

Preparing to Come to Curtis

For foreign students accepted to study at Curtis

Now that I am accepted at Curtis, when can I make my arrangements for travel to the U.S.?

Curtis strongly recommends that you make your travel arrangements after you have received your visa application materials/entry documents and after your visa application has been approved by a U.S. Consular official.

What do I do once I receive my entry document and pre-arrival materials?

First, review all the materials to make sure there are no misspellings or other mistakes on your documents. If everything is correct and accurate, you may use these documents to apply for a visa at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate nearest you. If corrections need to be made to your visa application materials, please contact Laurel Grady, associate dean of student life and international student affairs, at laurel.grady@curtis.edu

How do I apply for an F-1 visa?

Since visa application procedures differ from each consular office and sometimes from day to day, you should find information about the Embassy or Consulate you will use for your visa application on the internet at <http://www.usembassy.gov>. Generally, however, you will be expected to present the following to the consular officer:

- 1. The completed online visa application **Form DS-160** available at the U.S. Department of State website: <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/forms/ds-160--online-nonimmigrant-visa-application.html>*
- 2. Visa application fee*
- 3. Proof of paid I-901 SEVIS fee (F-1)*
- 4. Your entry document (I-20 for F-1 student status), signed by you and by the Designated Officer, Laurel Grady.*
- 5. A passport valid for at least six (6) months*
- 6. Proof of "non-immigrant intent"--intention to stay in the U.S. temporarily and solely for the purpose of pursuing a full course of study*
- 7. Proof of a residence outside the U.S. to which you intend to return after completing the temporary period of study, research or training*
- 8. Proof of financial ability to cover the cost of education and living expenses while at Curtis (as indicated on page 1 of your entry document I-20 on FINANCIALS section. Examples: financial aid award letter, tax return, bank statement, employment pay stub)*

You also should be prepared for the consular official to review your English proficiency, unless there is a notation otherwise on your student entry document. Most international students coming to Curtis are listed as "Diploma" for program of study. TOEFL for Diploma students is not mandatory and scores (if furnished) are for placement purposes only.

For more information about the visa interview, read about "What Consuls Look For" from the U.S. Department of State at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel.html>

In what situations might my first-time F-1 visa application be denied?

Below are examples of situations in which your visa application may be at risk. Please contact Laurel Grady if any of these cases applies to you.

1. *You intend to make an application in a "third" country (e.g., you are from P.R. China, but you intend to go to Canada to obtain a visa).*
2. *This is your first application for a visa.*
3. *You are returning home after a long stay in the U.S. (3 or more years).*
4. *There is a serious political or economic crisis in your home country.*
5. *You are waiting for the results of an application for permanent residency*
6. *You show no ties or no reason to return to your home country.*
7. *You are married to a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.*

What can I do if my visa application is denied?

If your visa application is denied, before you leave the U.S. Embassy or Consulate, obtain a written explanation of the specific reason you are denied the visa and ask about re-application procedures. Notify Laurel Grady immediately.

How can I prove to the consular officer that I intend to return to my home country (non-immigrant intent)?

From "What Consuls Look For" on the U.S. Department of State web site:

"Applicants generally establish their ties abroad by presenting evidence of economic, social, and/or family ties in their homeland sufficient to induce them to leave the United States upon the completion of studies."

This could include:

1. *Proof that your immediate family members reside in your home country*
2. *Proof that you own property or maintain a bank account in your home country*
3. *Showing the high likelihood of employment in your home country in your field of study after you complete your program in the U.S. (evidence of job searches, interviews, letters of prospective employment from employers in your home country, etc.)*

What do I do once my F-1 visa application has been approved?

Once you have made your travel arrangements, contact Laurel Grady and provide her your travel itinerary, names of who will accompany you, and your expected date of arrival into the U.S.

What should I expect at the Customs and Border port of entry?

When you land in the United States, you must go through Customs and Border Protection (CBP) with your valid immigration documents to gain admission. For information on what to expect, please visit the following Department of Homeland Security pages: Arrival Procedures for Students or Exchange Visitors and What to Expect at the Port of Entry at <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/2013/04/here-to-help-what-to-expect-at-a-port-of-entry-with-a-us-customs-and-border-protection-officer>.