Applying for a Visa

When to Apply

You must apply for your visa well in advance of your arrival, as it can in some instances take several weeks and occasionally longer, to obtain the J-1 student visa. The Department of State has instructed U.S. consulates that they may issue a J-1 visa no more than 120 days in advance of the program start date. However, an application for a J-1 visa can be submitted more than 120 days in advance of the start date noted on the DS-2019 in order to accommodate long processing times. Check the website of the consulate where you will apply for a visa for detailed instructions.

The Application Process

Collect the Following Documents:

- **DS-2019** (Sent to you by OISS.)
- **SEVIS Fee Receipt** [1]. All new students coming in J-1 status must pay a 0 SEVIS fee [1] prior to applying for your visa.
- **DS-2019 Forms for Spouse and Dependent Children.** Each J-2 dependent is issued an I-20 and has their own SEVIS ID. Additional SEVIS fees does not need to be paid for a dependent.

Apply at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

- Generally you will apply for a visa at U.S. embassy or consulate in your home country. To locate the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate, click here [2]. You can find visa wait times here [3].

Complete the DS-160.

- With the documents listed above, go to the Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application page to complete the DS-160. You can watch an overview [4] of the on-line application process called DS-160. There is a $220 visa application processing fee.

Schedule a Visa Appointment.

- Print the confirmation page from the DS-160 and schedule a visa appointment.

For the Interview, you will need the following documents:

- **Your DS-2019**
- **The SEVIS Fee receipt (I-901)**
- **A copy of your financial support documents**, i.e. evidence that you have sufficient funds to meet the expenses of studying at Yale, e.g. bank statement, financial aid award letter.
- **Check the website of the U.S. consulate/embassy where you are applying to see if there are other requirements.**
Arriving in the U.S.

You may enter the U.S. up to 30 days prior to the start date of your DS-2019 form (item #3). If you cannot arrive in the U.S. by this date, you must get academic permission to arrive late. To start this process, please get in touch with OISS. [5]

Please Note: The expiration date on your visa may not match the end date of your degree program. If your visa expires before you complete your degree program, you will apply for a new visa on your first trip outside the U.S. after your current visa expires.

Source URL: https://oiss.yale.edu/immigration/j-1-students/applying-for-a-visa

Links:
[1] https://oiss.yale.edu/immigration/j-1-students/applying-for-a-visa/paying-the-sevis-fee
[4] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TLxSobebKF0
[5] https://oiss.yale.edu/about/contact-oiss