



Tips for Receiving a Student Visa to the United States

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The visa interview is given by an American Consular Officer and will be conducted completely in English unless the interviewing officer needs special interpretation assistance to clarify information or verify a document. The questions that will be asked at the interview focus on the purpose of the student's trip to the U.S. In order to be qualified for a U.S. student visa the student must:

1. Be a bona-fide student
2. Have adequate financial resources
3. Have the intent to return to your country upon the completion of the proposed study in the U.S.

A Bona-fide Student

A bona-fide student is someone who intends to enter the US to pursue a full course of study at a recognized institution of learning. A bona-fide student also means the student has an educational plan. Having an educational plan means being able to describe what, where, and why you want to study in the U.S. A student should be flexible and able to discuss any issues relating to his or her studies. For example, the student should have information such as:

- The institution and admissions counselor or contact (It is best when you can offer the officer documents such as emails and official letters from the institution verifying acceptance and invitation to their school).
- A declared major and program (a document from the website or catalog detailing the classes that will be taken over the course of the program)...even if you are not sure it is better to speak as if you know for sure your plans rather than to tell them that you are unsure and will decide when you get there.

Adequate Financial Resources

Adequate financial resources means the family have a consistent source of income and can financially afford the cost of the study in the US. Hope International University requires students to submit a bank statement and affidavit to verify sufficient funds (the current balance should have at least a full year of tuition and housing costs for undergraduate study and the full program costs for the graduate programs). Copies of these documents and of current bank records and statements should be taken to the interview to demonstrate to the immigration officer the family's financial stability.

Intent to Return

This is probably one of the most important aspects of ensuring your chances of receiving a student visa to the U.S. The Consulate wants to know that you plan to return to your country. It is important to state your specific plans and intentions after the completion of your program and your return to your country. In addition, you need to explain why your education in the U.S. is only an opportunity to receive an education so that you can bring back new skills and knowledge to invest into your own country's development and betterment. A student's intent to return to your country upon the completion of their study in the U.S. can be defined as, but are not limited to: a family business, owning a home, family, etc. The officer needs to know that you have no intention to stay in the U.S.

longer than the educational program that you are pursuing requires. You need to clearly state your plans to return to your country and how your educational experience in the U.S. will equip you so that you can return to your country and invest your newfound knowledge and skills to better your country and family.

The following are examples of possible questions that may be asked in the visa interview:

1. Where are you going to study?
2. What are you going to study?
3. Why did you choose to study this course?
4. Why do you think that it will be beneficial to receive a degree overseas in this area?
5. How long is the program?
6. Why do you want to study?
7. What do you plan to do after you complete your studies? (Make sure that you make it clear that you plan to return to Your country and give specific reasons why you will return...for example, you will take over the family business, your family is very important to you, you have a job waiting for you in Your country, etc.)

Finally, relax and be confident! Make sure to keep eye contact and position your body in a way that demonstrates your confidence. If you prepare for this interview by bringing documentation and clearly state an educational plan and intent to return, you can focus on communicating clearly rather than feeling nervous about what you will say. In addition, the officer will see your confidence and preparation and that will be an indication to them that you are suitable for studying abroad.