



Applying For a Visa

This guide contains important information about the visa application process, the I-901 SEVIS fee, and traveling to the United States. If you have any questions regarding the Form I-20, F-1 visas or preparing for your arrival in the United States, please contact international.records@oc.edu for assistance.

It is very important to enter the United States with the proper visa. You must apply for an F-1 visa in order to enter the United States with student status. **It is important to apply for your student visa as soon as possible.** Processing times for visa issuance vary and may require additional time due to security checks.

How to apply for a student visa:

- **Pay the I-901 SEVIS Fee:** You will need to pay the I-901 SEVIS fee if this is your first time applying for an F-1 student visa (some students with a previous Form I-20 and F-1 visa will also have to pay this fee). Your SEVIS Identification number is listed on your Form I-20 and begins with the first number after the letter "N". Be sure to print out a copy of your SEVIS fee receipt at the time of payment and staple it to the back of your OC I-20. The printed confirmation will serve as proof of payment for the I-901 SEVIS fee.
Instructions for paying the I-901 SEVIS fee can be found at: fmjfee.com/i901fee
- **Make sure your passport is valid:** You must ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 more months at the time of your visa interview.
- **Schedule a visa interview:** Follow the U.S. Embassy/Consulate instructions to schedule an interview for your F-1 student visa. You can find instructions for scheduling a visa interview in your country here: usembassy.gov
- **Complete the DS-160 Nonimmigrant Visa Application form:** Once you finish the form DS-160, you will also need to pay the visa application fee. You can access the DS-160 form here: ceac.state.gov/GenNIV/Default.aspx
- **Review your Form I-20:** Review all the information on your Form I-20 carefully. Verify that your personal information is correct on page one, sign and date in ink under "Student Attestation" and provide the information requested if you are under 18 years of age. ***Be sure to also read the instructions to students listed on page three.*** Your signature on the Form I-20 indicates your complete understanding and recognition of these terms and conditions as a student visa holder.
- **Attend your scheduled visa interview:** Make sure to take all required documentation to your visa appointment, including your Form I-20 and the I-901 SEVIS fee receipt.

NOTE: Canadian citizens can enter the United States **without having an entry visa**, but Canadian citizens must obtain a Form I-20 and pay the I-901 SEVIS fee before entering the United States.

What is the I-901 SEVIS Fee?

SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) is an internet-based system that maintains data on foreign students and exchange visitors before and during their stay in the United States. It is administered by the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The I-901 SEVIS fee is a one-time fee that **MUST** be paid by all new students entering the country on an F-1 visa. The revenue from the fee is used to support the SEVIS program.

You do not need to pay the I-901 SEVIS fee again if you are transferring schools within the United States, extending your program date on your Form I-20, applying for F-2 dependent visas, or have paid this fee and been denied a visa within the last 12 months.

If you have paid the I-901 SEVIS fee and were issued a new I-20 with a different SEVIS number, it may be possible to transfer your fee to your new SEVIS number without having to pay it again.

Instructions for transferring your I-901 SEVIS fee can be found at:

studyinthestates.dhs.gov/2017/06/students-sevp-now-accepts-online-i-901-sevis-fee-transfer-requests

Documentation needed for the visa interview:

- **Form I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status.** This document will be sent to you from OC's international records office.
- **I-901 SEVIS fee receipt.** Instructions for paying the fee can be found at: fmjfee.com/i901fee
- **A passport that is valid for at least six months.**
- **Evidence of admission to Oklahoma Christian University.** This will include your OC acceptance letter sent by your advisor.
- **Evidence of your financial ability to pay for your education.** This may include official bank statements, an affidavit of support or other documentation from a sponsor.
- **Information that proves you will return to your home country after finishing your studies in the U.S.** This may include proof of property, family, or ties to your community.
- **Any other documentation your embassy/consulate requires.** It is possible that your embassy or consulate will hold your visa approval until you can provide additional documentation. If any of the documentation required concerns information about OC, please contact us at international.records@oc.edu for assistance.

After receiving your visa:

- Check the information on your visa to ensure it is accurate before leaving your country. Make sure your visa is classified as “F-1” and that your personal information is correct.
- Secure funds for the estimated costs listed on your Form I-20. Keep in mind that the balance on your OC student account must be paid on or before the first day of each semester and that you will not be allowed to enroll for the next semester until your student account is paid in full.
- Flight arrangements should be made to Will Rogers World Airport in Oklahoma City, OK.

When traveling to the United States carry your Form I-20, passport, financial documents and university contact information on the plane with you. **Be aware that you cannot enter the U.S. more than 30 days prior to the start date on your Form I-20.**

IMPORTANT: You must contact OC’s international records office at international.records@oc.edu as soon as possible in the event of either the following scenarios:

- You are unable to schedule a visa appointment before the program start date listed on your Form I-20. Embassies and consulates cannot issue an F-1 visa if the start date on your Form I-20 has passed.
- You cannot arrive in the United States by the start date listed on your Form I-20. You will either need permission from the registrar and the international office to arrive late or will need to defer your OC admission to the next available session.

Please visit ice.gov/sevis/students for additional information on How to Navigate the U.S. Immigration System.

In case of emergency:

If you are having an issue at the port of entry and require the assistance of a DSO, please contact:

- OC’s Campus Police at +1 405-425-5500 (available 24 hours a day), or
- Support Central at +1 405-425-5555 (Monday - Friday 8am - 5pm CST)

After arriving in the United States:

You are required to submit the following documents to international.records@oc.edu:

- Copy of your visa page in your passport
- I-94 Arrival/Departure Record (download a pdf of your most recent I-94 here: i94.cbp.dhs.gov)

You will be contacted by the international records office with a new Form I-20 (I-20 of Continued Attendance) within the first few weeks of the semester.

If you are planning to apply for a Social Security number or driver’s license upon your arrival in the United States, please contact international.records@oc.edu so that a DSO can expedite your Form I-20 and activate your SEVIS record.