What is the SEVIS fee?

This SEVIS fee is a congressionally mandated fee to cover the costs for the continued operation of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) and to administer and maintain the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). The fee is required of all international students and scholars.

This fee goes into effect September 1, 2004 and will be collected by the United States Department of Homeland Security.

Who must pay the SEVIS fee?

Those who wish to enter the United States either as a student or exchange visitor with a Form I-20 or DS-2019 dates on or after September 1, 2004 are required to pay the SEVIS fee. Spouses and dependent children (F-2, J-2) do not pay this fee.

Applicants who require a visa to enter the United States must pay the SEVIS fee before going to the U.S. embassy or consulate for their visa interview. Applicants who are citizens of Canada, Bermuda, Bahamas and residents of certain other islands) wishing to apply for F or J status at a Port of Entry into the United States must pay and process the SEVIS fee before appearing at the Port of Entry.

Nonimmigrants currently in the United States who apply for student or exchange visitor status must pay the fee prior to filing their change of status application.

How much is the SEVIS fee and how do I pay it?

The SEVIS fee is US$ 100. This fee is separate from and in addition to the visa application fee. The SEVIS fee must be paid by the Internet or by mail. It cannot be paid at a U.S. embassy or consulate and it cannot be paid at port of entry.

The fee can be paid by one of two means:

1) Electronically through the internet at www.FMJfee.com by using a Visa, MasterCard, or American Express credit card and completing the online Form I-901.

2) By mail, by submitting Form I-901, Fee remittance for Certain F, J, and M Nonimmigrants, together with a check or money order drawn on a U.S. bank and payable in U.S. currency. Sources for such checks and money orders include banks chartered or operated in the U.S., foreign subsidiaries of U.S. banks, or foreign banks that have an arrangement with a U.S. bank to issue a check, money order, or foreign draft that is drawn on a U.S. bank.

A third party such as a friend, family member, or other interested party can pay the fee on your behalf through the same means described above.
A Note About Processing Times and Payment Verification

If you pay the SEVIS fee by Internet, your payment is processed immediately and, at the
time you make payment, you can print a receipt directly from your computer. This
computer-generated receipt can be used to verify you have paid the fee at an embassy,
consular post, or port-of-entry. Mailing the SEVIS fee does not constitute payment. The
fee is processed when it is received by DHS. If you mail your payment rather than pay
on the Internet, it can take a considerable amount of time for payment to be received
and for you to receive a receipt by return mail.

Whether you choose to pay the fee by the Internet or by mail, a paper receipt will be
mailed to the address you provide on Form I-901. You may choose to have this receipt
sent to you either by regular mail or, at an additional charge, by express delivery.

A paper receipt is not required in order for you to be issued a visa or to be admitted at
the port of entry. Embassies and consular posts will be able to verify your fee payment
without a receipt in most circumstances if you pay the fee far enough in advance of your
visa interview. Electronic payments must be submitted at least 3 business days in
advance of the interview if you will rely on electronic fee verification at the consulate.
Mailed payments must be sent in a manner that assures arrival at the DHS address
listed on the I-901 at least 3 business days before the scheduled interview.

If I have already paid the SEVIS fee for one school, and then decide to enroll in another, do
I have to pay the fee again?

If you have been accepted to more than one institution and paid the fee using the SEVIS
ID number of an institution you will not be attending, you will not have to pay the fee
again. Bring the I-20s of both the school for which you paid the fee and the school you
will be attending, as well as your SEVIS fee payment receipt, to the consulate or port-of-
entry (if you are applying for a visa, you should bring both of the I-20s back to the
consulate)

Is the SEVIS fee refundable if I am denied a visa?

Once paid, the SEVIS fee is non-refundable, unless paid by mistake, even if your visa is
denied or, subsequent to issuance of the visa, you choose not to come to the United
States.

If you applied for an F-1 or F-3 visa and paid the SEVIS fee within the last year but were
denied a visa, you do not have to pay the SEVIS fee again as long as you re-apply for
the same kind of program with 12 months of the initial denial.

When must continuing students (F-1) pay the SEVIS fee?

Before filing an application for reinstatement when they have been out of status for more
than 5 months; or
When applying for a new visa or returning to the United States after an absence of more
than 5 months that did not involve authorized overseas study; or
When filing an application for a change of status to an F or J classification except for changes between F-1 and F-3.

**When must continuing exchange visitors (J-1 nonimmigrants who have begun, but not finished a program) pay the fee?**

Continuing exchange visitors must pay the SEVIS fee before:

- Filing a reinstatement application after a substantive violation; or
- Filing a reinstatement application after they have been out of status between 121 and 269 days; or
- Applying for a change of exchange visitor category unless the new exchange visitor category is fee exempt.

For additional information on the SEVIS fee contact the International Scholar and Student Services office.

**Helpful Links:**

For visa related issues - [http://travel.state.gov/visa/questions_embassy.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/questions_embassy.html).


Visas for Canada or Mexico - [http://travel.state.gov/travel/tcn.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tcn.html)


For additional information about the SEVIS program - [http://www.ice.gov/graphics/sevis/index.htm](http://www.ice.gov/graphics/sevis/index.htm)

