WELCOME TO TRUMAN STATE UNIVERSITY

International Student Pre-Orientation Information How to get a student visa

Spring 2016

STUDENT VISAS – WHICH ONE SHOULD YOU APPLY FOR?

The most common student visas are F-1 and J-1.

- **F-1**
- Apply for an F-1 visa if you are a degree-seeking student or visiting student. The F-1 student visa program is designed for students who wish to improve their personal and professional skills by completing a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree or visitor program.
- **J-1**
- Apply for a J-1 visa if you are participating in an exchange program between your home university and Truman. The purpose of a J-1 visa program is to promote cultural exchange and understanding.

THE STUDENT VISA PROCESS

- 1. Acceptance! You will receive a form I-20 (for an F-1 visa) or DS-2019 (for a J-1 visa) when you are accepted to Truman. *
- Pay the SEVIS fee (sometimes called the I-901 fee) go to <u>fmjfee.com</u> to pay. Keep the receipt!
- 3. Complete the DS-160 application** for an F-1 or J-1 visa. You will need to go to the US Embassy website for your country to do this.
- * ISEP students will receive their DS-2019s directly from ISEP, Truman is not involved with that process.

**The DS-160 will ask for your U.S. Point of Contact. This will be the person who issued your I-20/DS-2019. Use the information on the I-20/DS-2019 to complete this question. ISEP students use the information of the ISEP Official listed on your DS-2019.

THE STUDENT VISA PROCESS

- 4. Bring copies of all of the materials you submitted to Truman, your passport, your I-20 or DS-2019, and your SEVIS fee payment receipt to the visa interview.
- 5. If you pass the visa interview, the embassy or consulate will keep your passport for a few weeks and return it to you with your F-1 or J-1 visa stamp.



YOUR PASSPORT

DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT IT

- Proof of your identity
- Proof of your citizenship
- Must not be expired at any time while you are in the U.S.
- If it expires while you are in the United States, most countries will allow you to renew it at your embassy
- Keep it safe
- Never travel in the U.S. without your passport

Make a copy of your biographical and visa pages to carry with you at all times.

YOU ONLY NEED IT TO ENTER THE US!

Once you're in the U.S., your visa can expire and you may still be legal.* HOWEVER, you must maintain your legal status by going to school, keeping your I-20 or DS-2019 up to date (not expired), not working illegally, and obeying all U.S. laws.

*For J-1 students, this is true as long as your category does not change. For more information, contact the International Student Affairs Office.

YOUR I-20 OR DS-2019

- F-1 students have an I-20
- J-1 students have a DS-2019
- Your most recent one cannot be expired
- Don't lose them!
- Don't throw them away!

Keep <u>every</u> I-20/DS-2019 you are given. They are proof of your immigration history. You may need them in the future!

I-20

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DS-2019

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THE STUDENT VISA PROCESS - INTERVIEW

The interview for your student visa determines whether or not you are legally admissible into the United States, your true motives for wanting to come to the United States, and whether or not you will be able to follow all of the student visa rules.

- Intent all people wanting to enter the United States are assumed to be immigrants (people who never plan to return home) unless they can prove otherwise. You will need to prove that you have ties in your home country and that your true purpose in coming to the United States is to study rather than work or visit relatives.
- What if I want to live in the United States after I complete my studies!? That is fine, the key phrase is that you want to complete your studies. You must prove that you do not intend to work or engage in other nonpermissible activities while you are in the United States on a student visa.
- Ties to your home country can be established in various ways, bank accounts, documentation of family business, anything that shows that you will maintain close connections to your home country while you are a student.

THE STUDENT VISA PROCESS – THE RULES

Once you have arrived in the United States, you must continue to follow the rules for student visa holders. Following the rules means that you are "<u>maintaining your student status</u>." If you do not follow the rules, you will not be legally allowed to remain in the United States.

Know Your Responsibilities

Staying Legal Is Up To You!

