

Updated: 5 May 2011

Dear International Student,

Use this form to apply for your visa in order to enter the U.S. **Make an appointment with the local embassy or consulate in your home country. Take the following documents with you:**

1. SIGNED Form I-20 from WCU [**NOTE > \$200 SEVIS Fee Information on back of this form**]
2. A passport valid for travel to the US and with a validity date at least six months beyond your intended period of stay in the US
3. Letter of acceptance to Western Carolina University
4. Proof of your intention to stay in the U.S. temporarily to pursue a full course of study.
5. Proof of a residence outside the U.S. to which you plan to return after completing your program.
6. Proof of financial ability to pursue the selected course of study.
7. A completed DS 160: http://travel.state.gov/visa/forms/forms_4230.html
8. Required Fee: amount may vary per country (usually not payable with a personal check)
9. Required Photos – Check the USCIS Website: http://travel.state.gov/visa/visaphotoreq/visaphotoreq_5334.html

If you are denied entry, the embassy must issue you a reason. Fax the documentation / reason to International Programs and Services if you wish to appeal that decision by the consulate: **828.227.7080 (IPS FAX)**

At the airport, you must have the following documents with you

1. Signed and stamped I-20 (you must have this document with you at all times)
2. Passport
3. Letter of acceptance to Western Carolina University
4. Airline ticket
5. Make sure you have at least \$250-300 in cash or travelers checks for emergency.

Completing the I-94 application on the plane

At the port of Entry/Customs, it will be stamped by an official and given back to you. **THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT DOCUMENT.** Keep it or staple it into your passport. This shows that Customs has permitted you to enter into the U.S.

Upon Arrival into the United States

You have **30 days** from the program start date to report to the SEVIS Coordinator, otherwise, you will be cancelled out of SEVIS and will become out of status here in the U.S. Be sure to bring your passport, I-94 and I-20 for registration in SEVIS.

Once you know your flight schedule or if you have questions regarding your admission into WCU, contact the office of International Programs and Services and the International Student Advisor, Chris Pedo – copedo@email.wcu.edu / 828.227.7494/2557

Please check for more info at the IPS website: <http://www.wcu.edu/12192.asp>

VISA & SEVIS Fees

In 1996, the U.S. Congress passed a law requiring that students, who would come to the U.S. in either F-1 or J-1 status, would be required to pay a fee to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) [formerly known as Immigration and Naturalization Service] prior to obtaining the consequent visa to come into the U.S., or prior to changing to F-1 or J-1 status in the U.S.

DHS implemented the SEVIS fee effective September 1, 2004.

All potential students need to be aware of this obligation to pay this fee before a visa stamp will be issued.

Who must pay the fee? <https://www.fmjfee.com/index.jhtml>

If your F visa document (I-20) was issued September 1, 2004 or later for the purpose of "initial attendance", you will be required to pay this fee (\$200) before you can obtain a visa to enter the U.S. in F-1 status.

If your "initial attendance" document was issued before September 1, 2004, you do not need to pay the fee as long as you maintain your status in the same program and level. If you fall out of status or change level (e.g. advance from bachelors to graduate program), you will need to pay the fee.

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

69 East University Way | 109 Cordelia Camp Bldg. | Cullowhee, NC 28723 | 828.227.7494 *tel* | 828.227.7080 *fax*
| international.wcu.edu