

Consular Officers and the Visa Process

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Overview

- Statistics, Trends, and Policy
- Visa Application Process
- Additional Resources

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Statistics and Trends



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Fast Facts

- Embassy/Consular Agency/
Consulate/Consular Section
- Over 8,000 consular officers worldwide
- Average interview: 3 to 5 minutes
- 90% of posts have overall wait times less than 30 days
- 570 new consular positions worldwide since September 2001
- 97% of qualified applicants receive visas within two days

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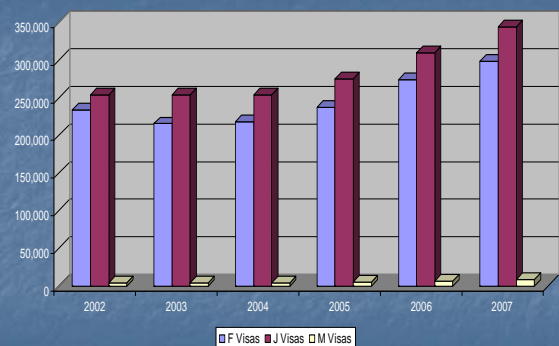
Statistics and Trends

- FY07: Highest number of F/M/J's (651,000) issued ever
 - 10.2% increase since FY 2006
 - 16% more than FY 2001
 - Record issuances in China (40% increase), India (40% increase), Korea

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Student Visa Issuances 2002-2007



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Policy Update

- Web-based application
- Unified appointment system
- Online fee payment
- Ten-print collection

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Visa Application Process



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When To Apply

- F-1 & M-1 students can apply up to 120 days before the "Report Date" listed on their Form I-20
- J-1 no regulatory defined timeframe for application

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How to Begin

- Contact Nearest Consulate for an Appointment
 - Almost all applicants must be interviewed
 - Students and scholars should be receiving an expedited appointment
- Appointment wait time and processing time information available at www.travel.state.gov

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The Visa Interview



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Preparing for the Interview

- Prepare the applicant
 - The interview is a conversation
 - Burden of proof is on the applicant
 - Alert applicant to anything unusual in their case
- How to contact us
 - Have the applicant bring any additional information to the interview
 - Check Embassy's website for contact information
 - Not always possible to discuss case beforehand

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Student/Scholar Visa Qualifications

- Visa Requirements - INA 101a15
 - Intent to Return (most applicants)
 - Financial ability
 - Full course of study (for students)
 - Language ability

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Consular Officers Must Consider:

- Presumption of Immigrant Intent
- Qualification under the law
- Each case on its own merits
- And if applicable:
 - Cultural/Religious norms
 - Economic and immigration trends
 - Fraud trends

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SEVIS: Consular View

Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) - Information Protected under FAR 22.62 and F FAM 40.4

SEVIS ID:	SEVIS Status:	CANCELLED	Status Last Changed:	26/09/07
Student				
SEVIS Number:	Class Name:	TOEFL	Nativity (Country Code):	PG
Country Code:	DOB:			F
School				
Address Number:	School Name:	Intl Language School	School Code:	W12145111000
Program Start:	Program End:	26 Jun 2007	School Approval Date:	15/05/02
School Official Name:	School Title:	Internal SEVIS User		
School Address:				
Canada Name:				
Intl Language School				
103 McDonald Ave.				
Brooklyn	NY	11220		
Education				
Level:	Major:	020108	2nd Major:	Minor:
Fee				
Record Type:	Amount:	100	Transaction Date:	15/05/07
			Receipt Number:	020072000000
Remarks				
Headline:				
Event/Action:				
DN:				
FAM Note(s):	Auto Cancel Student. Students in SEVIS status who are more than 90 days after program start date.			

1/2 Technical Support: Support@sevis.state.gov

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Renewals

- Same requirements as initial application (including clearances)
- May be possible to waive interview
- May not need a new visa, even if changed schools
- Vast majority are approved
- May apply in Canada/Mexico (check with post)

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Three Possible Outcomes

- Approved
- Refused
- Pending

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Special Clearances

- Country of Birth or Citizenship
 - NSEERS
 - Country-based requirements
- Personal Info/Characteristics of Applicant
 - Database check
 - Information from interview
- Fields of Study or Research

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Hits and Clearances

- Visa Lookout Accountability: Officers **MUST** address hits before issuing
- Officers **CANNOT** issue a visa if they are waiting for a response on a case



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Additional Resources



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Contacting Us

- **Specific visa case:** (202) 663-1225
- **General info:** usvisa@state.gov
- **Wait times/reciprocity:** www.travel.state.gov
- **Meet with us** when you travel

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Questions?

