

---

# The 7 Simple Steps to Getting Your **F-1 Student Visa** Approved and Studying English in **Los Angeles!**



## Columbia West College

3435 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1700, Los Angeles, CA 90010

Tel: (213) 368-3900 Fax: (213) 368-3903

[info@columbiawestcollege.edu](mailto:info@columbiawestcollege.edu) [www.columbiawestcollege.edu](http://www.columbiawestcollege.edu)



## 1. Apply To and Get Accepted at an SEVP Approved School (like CWC!)

---

You will need to submit the following documents (and payment) in order to receive your Form I-20 and Acceptance Letter from CWC (different SEVP approved schools may have slightly different requirements):

### 1.1 Application Form – Which you can complete either:

- Online at: <https://www.columbiawestcollege.edu/apply/online-application/>
- By downloading the form (at the link above), filling it out, and emailing it to us at: [info@columbiawestcollege.edu](mailto:info@columbiawestcollege.edu)

### 1.2. Copy of university or high school diploma, GED certificate (or equivalent), or transcript

### 1.3. Copies of your financial statement(s). Acceptable financial statements include tax returns and bank statements.

- Your financial statement(s) must be dated within the last 3 months and show a balance of at least \$9,000 for a 6-month Form I-20 and \$18,000 for a 1-year Form I-20.
- If you have a dependent(s), please have additional \$3,000.00 per person on the financial statement. For example, if you have 3 dependents (spouse and 2 children), your financial statement must have \$9,000.00 extra.
- If the financial statement holder is not the primary F-1 student, then please have the account holder fill out and sign an "Affidavit of Support" letter.

### 1.4. Copy of passport

### 1.5. Pay your Application and Mailing Fees

## 2. Apply for an F-1 Student Visa

---

- 2.1 **Pay your SEVIS I-901 fee** at [www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com) so you can be entered into Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). The fee is \$200.
- 2.2. **Complete your visa application form** (Form DS-160) at <https://ceac.state.gov/genniv/>
- 2.3. **Pay a non-refundable visa application fee.** Go to [www.usembassy.gov](http://www.usembassy.gov) to select your country and find country-specific instructions for paying the fee. The fee is currently \$160.



### 3. Schedule your Student Visa Interview

---

3.1 **Schedule an interview.** Go to [www.usembassy.gov](http://www.usembassy.gov) to select your country and find country-specific instructions for scheduling an interview.

Wait times for interview appointments can vary, so it's a good idea to apply for your visa early. Wait times for interviews and visa processing for each U.S. embassy or consulate are available at <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/general/wait-times.html>

You can apply for your F-1 student visa up to 120 days in advance of the **Program Start** date shown on your Form I-20.

### 4. Prepare for your Student Visa Interview

---

Make sure your name is spelled correctly and appears the same on all your documents!

4.1 **Printed copy of your appointment letter**

4.2 **Current and expired passports** (current passport should be valid for at least 6 months past the end of your intended period of study)

4.3 **Form I-20**

4.4 **Official CWC acceptance letter**

4.5 **Form I-901 SEVIS fee payment receipt**

4.6 **Form DS-160 visa application confirmation/barcode page**

4.7 **Visa application fee payment receipt**

4.8 **Financial statements** (e.g., tax returns and bank statements)

4.9 **Proof you plan to leave the U.S. after you finish your program** (e.g., job offer letter, business ownership documents)

4.10 **Diploma and transcripts** (required by some U.S. Embassies)

4.11 **Photo taken within the last 6 months** (required by some U.S. Embassies)

Prepare everything that you think might be helpful and applicable for your situation, but don't show the interviewing officer any documents unless asked to do so.



## 5. Go to your F-1 Student Visa Interview

---

Make sure you have all your documents for the interview.

The entire interview usually only takes a few minutes, so speak clearly and have some idea of what you want to say.

The consular officer will decide whether or not you meet all the requirements and will receive an F-1 student visa. Digital fingerprint scans are usually taken at this time.

Since getting a visa isn't guaranteed, don't make final travel plans until your visa is approved. See our video for tips on giving a successful interview.

## 6. Visa Approval!

---

Buy your plane ticket! You may be required to pay a visa issuance fee. Your passport will be taken so that you can get your visa and you will be informed when you can get it back, either by pick-up or in the mail.

Pay your tuition online at

<https://www.columbiawestcollege.edu/onlinepayment/>

\* If your Visa is denied, contact us for information on what to do next.

## 7. Enter the US and Attend your CWC Orientation

---

You can enter the United States up to 30 days before the Program Start date shown on your Form I-20. Have these documents ready to show the Customs and Border Protection officer when you enter the United States.

**7.1 Passport with F-1 Student Visa**

**7.2 Form I-20**

**7.3 Form I-901 SEVIS fee payment receipt**

**7.4 Official CWC acceptance letter**

**7.5 Financial statements** (e.g., tax returns and/or bank statements)



## Orientation Time At CWC!

---

Please bring these documents and attend your orientation to take your English placement test, complete the registration process, and learn more about CWC. It's normally on the Tuesday prior to the start date shown on your Form I-20. We can also help you open a bank account, get a cell phone, transit pass and more!

- **Form I-20**
- **Passport with F-1 Student Visa**
- **Local address in the United States**
- **Payment for tuition and fees**

If you arrive in the US earlier than your orientation date, we recommend that you visit us to take your English placement test and complete the registration process in advance of orientation.

We look forward to seeing you!

\* Print and keep copies of all documents and payment receipts for your records.