Preparing for Study at Midwestern

Step 1:

Discuss the admissions process with the admissions staff at Midwestern (816) 414-7738. Vicki Hauser, vhauser@mbts.edu.

Complete all application materials as instructed by the admissions office.

Step 2:

After being admitted to MBTS, prepare for your visa interview. A Certificate of Eligibility (I-20) will be sent to you by mail, which provides a number (SEVIS number) so that you can apply for a student visa.

After being admitted to MBTS, contact the International Student Services Office cmack@mbts.edu so that we can prepare your I-20.

Preparing for an F-1 Visa Interview

From: [http://www.nafsa.org/Resource_Library_Assets/Networks/ISTA/Preparing_for_an_F-1_Visa_Interview/]

This information is for people who plan to enter the United States for the first time to study. For information on bringing dependents to the U.S., returning to continue studies, or renewing your visa, or for more details on how to apply for a student visa, refer to the U.S. Department of State.

1. Contact your local U.S. Consulate or Embassy to ask about how to get an F-1 international student visa.
2. After you receive an I-20 form from the school that you want to attend, follow the U.S. Embassy/Consulate’s instructions to schedule an interview for your F-1 student visa. It is important to apply for your student visa as far in advance as possible. Many consulates recommend that appointments be made no more than 90 days from the intended date of travel, but some can make earlier arrangements for interviews.
3. Pay the visa application fee by following instructions on your local U.S. Embassy’s or Consulate’s web site.
4. You will also need to pay the $200 SEVIS fee.
5. Complete the following forms:
   a. DS-156 Nonimmigrant Visa Application Form
   b. DS-158 Contact Information and Work History for Nonimmigrant Visa Applicant if a male between the ages of 16 and 45, DS-157 Supplemental Nonimmigrant Visa Application
To Pay By Mail

Complete Form I-901 SEVIS Fee Remittance for Certain F, J, and M Nonimmigrants.” or call 800.870.3676 (inside the United States). Be sure to write your name exactly how it appears on your I-20 form.

Prepare a check, international money order or foreign draft (drawn on US banks only) in the amount of $200 USD. If paying by check, make the check payable to the “Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement.”

Many foreign banks are able to issue checks or money orders drawn on a U.S. bank. You may therefore obtain a check from a bank chartered or operated in the United States, a foreign subsidiary of a U.S. bank, or a foreign bank that has an arrangement with a U.S. bank to issue a check, money order, or foreign draft that is drawn on a U.S. bank.

Mail the completed I-901 and payment to the address listed on Form I-901. A Form I-797 receipt confirmation letter should be mailed within 3 days of processing the fee. Be sure to make copies of this receipt letter, and keep it with your other important immigration documents.

To Process Online

https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/students/formSelection.htm

Complete the form online and supply the necessary Visa, MasterCard or American Express information. *Be sure to write your name exactly how it appears on your I-20 form. Be sure to print a copy of the online receipt. Remember to make copies of your receipt, and keep it with your other important immigration documents.

You must bring the receipt of fee payment with you to the interview. If you have lost the receipt, the Visa Officer should be able to view your payment history in his or her database.

If you are transferring schools, extending your program, applying for an F-2 dependent visa, or have paid this fee and been denied a visa within the last twelve months, you do not need to pay the $200 SEVIS fee.

Preparing for the Visa Interview

Prepare and bring to your visa interview the following:

1. A passport valid for at least six months
2. Form I-20 (sign the form under Item 11)
3. School admission letter
4. Completed visa applications (DS-156, DS-158, and, if applicable, DS-157)
5. Two 2"x 2" photographs in the prescribed format
6. A receipt for the visa application fee
7. A receipt for the SEVIS fee. If you have not received an official receipt in the mail showing payment and you paid the fee electronically, the consulate will accept the temporary receipt you printed from your computer. If you do not have a receipt, the consulate may be able to see your payment electronically if your fee payment was processed at least 3 business days before your interview.
8. Financial evidence that shows you have sufficient funds to cover your tuition and living expenses during the period you intend to study.
9. Any information that proves that you will return to your home country after finishing your studies in the United States. This may include proof of property, family, or other ties to your community.
10. Remain calm and answer all the Visa Officer's questions to you openly and honestly.

10 Points to Remember When Applying for a Nonimmigrant Visa
(Prepared by Ohio State University)

1. Ties to Your Home Country
Under U.S. law, all applicants for nonimmigrant visas, such as student visas, are viewed as intending immigrants until they can convince the consular officer that they are not. You must therefore be able to show that you have reasons for returning to your home country that are stronger than those for remaining in the United States. "Ties" to your home country are the things that bind you to your home town, homeland, or current place of residence: job, family, financial prospects that you own or will inherit, investments, etc. If you are a prospective undergraduate, the interviewing officer may ask about your specific intentions or promise of future employment, family or other relationships, educational objectives, grades, long-range plans and career prospects in your home country.

Each person's situation is different, of course, and there is no magic explanation or single document, certificate, or letter which can guarantee visa issuance. If you have applied for the U.S. Green Card Lottery, you may be asked if you are intending to immigrate. A simple answer would be that you applied for the lottery since it was available but not with a specific intent to immigrate. If you overstayed your authorized stay in the United States previously, be prepared to explain what happened clearly and concisely, with documentation, if available.

2. English
Anticipate that the interview will be conducted in English and not in your native language. One suggestion is to practice English conversation with a native speaker before the interview, but do NOT prepare speeches! If you are coming to the United States solely to study intensive English, be prepared to explain how English will be useful for you in your home country.
3. Speak for Yourself
Do not bring parents or family members with you to the interview. The consular officer wants to interview you, not your family. A negative impression is created if you are not prepared to speak on your own behalf. If you are a minor applying for a high school program and need your parents there is case there are questions, for example about funding, they should wait in the waiting room.

4. Know the Program and How It Fits Your Career Plans
If you are not able to articulate the reasons you will study in a particular program in the United States, you may not succeed in convincing the consular officer that you are indeed planning to study, rather than to immigrate. You should also be able to explain how studying in the United States relates to your future professional career when you return home.

5. Be Brief
Because of the volume of applications received, all consular officers are under considerable time pressure to conduct a quick and efficient interview. They must make a decision, for the most part, on the impressions they form during the first minute of the interview. Consequently, what you say first and the initial impression you create are critical to your success. Keep your answers to the officer’s questions short and to the point.

6. Additional Documentation
It should be immediately clear to the consular officer what written documents you are presenting and what they signify. Lengthy written explanations cannot be quickly read or evaluated. Remember that you will have 2-3 minutes of interview time, if you are lucky.

7. Not All Countries are Equal
Applicants from countries suffering economic problems or from countries where many students have remained in the United States as immigrants will have more difficulty getting visas. Statistically, applicants from those countries are more likely to be intending immigrants. They are also more likely to be asked about job opportunities at home after their study in the United States.

8. Employment
Your main purpose in coming to the United States should be to study, not for the chance to work before or after graduation. While many students do work off-campus during their studies, such employment is incidental to their main purpose of completing their U.S. education. You must be able to clearly articulate your plan to return home at the end of your program. If your spouse is also applying for an accompanying F-2 visa, be aware that F-2 dependents cannot, under any circumstances, be employed in the United States. If asked, be prepared to address what your spouse intends to do with his or her time while in the United States. Volunteer work and attending school part-time are permitted activities.
9. Dependents Remaining at Home
If your spouse and children are remaining behind in your country, be prepared to address how they will support themselves in your absence. This can be an especially tricky area if you are the primary source of income for your family. If the consular officer gains the impression that your family will need you to remit money from the United States in order to support themselves, your student visa application will almost certainly be denied. If your family does decide to join you at a later time, it is helpful to have them apply at the same post where you applied for your visa.

10. Maintain a Positive Attitude
Do not engage the consular officer in an argument. If you are denied a student visa, ask the officer for a list of documents he or she would suggest you bring in order to overcome the refusal, and try to get the reason you were denied in writing.

Step 3

Arriving in the U. S.

1. Carry your I-20(s) with you when you leave for the U.S.
2. Arrive in the U.S. by your program start date, but no earlier than 30 days before your program start date.
3. Call 816-414-3733 to arrange a ride from the airport to the Seminary.
4. If you have no medical insurance, choose a general travel insurance plan to cover you for the journey to the U.S. You may select a full-coverage plan when you arrive at the seminary.
5. Report to the seminary within 30 days of your program start date (15 days if you are a transfer student within the U.S.).
6. Check-in with the International Student Services office as soon as you arrive. This is mandatory. To schedule a check in appointment, call: 816-414-3720.
   For the Check-In session, bring:
   o Admission letter
   o Passport and visa (as well as your family members’ if they travel with you)
   o Stamped I-20 (same as above)
   o Stamped I-94 Card (same as above)
   o Proof of immunization for Measles, Mumps, Rubella
7. Call this number if you have any problems at the Port of Entry 816-678-9355 and ask them to contact Carol Mack or Dr. David McAlpin