstrate convincing reasons for consular officials to believe that you intend to return home after studies and/or Optional Practical Training if applicable, in the United States.

4. Financial Documentation: Be prepared to prove financial ability to pay for your education and living expenses especially for the first year.

5. Be Concise: Because of the volume of visa applications, all consular officials are under considerable pressure to conduct a quick and efficient interview.

6. Not All Countries Are the Same: Applicants from countries suffering economic problems or from countries where many students have remained in the United States as immigrants without F-1 or J-1 status will have more difficulty getting visas.

7. Dependents Remaining at Home: If you have a spouse and/or children remaining behind in your home country, be prepared to address how they will support themselves in your absence. This can be an especially tricky area if you are the primary source of income for your family. If the consular official gains the impression that your family members will need you to remit money from the United States in order to support them, your student visa will almost surely be denied.

If renewing your Visa be sure to:

- Register for an interview online through www.travel.state.gov. You make an appointment over the phone by getting the phone number from the above mentioned web site.
- If registered for the following semester, carry proof of registration from Oasis. This can be in form of an official transcript; if passing i.e. 2.0GPA for undergraduates and 3.0 for graduate students.
- Visa renewal letter from our office.

*** Visa Denial**

The vast majority of Hunter College students will be successful in obtaining their student visas. Despite this, a small number of students may have their visa applications denied. The most common reasons for visa denial are failure to prove sufficient ties to your home country, or failure to provide sufficient evidence of financial support

The visa officer must verbally inform you of the reason for the visa denial. If your visa is denied, please send an e-mail message to iaroyewu@hunter.cuny.edu and provide the date and location of your visa interview, and details regarding the reason given by the visa officer for the denial.

Travel to the USA:

Make sure to put in your carry-on:

- original 3 pages of your I-20
- valid F-1 visa
- valid passport
- copy of financial documents showing adequate funds to study at Hunter College
- copy of your letter of admission to Hunter College
- a copy of your SEVIS fee receipt

*Canadians exempt from visa requirements must also be prepared to show proof of payment of the SEVIS fee.

Pay attention at the airport or any US port of entry!

F-1 status will be granted at the port of entry by the receiving Immigration inspector, who;

- will staple into your passport a white card (Form I-94)
- will stamp your I-94 card with the current date and the notation "F-1 D/S."

**Once you have reached your destination, make copies of these documents and keep them in a safe place. If originals are misplaced, it is often easier to get them replaced with copies.

Never destroy/trash an I-20 whether or not you currently attend that institution.

Sources:

http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/studentaffairs/issc/undergraduate_graduate.htm (5/22/07)

<http://www.fitnyc.edu/2909.asp> (8/6/10)