

Tips on Receiving a VISA

Scheduling the F-1 Visa Interview

- ▶ Locate the nearest → [U.S. Embassy or Consulate](#).
- ▶ Complete the → [DS-160 Nonimmigrant Visa Application](#). Save a copy of the DS-160 confirmation barcode page for the interview.
- ▶ Schedule your visa appointment. Many embassies allow interviews to be scheduled through their website.
- ▶ Pay fees associated with your F-1 visa.

What to bring to your visa interview

- ▶ SEVIS I-20 Form signed by the school and the student
- ▶ SEVIS Fee Receipt
- ▶ Passport, valid for at least 6 months
- ▶ Confirmation barcode page (DS-160)
- ▶ One passport photo per applicant
- ▶ Acceptance letter
- ▶ Financial documents to cover the expense for the first year

Tips for a successful interview

- ▶ Be organized – Make sure you have all documents ready and can access them quickly during the interview.
- ▶ Speak English – The interview will most likely be in English, so be prepared to speak English. One suggestion is to practice ahead of time with a native speaker before the interview.
- ▶ Be ready – Address the following questions: How long do you plan to stay in the U.S.? Why do you want to study in the U.S. instead of your own country? Explain your reasons to study at JMU and how this will help you achieve your career goals once you return home.
- ▶ Ties to home country – Be ready to explain ties to your country and your plans to use your U.S. education in your home country. (See next section)
- ▶ Speak for yourself – The interview will most likely be with you, not your parents or family members.
- ▶ Be Concise – You may only have 2 to 5 minutes for the interview so your first impression is crucial. Keep your answers short and to the point.

Evidence of ties to home country

- ▶ Financial ties – Current bank account statements and when it was established and investments for instance family-owned business and/or ownership of property such as vehicles, land and/or house in home country.
 - ▶ Family ties – Immediate family in home country, leaving spouse/fiancé and/or children.
 - ▶ Share your plan for potential employment upon returning to your home country.
- ▶ Translations are needed with any documents not in English

If your visa is denied

- ▶ Be polite - you may be very upset and frustrated, but an argument will work against you. Remember, you will have to deal with this person again, so do your best not to give the officer a bad impression.
- ▶ Ask the consular officer to give you a written explanation of your denial. The officer is required to do so upon request.