



INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS COLLEGE

The F-1 Student Visa

Everything you need to know about the application, interview and entry

Applying for your F-1 Visa:

1. **Apply for your F-1 Visa early.** You can make an appointment at your local U.S. embassy or consulate as much as 3 months (sometimes more) prior to your departure date. Make sure you pick a date when you are sure you will have all your documents ready. Contact your local U.S. Consulate or Embassy at <http://usembassy.state.gov/>. Some appointments are made by phone and some on-line only.
2. **Pay the Visa Application Fee** (usually \$100 US) following instructions on your local U.S. embassy/consulate's web site.
3. **Pay the \$100 SEVIS fee.** You can do this on-line with a credit card at www.FMJfee.com once you have received your I-20 form from ICC. A Form I-797 payment receipt confirmation notice appears on your computer screen after payment is successful (print this out). This form will also be mailed to you within 3 days of processing the fee. Be sure to make copies of this receipt notice, and keep it with your other important immigration documents.
4. Take all required documents to the US embassy or consulate appointment including:
 - (a) I-20 from ICC (check that your name and birth date are correct on this form)
 - (b) SEVIS payment receipt (I797)
 - (c) Visa application fee receipt
 - (d) Financial documents (bank statement showing ability to pay school and living expenses)
 - (e) Acceptance letter from ICC
 - (f) DS-156 Nonimmigrant Visa Application Form
 - (g) DS-157 (Males only ages 16-45)
 - (h) DS-158 (check with US Embassy to see if this is required)
 - (i) Two 2"x 2" photographs in the prescribed format (see the travel.state.gov website)
 - (j) Passport valid for at least 6 months
 - (k) The F-1 Visa is a non-immigrant visa. It is only issued to applicants who plan to return to their home country. **You will need to prove to the visa officer that you plan to return home.** Bring any information or evidence that proves you will return to home after finishing your studies in the U.S. Such as:
 - Letter from someone in government or business management who plans to offer you a job when you return
 - Letter from your employer stating your job will be held for you while you are away and that English will be useful for your future employment with the company
 - If a brother or sister studied in the U.S. and then returned home, a copy of their diploma or certificate and a letter from their school or employer stating they returned home. You can also bring their passport to show they returned home.
 - Transcripts from school, college and/or university you are attending
 - Land ownership or family business documents

- Documents to prove the functioning stable and prosperous business (*for entrepreneurs and businessperson*)
- Birth and/or marriage certificates
- Any other documents that might help applicants prove their economic and social ties to their home country.

The F-1 Visa Interview

1. Consider the interview a formal event. Business clothes are appropriate.
2. The interview will probably be in English and not your native language.
3. Speak for yourself. Do not bring relatives unless you are under 18 years of age.
4. Remain calm and answer all the Visa Officer's questions openly and honestly. Be clear and specific but do not memorize speech.
5. Be brief. Keep your answers short and to the point. Consular officials are under a lot of pressure to conduct a quick and efficient interview.
6. You should be ready to discuss your plans for the future. Be prepared to answer these 2 questions:
 - 1) Why do you need to go to the United states to study English?
 - 2) Why did you choose to go to ICC in Honolulu?

Entering the U.S. in F-1 Status

1. After you have received your student visa, check it to verify all the information is correct.
2. When you travel carry your visa documents on your person, NOT in your checked luggage.
3. When you enter the country you will need to show the Immigration officer:
 - a) your passport
 - b) your I-20
 - c) your evidence of financial resources
4. The flight attendant will give you a Customs Declaration Form and an I-94 Arrival-Departure record Form. Fill these out to give to the immigration officer when you arrive in the U.S.
5. Upon arrival, proceed to the area for entry inspection by the Department of Homeland Security (immigration). Have ready your passport, I-20, I-94 form and Customs Declaration form.
6. You will be asked to state the reason for your visit. It is important that you tell the officer that you will be a student.
7. You will be digitally photographed and have an index finger scan.
8. If the Homeland Security officer wants to verify your admission to ICC, he or she can call the Registrar, at 946-2445 Monday-Friday 0800-1600 or 389-3854 after working hours.

Please contact us at registrar@icchawaii.edu for any other visa-related questions.