



# Northeastern University

## F-1 Student Visa & Arrival Information

This instruction sheet will help you to better understand the necessary procedures to obtain your student visa and prepare for your arrival to the U.S.

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### I. SEVIS Fee

A SEVIS I-901 fee payment is required for F-1 students and the receipt must be included with all F-1 visa applications. Students should also be prepared to present the SEVIS I-901 fee payment receipt at the U.S. port of entry. Students with a country of citizenship or country of birth of Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria or Gambia must pay by money order, Western Union Quick Pay or certified check drawn from a U.S. bank. All other students also have the option to make a credit card payment. To pay the SEVIS fee, please refer to [www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com).

### II. Applying for a Visa

Students are encouraged to apply for their visa as soon as they receive the I-20 issued by Northeastern to provide time for visa processing. U.S. Embassies or Consulates are able to issue F-1 entry visas up to 120 days before the program start date listed in item #5 on your I-20.

In most countries, student visa applicants must appear in person for the visa interview. However, each U.S. embassy or consulate sets its own interview policies and procedures. Students should consult the specific embassy websites or call for application instructions; see <http://usembassy.state.gov>.

In general, the following documents are required for the F-1 visa application:

1. **Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application (DS-160) confirmation page**
2. **Visa application fee payment receipt** - check the U.S. embassy or consulate website for specific instructions
3. **Form I-20** issued by the ISSI at Northeastern University
4. **Valid passport** - must be valid at least 6 months into the future
5. **Financial evidence** - proof of sufficient funds for estimated cost of one academic year
6. **SEVIS I-901 fee payment receipt**
7. **Northeastern admission letter**
8. **One photograph** - see the U.S. Department of State website for photo requirements:  
<http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/general/photos>

All applicants should be prepared to provide additional information, such as transcripts or diplomas from previously attended institutions, or documents which demonstrate that the applicant intends to return home after his/her studies, etc. Dependents will receive their own I-20 with their own SEVIS ID number to apply for the F-2 visa. Dependents are not required to pay the SEVIS fee and it is the F-1 student who signs all I-20s.

**IMPORTANT:** No assurances regarding the issuance of visas can be given in advance. Therefore final travel plans or the purchase of non-refundable tickets should not be made until a visa has been issued. After the visa is issued, check to make sure the F-1 visa sticker in your passport is accurate and that your original I-20 has been returned to you as you will need to have it in hand when entering the U.S.

*Citizens of Canada and Bermuda do not need to apply for an F-1 visa, but are required to have the I-20 and pay the SEVIS I-901 fee before entering the U.S. to study.*



### III. Entering the United States

When preparing for your arrival to the U.S., you should plan your travel according to information provided by the Office of New Student Orientation or your admitting college. According to immigration regulations, F-1 student visa holders can enter the U.S. up to **30 days** prior to the program report date on the I-20 (item #5).

Students transferring into Northeastern in F-1 status from another institution or changing their degree level at Northeastern can stay in the U.S. or travel between programs, and may enter the U.S. more than 30 days before the new program start date.

**When you travel, make sure to have the following documents in your carry-on bag:**

1. Valid passport with valid F-1 visa sticker
2. The original I-20 issued by Northeastern University
3. I-901 SEVIS fee receipt
4. Financial documents
5. Admissions letter

At the U.S. port of entry, you will be required to present your passport and I-20 to the immigration officer who will stamp your passport. In most cases, the officer notes “D/S” (“Duration of Status”) on your passport page. This means that you are allowed to stay in the U.S. for the length of time indicated on your I-20 (item #5), as long as you maintain full-time enrollment and valid F-1 status. Be sure that your passport is properly stamped before exiting the inspection area.

Do not enter the U.S. in visitor status (B1/B2, WT, or WB). This status does permit full-time study in the U.S.

After your arrival, print out your Admission (I-94) number at [www.cbp.gov/I94](http://www.cbp.gov/I94) and keep a copy of all travel documents (I-94 information, F-1 visa, and I-20) for your personal records. Make sure your I-94 print out contains the correct information: visa status F-1, admit until D/S.

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**Contact ISSI:**

405 Ell Hall, Northeastern University  
Boston, Massachusetts 02115  
Phone: 617.373.2310 Fax: 617.373.8788  
[www.northeastern.edu/issi](http://www.northeastern.edu/issi) [issi@neu.edu](mailto:issi@neu.edu)

ISSI walk-in advising hours: Monday – Friday from 10:00a.m. – 4:00p.m.