Applying for Your U.S. Visa

Congratulations on your admission to Yale! OISS will begin processing the visa documents for newly admitted students after we have confirmation of your admission from your school. The steps listed below are for students who are outside the U.S. and will be applying for a F-1 or J-1 student visa to attend Yale.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact our office using this email address set up specifically for new students: newstudents.oiss@yale.edu [1].

Yale College students should contact their designated OISS adviser, daniel.riecker@yale.edu [2].

Important Note:
Do not book a flight until you have your visa in hand.

Preliminary Steps

1. Submit Your Financial Certification

Professional School students will submit financial documents to their school contact.

GSAS Masters students should go to the Application Status Portal [3] to submit your Financial Certification form and supporting documents. For GSAS Masters students, the form will be available on your Application Status Portal only after you accept an offer of admission.

Each school will have a deadline to submit documents, and your immigration document cannot be issued until you do, so be sure that you complete this step.

Yale College students are not required to complete the financial certification form. You will instead upload evidence of funding for your first year at Yale to the online survey (see next section).

2. Submit Your Survey & Receive Your Immigration Document

After accepting your offer of admission, you will receive an email from OISS with a link to an online survey. We begin this process in mid to late March. With hundreds of documents to issue, completing the online survey as soon as possible helps ensure that you receive your immigration document (an I-20 for F visa or DS-2019 for J visa) in good time.

After receiving your information and all required supporting documentation, OISS will issue your immigration document (I-20 or DS-2019). This generally takes two weeks. Your immigration document will be emailed to you unless an original is required.
3. Review & Sign Your Immigration Document

Thoroughly review your I-20 or DS-2019 to make sure all of the information is correct. Sign the form at the bottom of page 1. If you have any questions, please contact your OISS adviser [4].

4. Pay the SEVIS Fee

All new students coming in F-1 or J-1 status must pay a one-time SEVIS fee prior to applying for their visa. Learn more about paying your SEVIS fee [5]. You must do so before you attend your visa interview.

Apply for Your Visa

Special Note For Canadians:
You do not need to apply for a U.S. visa. Learn about what you will need here [6].

Once you have your SEVIS number, you can start the visa application by completing the DS-160 online application and scheduling an appointment at the embassy or consulate. Follow the links below to learn more.

Next Steps

Follow the instructions below depending on your visa type.
Applying for the F-1 Student Visa

Next steps to apply for the F-1 Student Visa.
Applying for the J-1 Student Visa

Next steps to apply for the J-1 Student Visa.

F-1 & J-1 Comparison

Read a brief overview of the the F-1 and J-1 visas, as well as a comparison of the two statuses.
Visa Appointment Wait Times

Review the current wait times for getting a visa appointment at an American embassy in your country. 

[10]