

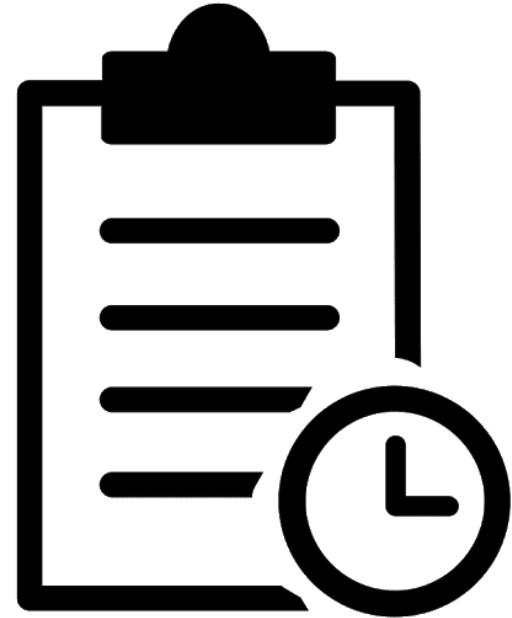


# ***International Student Visa and Entry Process***

***April 28, 2021***

# Today's Agenda

1. Meet your Global Ambassadors
2. Overview of student visa and entry process
3. Scheduling the visa interview appointment
4. The visa interview appointment
  - a. What to expect and how to prepare
  - b. Advice and tips
  - c. Possible outcomes
5. Traveling to and arriving in the U.S.
  - a. What to expect
  - b. How to prepare
6. Resources
7. Q & A



Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)

# Today's Global Ambassadors



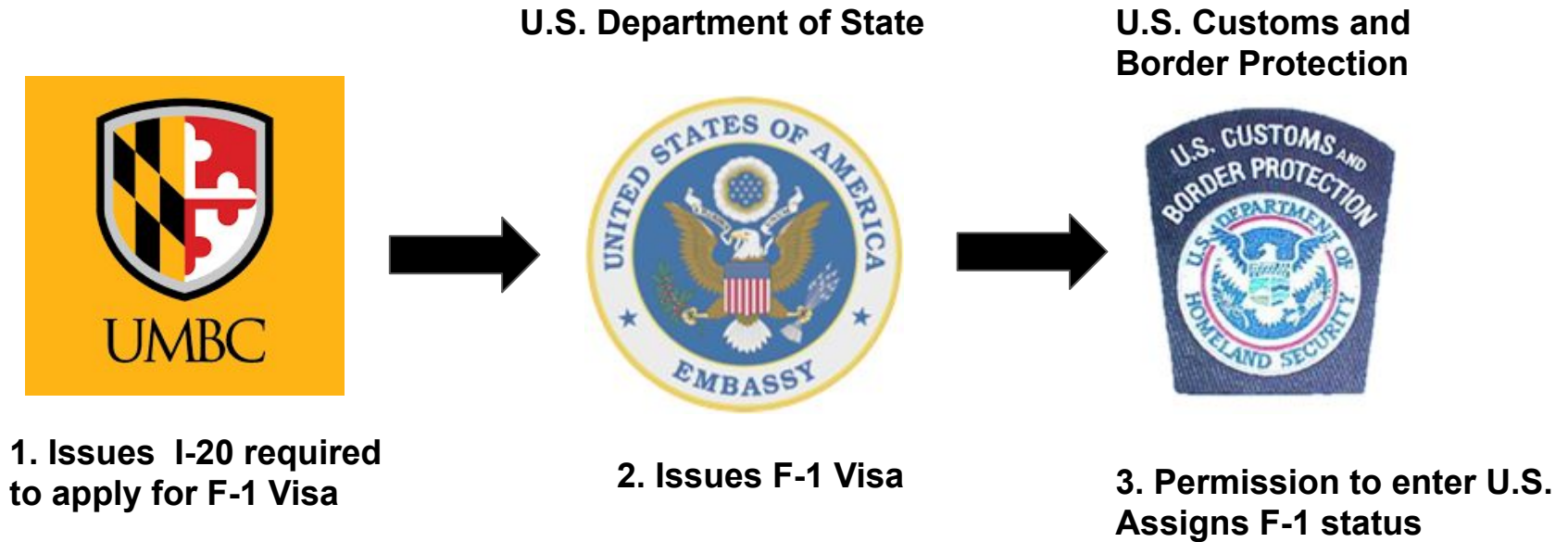
Ashuthosh C.  
M.S. Engineering Management  
Bengaluru, India



Nastaran A.  
B.S. Biology  
Tabriz, Iran

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# The Student Visa Process



Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)

# Form I-20

- Issued by UMBC after admission
  - Program dates, level, study
  - Estimated cost of attendance
  - Permission to apply for F-1 visa
- Required at U.S. embassy and U.S. border
- Most important document for maintaining immigration **status** in future, **not visa**
- DO NOT LOSE

Department of Homeland Security  
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status  
OMB NO. 1651-0038

SEVIS ID: N00XXXXXXX

SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME Trojan	GIVEN NAME Tony	CLASS <b>F-1</b> ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE
PRETENSE NAME Tony Trojan	PASSPORT NAME	
COUNTRY OF BIRTH	COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP	
DATE OF BIRTH	ADMISSION NUMBER	
FORM ISSUE REASON (CONTINUED ATTENDANCE)	LEGACY NAME Tony Trojan	

**SCHOOL INFORMATION**

SCHOOL NAME University of Southern California University of Southern California	SCHOOL ADDRESS Office of International Programs, 300 Student Union, Los Angeles, CA 90089
SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL Raviel Raviel Immigration Advisor	SCHOOL CODE AND APPROVAL DATE 10012501000000 30 JANUARY 2016

**PROGRAM OF STUDY**

EDUCATION LEVEL MAJOR 1 MAJOR 2	MAJOR 1 Playwriting and Screenwriting 30.0504	MAJOR 2 None None
NORMAL PROGRAM LENGTH 24 Months	PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY Proficient	ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTES Student is proficient
PROGRAM START DATE 11 AUGUST 2014	PROGRAM END DATE 11 MAY 2016	

**FINANCIALS**

ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FOR 9 MONTHS	STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR 9 MONTHS
Tuition and Fees \$ 37,599	Personal Funds \$ 0
Living Expenses \$ 2,044	None \$ 0
Expenses of Dependents (if any) None \$ 0	On-campus Employment \$ 57,909
TOTAL \$ 39,643	TOTAL \$ 57,909

**REMARKS**

**SCHOOL ATTESTATION**

I certify under penalty of perjury that the information provided above was entered before I signed this form and is true and correct. I executed this form in the United States after review and evaluation by the United States of me or other officials of the school of the student's application, transcripts, or other records of course taken and proof of financial responsibility, which are required for the execution of this form. This school has determined that the above named student's qualifications meet all standards for admission to the school and the student will be required to pursue a full program of study as defined by 8 CFR 214.2(f)(5). I am a designated school official of the above named school and am authorized to issue this form.

SIGNATURE OF SCHOOL OFFICIAL: Tony Trojan, Immigration Advisor DATE ISSUED: 10 March 2016 PLACE ISSUED: Los Angeles, CA

**STUDENT ATTESTATION**

I have read and agreed to comply with the terms and conditions of my admission and those of my extension of stay. I certify that all information provided on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I certify that I seek to enter or remain in the United States temporarily, and solely for the purpose of pursuing a full program of study at the school named above. I also authorize the named school to release any information from my records needed by DHS pursuant to 8 CFR 214.2(g) to determine my nonimmigrant status. Parent or guardian, and student, must sign if student is under 18.

SIGNATURE OF: Tony Trojan DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN: \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS (city/state or province/country): \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Scheduling visa appointment

1. Pay I-901 SEVIS fee - [www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com)
  - a. Must have Form I-20 to pay the fee
  - b. Current F-1 SEVIS fee \$350
2. Complete DS-160: Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application - [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)
  - a. Must have Form I-20 to pay the fee
  - b. Current DS-160 fee \$160
3. Schedule a visa interview appointment at local U.S. Embassy or Consulate
  - a. Each U.S. embassy or consulate process differs slightly
  - b. Refer to website of specific embassy or consulate for detailed instructions at that post

Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)

# Scheduling visa appointment

- Many countries are experiencing delays or cancellations in visa appointments due to COVID conditions.
- The US State Department has stated the student visas as a priority, and as it is safe to start appointments again, student visas will be given priority
- Monitor Embassy websites for updates, like this one for India:  
<https://in.usembassy.gov/visas/>
- Embassy websites may have directions for Emergency appointments for students, or you can contact the Embassy to ask about emergency appointments if they are open



# The visa interview appointment

## Required documents:

- Form I-20 (signed)
- I-901 SEVIS fee receipt
- DS-160 receipt and barcode page
- Valid passport
- Transcripts from previous study (secondary school, undergraduate degree)
- Test results (TOEFL/iELTS, GRE, SAT etc..)
- Financial documents



Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)



# Global Ambassadors

How far in advance did you schedule your visa appointment?

What documents did you bring with you to your appointment?

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# The visa interview appointment



- U.S. law assumes all applicants intend to immigrate
  - Burden of proof is on you to overcome that assumption
- Must establish strong ties to home country
  - 9 FAM 402.5(E)(1) “Possess residence in a foreign country he or she has no intention of abandoning”
  - “Intends to depart upon completion of the approved activity”
  - Be prepared to explain why you chose UMBC, and your specific degree program.
  - Articulate your plans for after graduation related to returning home
- Consular officers are under pressure to act quickly
  - Conducted in less than three minutes
  - Usually conducted in English

Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)

# Global Ambassadors

Describe the day of your visa appointment?

What was the embassy like where you had your interview?

How long did your interview last?

Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)

# The visa interview appointment

Consular officer may ask:

- What do you intend to do after completing your degree?
- About your family's business in your home country or in the U.S.
- Why UMBC and why this particular program and degree?
- What are your long term career and academic goals?
- Where is UMBC?
- How will you support yourself while in the U.S.?
- How will you support your family in the U.S. or at home if they stay?

Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)

# Global Ambassador

What questions did the consular officer ask you?

When did you learn if you were approved?

What documents did the officer ask for?

Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)

# Tips for a Successful Visa Interview Appointment

- Be prepared to establish ties to home country and nonimmigrant intent
  - Do you or your family own property?
  - Investments or inheritance in home country?
  - Did you apply to the visa lottery in the past?
  - Do you have close relatives who are U.S. citizens or permanent residence?
- Do your research
  - What is UMBC? Where is UMBC? Why UMBC?
  - What do you know about Maryland? Baltimore? Baltimore County?
  - Be prepared to explain your academic program/field of study in layman's terms
  - Why did you choose UMBC and not a different university?
  - What are your career plans and how does this program help you achieve them?

Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)

# Tips for a successful visa interview appointment

- Practice, Practice, Practice
  - Most interviews conducted in English
  - Speak for yourself
  - Be brief and be positive
- Be honest
  - A lie (however imaterial) will likely result in denial
  - Social media question on DS-160
- Be concise and prepared
  - Organize supporting documents in advance
  - Remember, you have 2-3 minutes (if you are lucky)

Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)



# Global Ambassadors

What tips and advice do you have for visa applicants?

What is one thing you know now that you wish you knew before your interview?

Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)

# Visa interview outcomes

1. Approval
  - a. The vast majority of visa applications are approved
2. Failure to demonstrate nonimmigrant intent - INA 214 (b)
  - a. Burden of proof is on applicant
  - b. Credibility and evidence - does your plan make sense?
  - c. May apply again
3. Administrative Processing - INA 221 (g)
  - a. Consular processing - clerical or security (sensitive technology, terror, clearance)
  - b. "Washington-related"
4. Serious Ineligibilities - INA 212 (a)
  - a. Health, previous overstay, security concerns, previous criminal charge, etc.

Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)

# Traveling to the U.S.

- A visa is not a guarantee of entry to the U.S., it is only permission to apply
- F-1 Visa holders can request entry to the U.S. up to 30 days before I-20 start date
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has broad authority at U.S. Ports of Entry
  - All arriving “applicants for admission” are inspected by CBP to determine admissibility



Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)

# Inspection at Port of Entry



Primary inspection

Required documents:

- Passport with at least six months future validity
- Form I-20

Suggested documents:

- Admission letter/academic transcripts
- Evidence of financial support

Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)

# Inspection at Port of Entry

## Secondary inspection



- Not a cause for alarm
- Applicants taken to secondary:
  - SEVIS technical issues
  - Efficiency
  - Extra screening
  - Review documents
  - Officer training issue

Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)

# Global Ambassadors

Tell us about your experience(s) at U.S. Ports of Entry

What kind of questions have you been asked?

Have you ever been taken to secondary inspection?

Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)

# Admission to the U.S.

Assigns I-94 number and admission status:

- F-1
- D/S
- May or may not stamp your passport

I-515A

- Temporary admission
- Must contact a DSO (IES staff) to comply



## Most Recent I-94

Admission (I-94) Record Number : 51415565885

Most Recent Date of Entry: 2017 July 25

Class of Admission : F1

Admit Until Date : D/S

Details provided on the I-94 Information form:

Last/Surname :

First (Given) Name :

Birth Date :

Passport Number :

Country of Issuance : China

Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)



# Port of Entry Tips

- Remain calm
- Keep your documents in your carry on luggage
- Ensure your passport has six months of future validity
  - Present F-1 visa foil, not B-1/B-2
- Do not lie to a CBP officer
- Know how to contact UMBC
  - After hours: 410-455-5555 ask to speak to "ISSS"
- Check your I-94 record

Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)





# Global Ambassadors

What tips do you have for students traveling to the U.S.?

Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)

# Questions?

Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)

# Resources

- NAFSA Ten Points to Remember When Applying for a Student Visa  
<https://www.nafsa.org/professional-resources/browse-by-interest/10-points-remember-when-applying-student-visa>
  - Be sure to checkout the videos at the bottom!
- International Student & Scholar Services- “F-1 Visa Process”  
[www.issu.umbc.edu](http://www.issu.umbc.edu)
- U.S. Department of State Student Visa Page  
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/student-visa.html>
- Your local embassy or consulate is always the best source of information

Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)

# Thank You!

Ask a question in the Q&A box or email the ISSS team at [ies@umbc.edu](mailto:ies@umbc.edu)