Prospective International Student

Resource Guide

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to guide you through the process of obtaining a visa in order to study at Calvin Theological Seminary as an international student. Most international students admitted to Calvin Seminary will need to obtain an F-1 or J-1 visa. Complete the following steps in order to receive an I-20 for an F-1 visa or DS-2019 for a J-1 visa to enter the United States and study at Calvin Seminary.

APPLY TO CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

After your application is accepted, you will receive an official Letter of Admission.
A Letter of Admission is required to continue the process of applying for an F-1 or J-1 visa.

SUBMIT DECLARATION OF FINANACES

Submit a completed Declaration of Finances to Calvin Seminary's International Student Office at least three months prior to your program start date in order to be eligible to receive a Certificate of Eligibility. Upon receipt of the Declaration of Finances, the International Student Office will send you a Certificate of Eligibility. **Please allow two weeks for processing.**

The Certificate of Eligibility is a government document created by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) approved school that allows you to obtain a student visa from a United States Consulate or Embassy and enter the United States. It is sent to you prior to your start date.

A complete Declaration of Finances includes:

- Declaration of Finances Form
- Financial Documents - original bank statements
- Sponsor letters, bank statement(s), letters from supporting churches indicating the amount of support, or letters from classis (if applicable)
- Scholarship letter from Calvin Seminary (if applicable)
- Copy of passport(s) for student and all dependents

Note: United States regulations require all international students to demonstrate they have sufficient funds for their program of study in order to receive a Certificate of Eligibility.

- **F-1 visa:** full funding for the first year of study and "sufficient" funds for the following years is required.
- **J-1 visa:** full funding for duration of a program is required.

PAY SEVIS FEE

Upon receiving a Certificate of Eligibility, complete Form I-901 and pay the Department of Homeland Security SEVIS fee. **Keep your SEVIS fee payment receipt to bring it to your visa interview.**

- **SEVIS Fees:** F-1 visa = $350, J-1 visa = $220
- **Calvin Seminary school code:** DET214F00289000
- **SEVIS number:** located in the top right corner of the I-20 or DS-2019

SCHEDULE A VISA INTERVIEW

Schedule a visa interview with the U.S. Consulate or Embassy.

Bring the following documents with you to your interview:

- Certificate of Eligibility (I-20 or DS-2019)
- Declaration of Finances
- Supporting Financial Documents (if applicable)
- Valid Passport
- SEVIS fee payment receipt
- Calvin Theological Seminary acceptance letter

Note: Canadian citizens are not required to go to interview at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate to obtain a visa. Instead, Canadian citizens present their Certificate of Eligibility (I-20 or DS 2019), Passport and SEVIS Fee payment receipt at the Port of Entry.

ENTER THE UNITED STATES WITH F-1 OR J-1 VISA

Be prepared to present the following documents at the Port of Entry:
- Certificate of Eligibility (I-20 or DS-2019)
- Valid student visa and dependent visa(s), except Canadian citizens
- Valid passport (and dependent passport(s)
- Declaration of Finances

Upon entering the United States, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) will create an electronic I-94 admission record that will be available online. Print out a copy of the I-94 for yourself and each of your dependents.

CHECK IN WITH THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT OFFICE AT CALVIN SEMINARY

Bring the following documents with you to the International Student Office within 7 days of your arrival to the United States:

- Certificate of Eligibility (I-20 or DS-2019)
- Passport(s)
- Visa(s)
- I-94 (available online)
- Local address in the United States