

Obtaining a J-1 Visa

First, verify that your name, date of birth, city/country of birth and citizenship as listed on your DS-2019 form match the information in your passport. Contact The Office of Immigration and International Admissions if changes are needed on your DS-2019.

SEVIS Fee Requirement

Prior to applying for a J-1 visa, a SEVIS I-901 fee of \$180 must be paid. The U.S. government requires this fee to support the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), a computerized system that manages data about foreign scholars during their stay in the United States. The fee can be paid to the Department of Homeland Security by mail, online, or through Western Union Quick Pay.

1. To pay online:
 - a. Complete the Form I-901 at <https://www.fmjfee.com/>. Be sure to write your name exactly as it appears on your DS-2019 form and your date of birth in month/day/year format.
 - b. Supply the necessary Visa, MasterCard or American Express information. Debit cards with the Visa or MasterCard logo are also accepted.
 - c. Print a copy of the online receipt.

2. To pay the SEVIS fee by mail or Western Union Quick Pay, see instructions www.ice.gov/sevis/i901.

Applying for the J-1 visa

1. Follow the U.S. Embassy/Consulate's instructions to schedule an interview for a J-1 visa application. A list of Consulates and Embassies can be found at www.usembassy.gov/.
2. Complete the appropriate forms at <https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/forms.html>:
 - a. DS-156 Nonimmigrant Visa Application form
 - b. DS-158 Contact Information and Work History for Nonimmigrant Visa Applicant
 - c. DS-157 Supplemental Nonimmigrant Visa Application for males ages 16-45.

Important Notice: At certain U.S. Embassies and Consulates abroad, nonimmigrant visa applicants are now required to apply for their visa using the new DS-160 Online Nonimmigrant Visa Electronic Application, instead of the nonimmigrant application forms DS-156, 157, 158, and other related forms. Check with the Embassy/ Consulate where you will apply.

3. Pay the visa application fee by following instructions on your local U.S. Embassy/Consulate's site.
4. Prepare and bring to your visa interview:
 - a. Passport valid for at least six months into the future
 - b. Form DS-2019
 - c. Completed visa application
 - d. 2x2 photograph in the prescribed format
<http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/general/photos.html>
 - e. Receipts for payment of the SEVIS and Visa Application fees
 - f. Financial evidence to show there are sufficient funds to cover your tuition and living expenses during the period you intend to study
 - g. Any additional information listed on the Consulate's website

Be prepared to explain the program in which you will participate at the University of South Alabama, your reasons for wanting to participate, and any information that helps to establish your nonimmigrant intent since the J-1 visa is for nonimmigrant status.

Additional Helpful Sites:

<http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/study-exchange/exchange.html>

<http://j1visa.state.gov/>