Enclosed is the Form I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for F-1 Student Status. **ALL international students MUST be in F-1 student status in order to pursue full-time study.** Although citizens of countries participating in the Visa Waiver Program are eligible to enter the U.S. as tourists without a visa, **students must enter the U.S. on a student visa.** If you arrive as a tourist you will not be able to change your status within the U.S and will be required to leave the U.S. in order to reenter on a proper student visa.

**Steps to follow:**

1. **Obtain a passport from your government.** The passport must be valid at least six months into the future at all times.

2. **Read all the information on your Form I-20.** If any information is incorrect, please contact the International Students & Scholars Office immediately. If you have informed us of your dependents (spouse and children under the age of 21) who will travel with you to the United States, they will receive their own SEVIS Form I-20 so that they can apply for an F-2 visa. Sign and date the Student Certification (#11) on page 1 of each Form I-20 (including dependent I-20s). You and your dependent(s) name(s) and date(s) of birth must be exactly the same as reflected in your passport(s). If it is not, please request that we issue you an amended I-20.

3. **Contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate** to determine the procedures for visa application and to schedule your visa interview. Citizens of all countries except Canada and Bermuda are required to obtain an F-1 visa stamp in their passports. Please note: processing times vary and occasional delays arise due to more extensive security checks on visa applications. You must appear in person for your visa interview. When you schedule the visa interview state that you are student visa applicant (this is important because student visa applicants should receive scheduling priority at most U.S. Consulates). For a listing of U.S. embassies and consulates abroad visit [http://usembassy.state.gov](http://usembassy.state.gov). To check visa appointment wait times at the Consulate where you will be interviewed go to [http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/wait/wait_4638.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/wait/wait_4638.html)

4. **Pay the SEVIS fee in time for your visa interview.** All new F-1 students with “initial attendance” I-20s must pay the $200 SEVIS fee in order to become eligible for a student visa. While immigration regulations indicate that the fee should be paid at least 3 business days prior to a visa application at a U.S. Embassy/Consulate, we suggest that students pay the fee as soon as they receive the Form I-20 to allow sufficient time to update the fee payment information in the student’s electronic SEVIS record. Please refer to the attached information **SEVIS Fee Information and Procedures.**

5. **Visa interview.** To apply for a visa, you will need to submit the following documents:
   - Online Form DS-160 found at [https://ceac.state.gov/GENNIV/](https://ceac.state.gov/GENNIV/)
   - Application fee (check with the Consulate for the fee amount and how it must be paid or visit the following website at [http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1263.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1263.html)
   - Valid Passport.
   - Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status (SEVIS Form I-20) from Clark University.
   - Print of online proof/receipt of SEVIS Fee payment or Form I-797 receipt.
   - Admission letter from Clark University.
   - Original financial documents proving the availability of funds as reflected on your Form I-20.
   - Documents which demonstrate that you intend to return home after your studies.

The consul officer will review your documents and, if all is in order, issue you an F-1 visa. The officer may put your I-20 in a sealed envelope that you will present to the immigration officer at the port of entry.

Citizens of North Korea, Cuba, Syria, Sudan, Iran, Iraq, and Libya, please visit the following website for special procedures on applying for a U.S. visa: [http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/info/info_1300.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/info/info_1300.html).
To receive an F-1 student visa, you must prove the following:

**That you are eligible for F-1 Student Status.** You must present the I-20 and letter of admission to the consul officer. Have clear, well-thought-out answers to such questions as "Why do you want to study this field? Why did you choose Clark University?" If the consul officer suspects that you have accepted admission at Clark to come to the U.S. but do not intend to be a student, your application will be denied.

**That you can meet all your financial obligations while in the U.S.** You must show that you have the funds to cover at least your first year of tuition, fees, and living expenses. However, consul officers must be assured that you will not run out of money at any point during your program of study. Be sure to have financial aid/scholarship letters, bank statements, or affidavits of support for the consul officer to inspect.

**That you will return to your home country after your studies.** This may be very difficult proof. The best way is to be prepared to explain in detail your plans and employment prospects in your home country after you finish your program. Tentative job offers, proof of how marketable your degree will be, or any other documents are helpful.

**Things to remember:**
- Consul Officers have absolute authority to grant or deny visas and their decisions cannot be overturned. If you are denied you may re-apply for the visa if you can provide additional supporting documentation.
- Most people are denied for "immigrant intent". If you have any relatives living permanently in the U.S., the consul officer may believe that your intention is to remain permanently in the U.S. as well.
- Be honest. If the consul officer suspects that you are being untruthful you will be denied the visa.
- If you appear unclear about your academic goals or how you will put your new skills to work in your home country, you may be denied the visa.

6. **Entering the United States:**

Immigration regulations allow you to enter the U.S. no more than 30 days prior to the start of your program indicated in section 5 of your Form I-20. For immigration inspection you must present the items listed in step 5 above so be sure these documents are with you at all times during your travel. The immigration officer may ask you some questions. If you are asked about how you will pay for your studies, answer the question and offer to show your financial documents. If you are asked about your "intentions," answer the question and offer to show documents that demonstrate your intent to return home. You should calmly provide all information requested by the immigration officer.

Please be advised that citizens of certain countries may be subject to Special Registration procedures when entering the U.S. This process requires fingerprinting and photographing and could take extra time. **Please plan connecting flights accordingly.**

If you have the required documents and there are no more questions, the inspector will "admit" you to the U.S. by stamping your passport and Form I-20. When you leave the inspection area, make certain you have the following documents in your possession:
- Passport
- SEVIS Form I-20
- All financial documents

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** If your passport is not stamped to indicate "F-1, D/S", please contact the International Students & Scholars Office immediately upon your arrival at Clark.

**US-VISIT PROGRAM NOW IN EFFECT AT THE PORT-OF-ENTRY**

US-VISIT is an entry program that is in effect at most ports of entry. When you enter the U.S. you will be fingerprinted and photographed. Visit [http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interapp/content_multi_image/content_multi_image_0006.xhtml](http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interapp/content_multi_image/content_multi_image_0006.xhtml) for more information.

If you have any questions, please contact us. The International Students & Scholars Office is located on the second floor of the Corner House at the corner of Woodland and Charlotte Streets; our hours are 9:00am-5:00pm, Monday through Friday. We can be reached by phone, 508-793-7362; fax, 508-421-3732; or e-mail: pdoherty@clarku.edu, or vgenkos@clarku.edu

10/14 Updated
Clark University
SEVIS Fee Information and Procedures

Anyone applying for F-1 and J-1 visas is required to pay a SEVIS fee. The fee for F-1 is $200 and $180 for J-1. This is a nonrefundable fee, in addition to the visa application fee. You can pay three ways: electronically with a credit card, Western Union, or by mail to an U.S. address. **You cannot pay the SEVIS fee until you receive your Clark University I-20(F-1) or DS-2019 (J-1).** However, you can schedule the visa interview prior to completing the SEVIS fee payment process.

Online payment (Preferred method)
- Have your credit card information available and make sure your computer has access to a printer.
- Our school code: BOS214F00098000. (BOS contains the letter “O”, all others are zeros.)
- Go to [www.FMJfee.com](http://www.FMJfee.com). Follow the links to access Form I-901 and complete the required information. Enter the information carefully. Type your name exactly as it appears on your I-20 or DS-2019.
- Print a copy of the online receipt and be prepared to present it at the embassy and at the port-of-entry in the U.S.
- To ensure timely electronic verification, submit the SEVIS fee payment at least 3 business days before your visa interview. Fee payment information is downloaded to a database that provides consul officers an electronic verification of SEVIS fee payment. Keep the printed on-line receipt with your travel documents.
- A Form I-797 receipt notice will be sent to the address listed on Form I-901 within several weeks of submission.
- Citizens of Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, and Nigeria cannot pay the SEVIS fee online and should use Western Union.

Payment by Western Union:
This service is available in most countries through local Western Union agents. For additional information visit: [http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/wu_instr.htm](http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/wu_instr.htm).

Payment by mail:
- This option is not recommended because it can be a very long time for you to receive the receipt notice.
- Download and complete the Form I-901found at [www.ice.gov/sevis/i901](http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901).
- Prepare a check or international money order in the amount of $200 (F-1) or $180 (J-1) made payable to: “I-901 Student/Exchange Visitor Processing Fee.”
- Only checks and money orders in US$ from a bank located in the U.S. may be used when paying by mail.
- Some banks overseas are able to issue checks or money orders drawn on a U.S. bank. Check with banks in your area to see if this is possible.
- Mail the completed form I-901 and payment to the address listed in the instructions.
- A Form I-797 Receipt Notice will be mailed to the address you provide on the Form I-901.

If you think your SEVIS fee payment was received and the Consulate should have electronic verification of your payment, yet you have not received Form I-797 Receipt Notice, go to your scheduled interview. If the consul officer has electronic verification of your SEVIS fee payment, your visa should not be denied due to failure to provide the I-797 Receipt Notice.

Citizens of Canada:
If you are not required to obtain a visa-stamp in order to enter the U.S., SEVIS fee payment will be verified at the time you are initially admitted to the U.S. Allow at least 3 business days from the date your payment is processed until the time you enter the U.S. so that the immigration officers at the port of entry receives electronic verification.

Frequently Asked Questions:
What if my visa is denied?
If you pay a SEVIS fee, but your visa application is denied, you may re-apply for a visa in the same category within 12 months following the notice of visa denial without having to repay the SEVIS fee. Keep the visa denial notice for your records.

Do F-2 and J-2 dependents have to pay the SEVIS fee?
No. Only the student applying for an F-1 or J-1 visa has to pay the SEVIS fee.

If I have already paid the SEVIS fee for one school and then decide to attend another, do I have to pay the fee again?
If you paid the fee using the SEVIS ID number of an institution you will not be attending, you will not have to pay the fee again. Bring the I-20s or DS-2019s from both schools and your SEVIS fee payment receipt, to the consulate or port-of-entry.

Where can I find help if I have a problem with the SEVIS I-901 fee payment process?
Visit the SEVP website at [www.ice.gov/sevis/i901](http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901) or contact fmjfee.SEVIS@DHS.gov.

updated 10/14