Steps for Obtaining an F-1 Student Visa

This information is presented as a guide; it is not legally binding. Students in F-1 are responsible for learning, understanding, and complying with U.S. federal laws and regulations governing the F visa. Failure to do so will violate your legal status in the United States and will have serious consequences. If you have any questions regarding the process, contact CCC’s Designated School Official at admissions@corning-cc.edu. If necessary, you may be directed to seek legal counsel.

Obtaining the F-1 student visa

- Familiarize yourself with the regulations for F-1 visa or http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1268.html
- Send a completed admission application to the Office of Admissions and meet the admission standards.
- A letter of acceptance will be issued when all documentation is received and meets admissions standard (see Admission Requirements for International Students).
- After the letter of acceptance is issued an I-20 will be completed in the federal SEVIS database. The I-20 will be signed by the appropriate Designated School Official (DSO) and sent to you. It is then your responsibility to follow through with the U.S. consulate.
- You may not request a visa from the U.S. Consulate earlier than 120 days before your course of study (as noted on the I-20) is to begin.
- Payment of the SEVIS I-901 fee may be required by the consulate before your visa will be issued. Contact the consulate in your home country for further information.

Documents Required at U.S. Port of Entry

- Passport valid for at least six (6) months.
- F-1 visa issued by U.S. Consulate. Consular officer should annotate the visa with the name of the school for which the F-1 visa was obtained for initial F-1 admission.
- Evidence of financial support—include the same evidence of financial ability that was used to process the I-20.
- I-20 form—completely signed and dated by the Primary Designated School Official (or Designated School Official) and the student.
- Proof of payment of SEVIS I-901 fee may be required.

Students who have applied for initial entry in F-1 status must attend the school authorized by the I-20 or be considered out of status. Should the school designate you as a “no-show” in the SEVIS database, the U.S. government will make every attempt to locate you. Please take this warning seriously.

It is imperative to keep in mind that the F-1 visa is a non-immigrant visa. This means that the student is maintaining a residence abroad and will return to the home country following completion of the F-1 period of attendance. By requesting the F-1 visa you are indicating this intent to the U.S. government.