



UMBC International Student and Scholar Services

International Student Visa and Entry Process

April 19, 2022



Reminder:

Please **type questions in**
the Q&A not in the chat

Our team is monitoring the Q&A during this session. The chat is for links we share, but it is not monitored for questions.

Your patience is appreciated as we answer your questions!



📅 Agenda 📅

- Working With ISSS
- Meet your Global Ambassadors
- Overview of student visa and entry process
- Scheduling the visa interview appointment
- The visa interview appointment
- What to expect and how to prepare
- Advice and tips
- Possible outcomes
- Traveling to and arriving in the U.S.
 - What to expect
 - How to prepare
- Q&A



Meet the International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) Team



Adam Julian - Director



Dave Anguish - Assistant Director



Adwoa Hanson-Hall - ISSS Advisor



Natalie Lobb - International Student
Support Manager



Mercedes Arias - ISSS Advisor



Sarah Cockcroft - ISSS Advisor



Meet our Global Ambassadors



Chetan - Data Science (MPS)

Level of Study: Graduate

Hometown: Gulbarga, India



Ian - Mechanical Engineering (BS)

Level of Study: Undergraduate

Hometown: Yaounde, Cameroon



About ISSS

International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS), a branch of UMBC's Center for Global Engagement, is dedicated to supporting UMBC's international student and scholar community and helping them achieve their academic, personal, and professional goals. ISSS offers a variety of programs and services to aide students in these endeavors:

- **Immigration Advising** - ISSS helps international students and scholars navigate the U.S. visa process and maintain valid immigration status by providing the guidance, knowledge, and necessary resources.
- **Community Building** - ISSS offers programming designed to help students make important connections within the UMBC community. These opportunities for intercultural exchange and mutual understanding enhance the UMBC international student experience.
- **Work and Internships** - ISSS works with current students and alumni to help them access the many employment and internship opportunities available to them by facilitating the use of benefits such as Curricular Practical Training (CPT), Optional Practical Training (OPT), and other employment authorizations.



Questions? Need assistance?



Contact Us

Before you schedule an appointment or contact us, the answers to most F-1 student questions can be found here:



CPT: Off-Campus
Work Authorization



Social Security Numbers
(SSN)



Travel Outside the US



Request a Letter



OPT: Post-Graduation
Work Authorization



STEM OPT Extension



Extend Your F-1 Program
(I-20)



Change of Immigration
Status



New Students!
Fall 2021 International Student Arrival Guide



Something else?
See below to contact us!

University Center 207

8:30 - 4:30

Mon - Fri

issss.umbc.edu





ISSS Spring 2022 Advising Hours



Live Chat (all times Eastern US Time)

Monday/Thursday: 2:00 – 4:00 PM

Wednesday: 10:00 AM -12:00

Tuesday/Friday 10:00 AM -12:00, 2:00 – 4:00 PM

[Live Chat](#)

► [When should I use Live Chat?](#)



ISSS Advising Appointments

Monday: 10:00 AM- 12:00 noon

Wednesday: 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Thursday: 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

[Book an Advising Appointment](#)

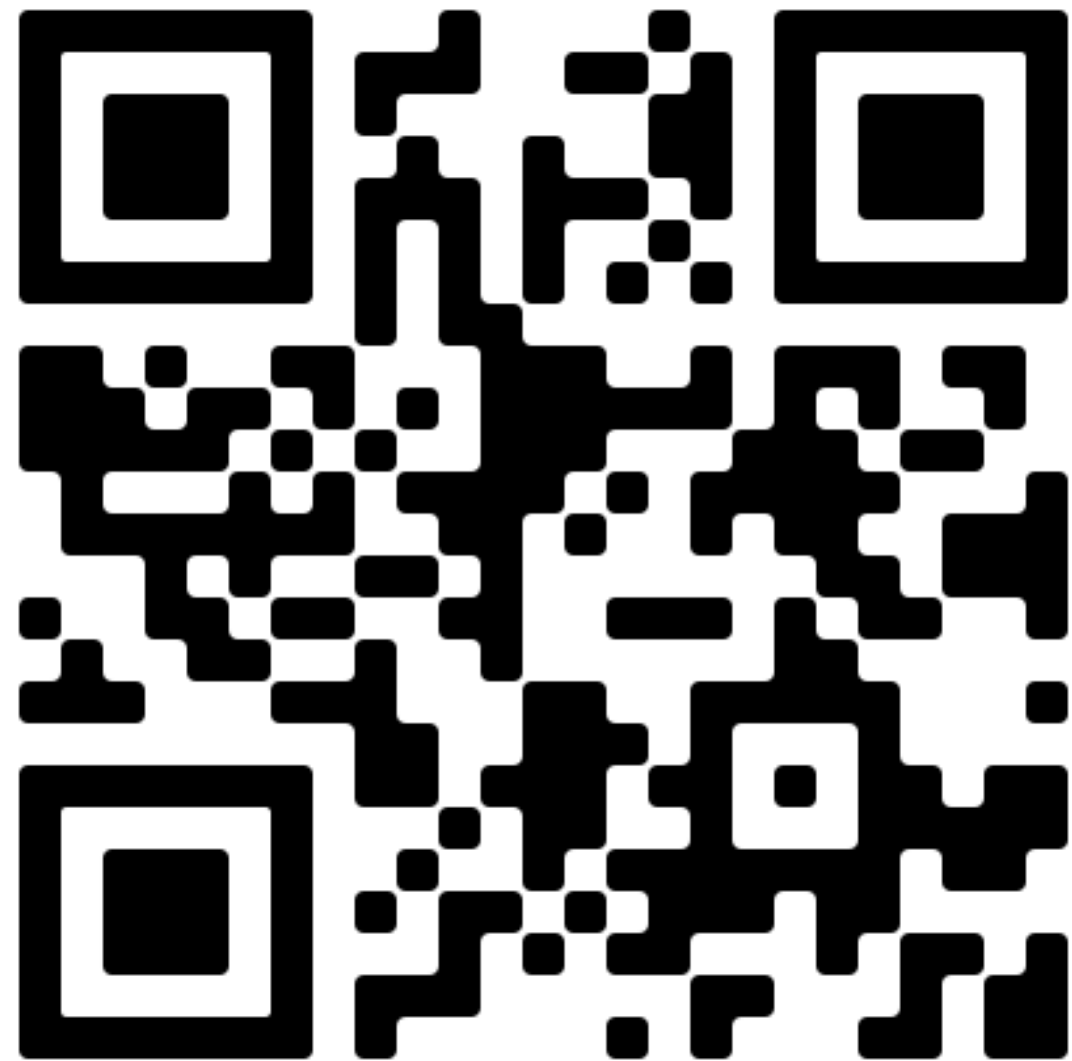
► [When should I book an appointment?](#)

Getting in Touch By Email

If you have a question or issue that you cannot resolve using any of the methods above, please email ISSS. We aim to respond to inquiries within 2 – 3 **business** days. ISSS advisors respond to emails during business hours: Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.



Speak with an Advisor



issss.umbc.edu/contact/



Stay connected with ISSS



ISSS email list:
Read your email!



ISSS Portal:
issportal.umbc.edu



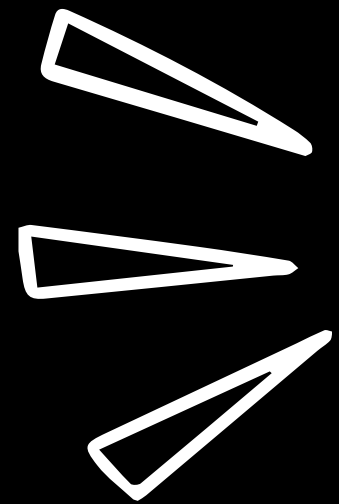
ISSS website:
iss.umbc.edu



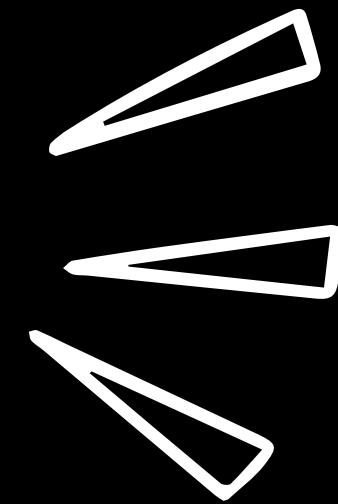
Advising Appointments
iss.umbc.edu/contact/

Answers to most
of your
questions can be
found here!

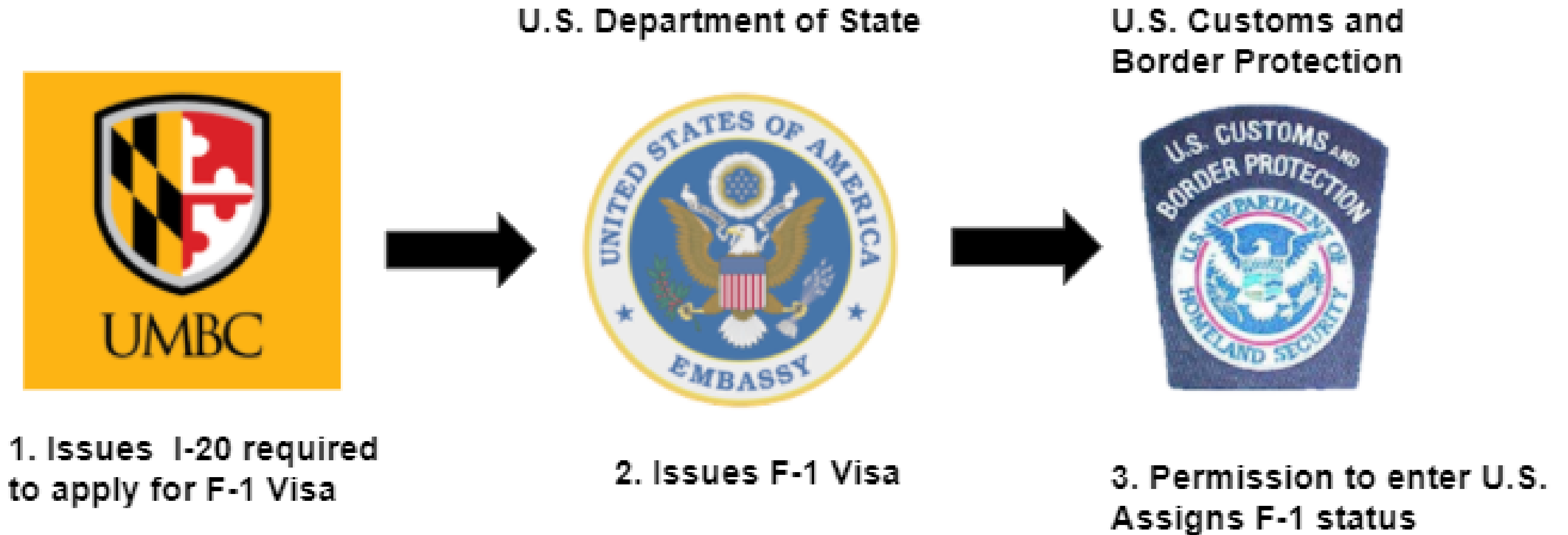




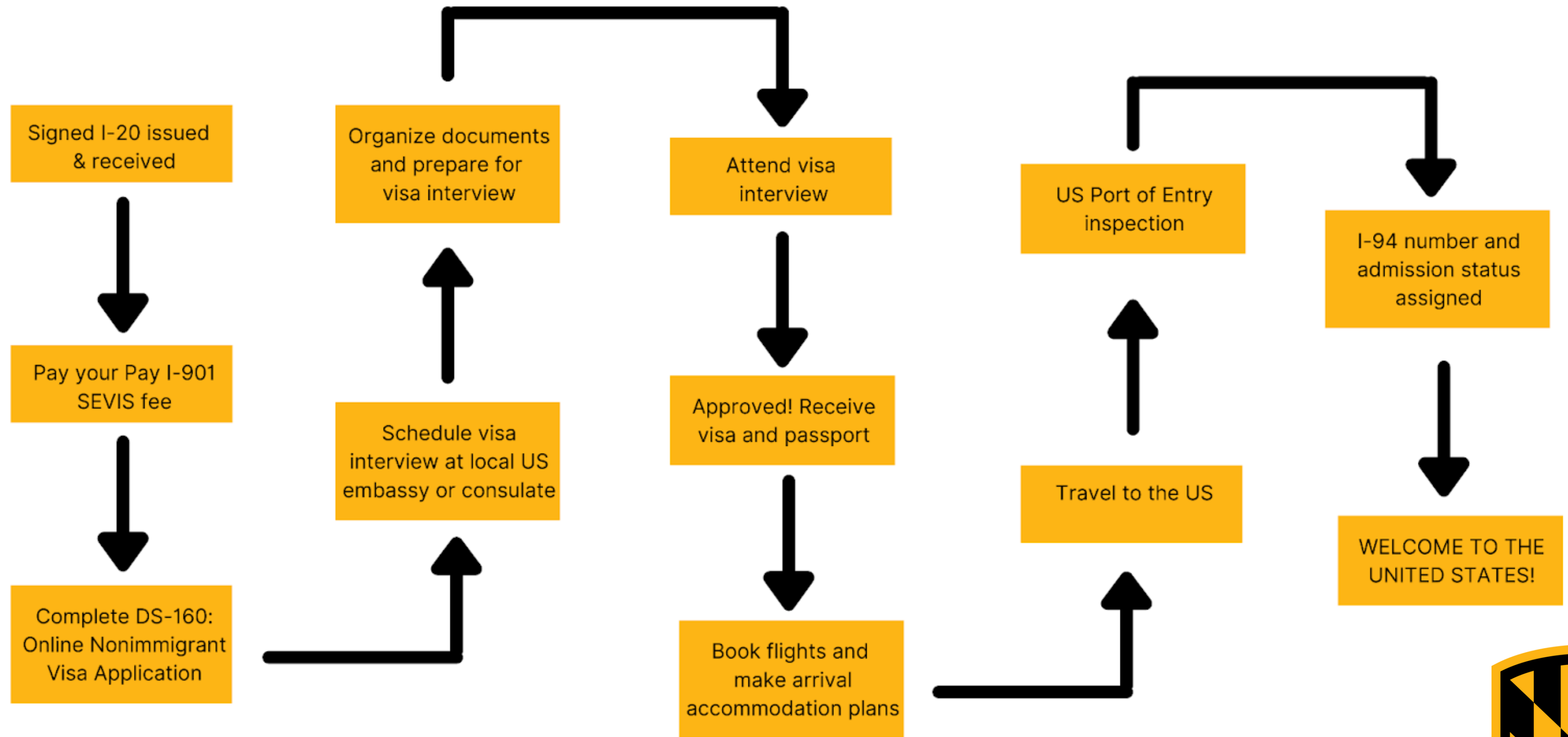
The Student Visa Process



The Student Visa Process



Next Steps: I-20 through Entering U.S.



Form I-20

- Issued by UMBC **after** admission
 - Program dates, level, study
 - Estimated cost of attendance
 - Permission to apply for F-1 visa
 - Electronic - print and sign in blue ink
- 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. 1653-0038

SEVIS ID: N00XXXXXXXXXX

SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME Trojan	GIVEN NAME Tommy	CLASS F-1 ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE
PREFERRED NAME Tommy Trojan	PASSPORT NAME	
COUNTRY OF BIRTH	COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP	
DATE OF BIRTH	ADMISSION NUMBER	
FORM ISSUE REASON CONTINUED ATTENDANCE		LEGACY NAME Tommy Trojan

SCHOOL INFORMATION

SCHOOL NAME University of Southern California University of Southern California	SCHOOL ADDRESS Office of International Services, 300 Student Union, Los Angeles, CA 90089
SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL Ariel Suarez Immigration Advisor	SCHOOL CODE AND APPROVAL DATE 10S214F00291000 30 JANUARY 2008

PROGRAM OF STUDY

EDUCATION LEVEL MASTER'S	MAJOR 1 Playwriting and Screenwriting 50.0504	MAJOR 2 None 00.0000
NORMAL PROGRAM LENGTH 24 Months	PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY Required	ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTES Student is proficient
PROGRAM START DATE 11 AUGUST 2014	PROGRAM END DATE 13 MAY 2016	

FINANCIALS

ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FOR: 9 MONTHS		STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR: 9 MONTHS	
Tuition and Fees	\$ 37,561	Personal Funds	\$ 0
Living Expenses	\$ 20,348	NONE	\$ 0
Expenses of Dependents (0)	\$ 0	NONE	\$ 57,909
NONE	\$ 0	On-Campus Employment	\$ 0
TOTAL	\$ 57,909	TOTAL	\$ 57,909

REMARKS

SCHOOL ATTESTATION

I certify under penalty of perjury that all 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 in the United States by me or other officials of the school of the student's application, transcripts, or other records of courses taken and proof of financial responsibility, which were received at the school prior to the execution of this form. The 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)(6). I am a designated school official of the above named school and am authorized to issue this form.

X
SIGNATURE OF: Ariel Suarez, Immigration Advisor
DATE ISSUED: 16 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 any extension of stay. I certify that all information provided on this form refers specifically to me and 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 214.3(g) to determine my nonimmigrant status. Parent or guardian, and student, must sign if student is under 18.

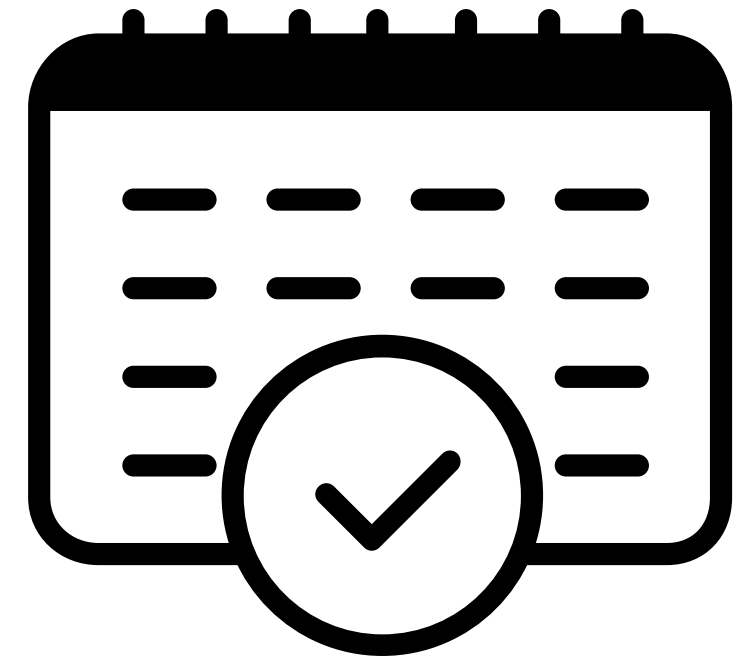
X
SIGNATURE OF: Tommy Trojan
DATE

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



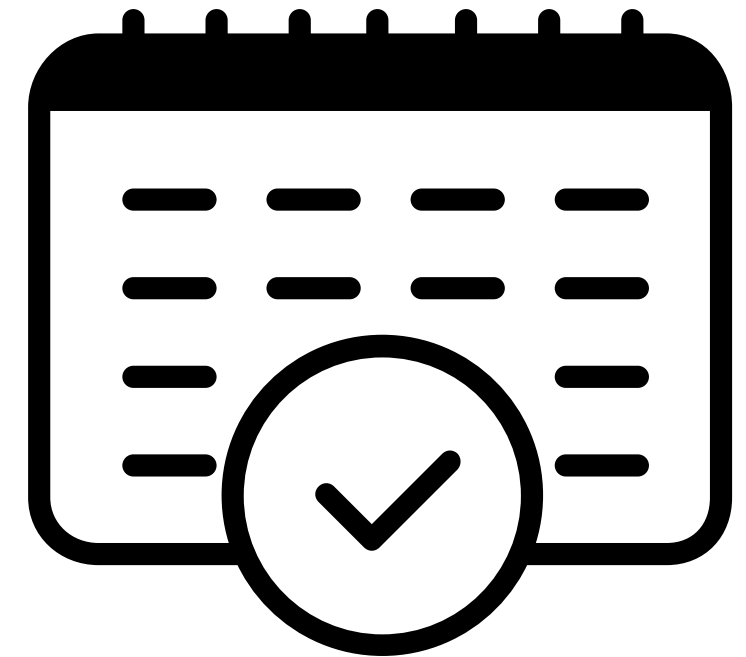
Scheduling Visa Appointment

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



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:

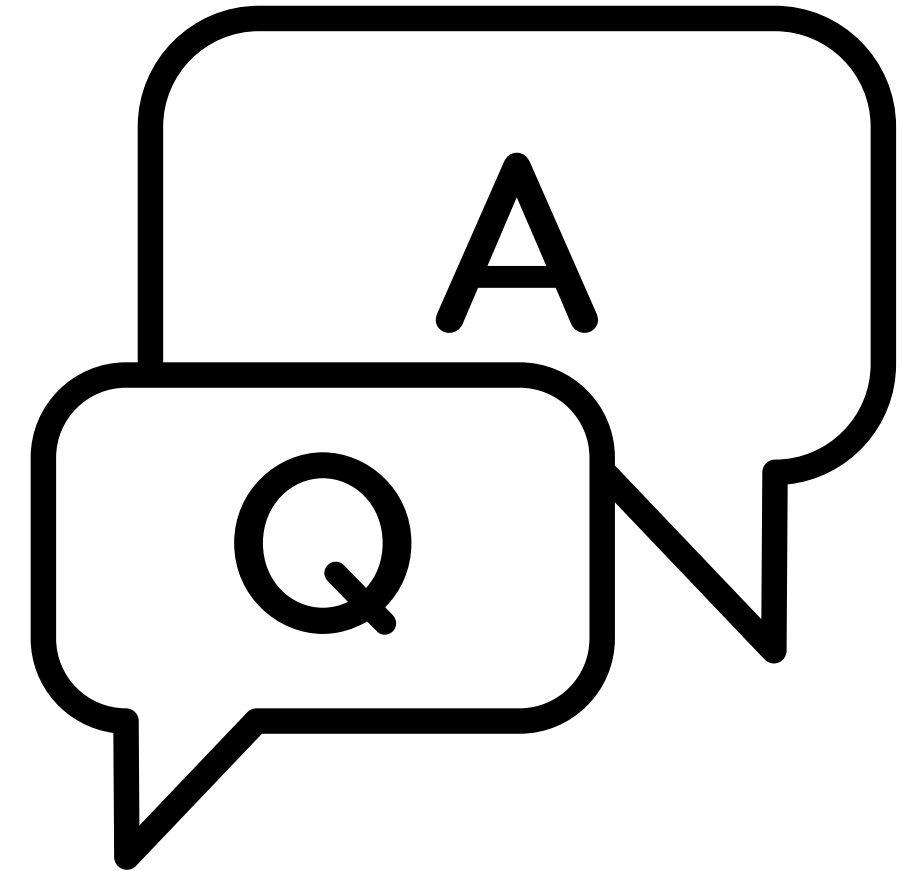
- Form I-20
- I-901 SEVIS fee receipt
- DS-160 receipt and barcode page
- Valid passport
- Transcripts from previous study (secondary school, undergraduate degree)
- Test results (TOEFL/iELTS, GRE, SAT etc..)
- Financial documents



Global Ambassadors

Did you have any difficulty booking your appointment? Do you have any tips or suggestions for future students?

What documents did you bring with you to your appointment?



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

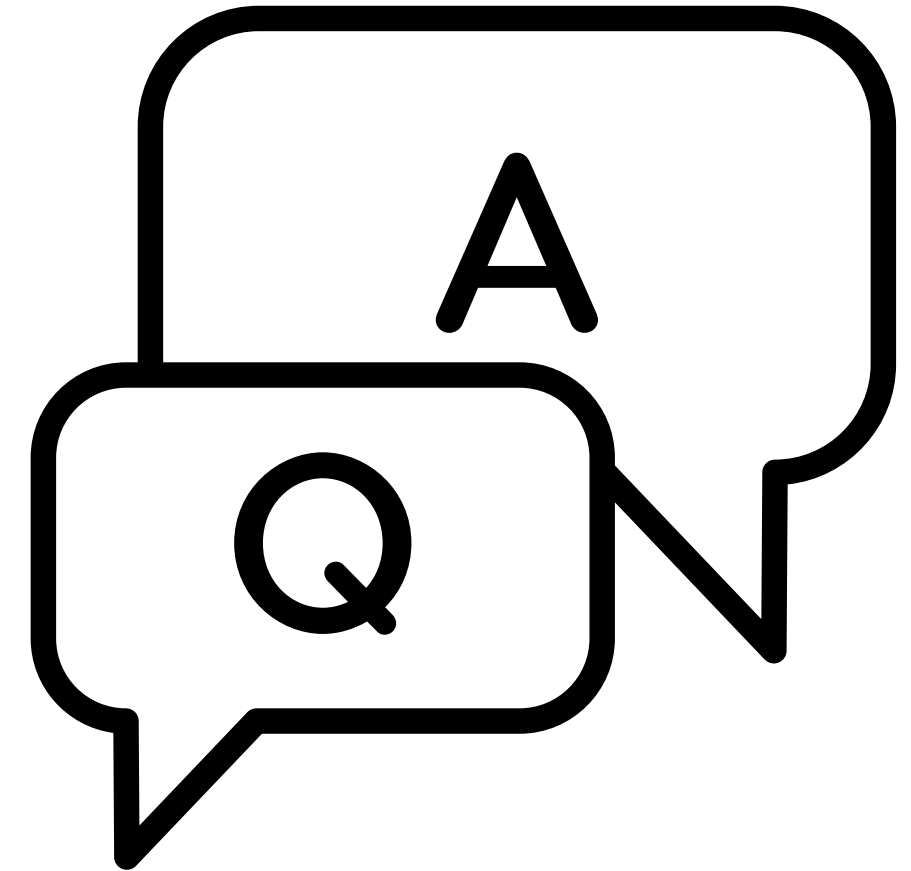


Global Ambassadors

Describe the day of your visa appointment?

What was the embassy like where you had your interview?

How long did your interview last?



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?

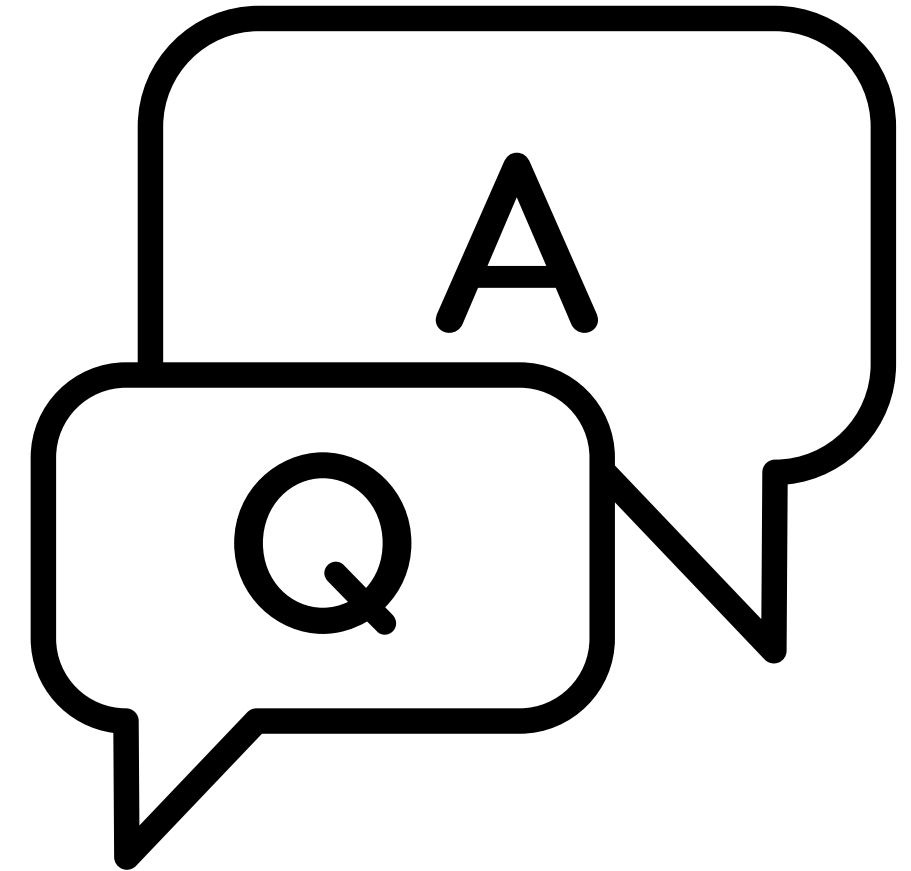


Global Ambassadors

What questions did the consular officer ask you?

When did you learn if you were approved?

What documents did the officer ask for?



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?



Tips for a Successful Visa Interview Appointment

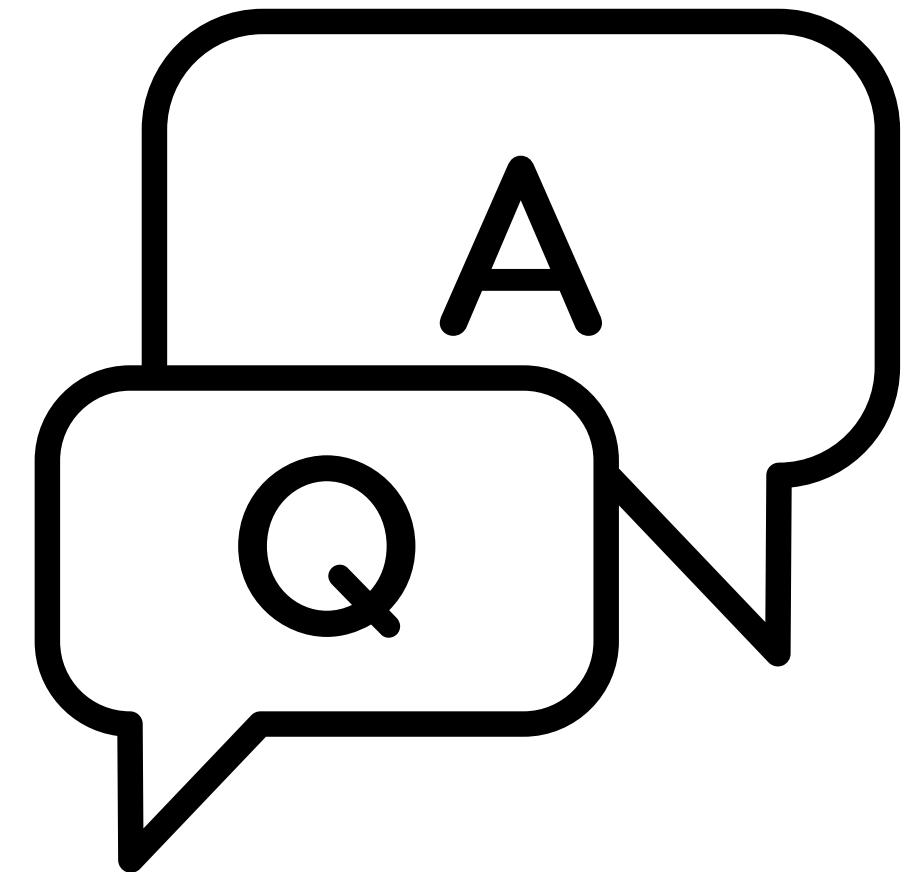
- **Practice, Practice, Practice**
 - Most interviews conducted in English
 - Speak for yourself
 - Be brief and be positive
- **Be honest**
 - A lie (however immaterial) will likely result in denial
 - Social media question on DS-160
- **Be concise and prepared**
 - Organize supporting documents in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



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?



Visa Interview Outcomes

1. Approval

- The vast majority of visa applications are approved

2. Failure to demonstrate nonimmigrant intent - INA 214 (b)

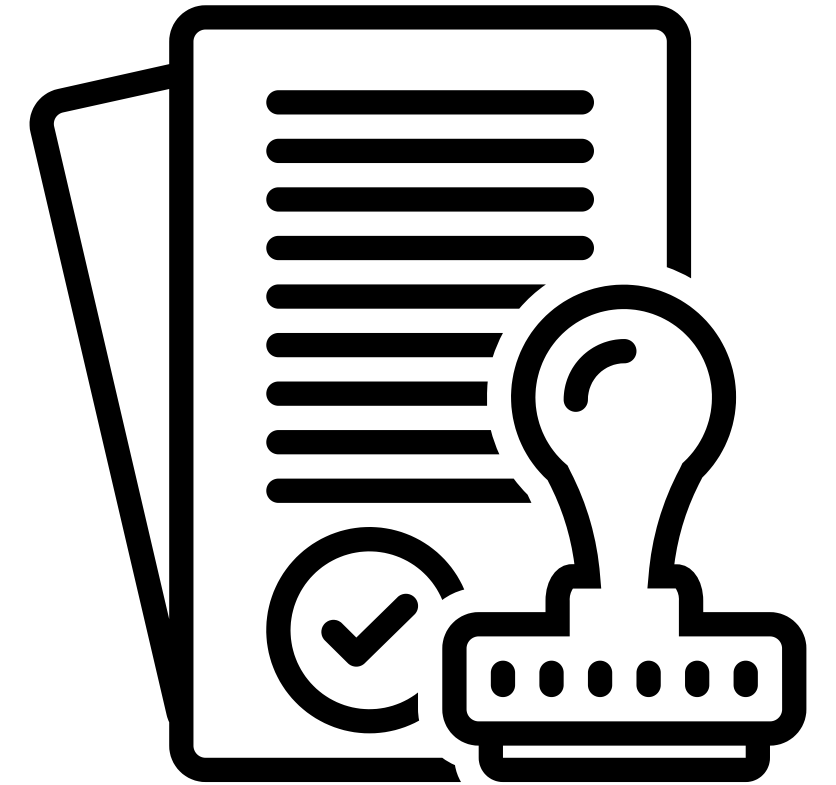
- Burden of proof is on applicant
- Credibility and evidence - does your plan make sense?
- May apply again

3. Administrative Processing - INA 221 (g)

- Consular processing - clerical or security (sensitive technology, terror, clearance)
- “Washington-related”

4. Serious Ineligibilities - INA 212 (a)

- Health, previous overstay, security concerns, previous criminal charge, etc.





Traveling to the U.S.



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
 - January 31st Start Date = January 1st Earliest Entry
 - January 2nd Start Date (GAs only) = December 3rd Earliest Entry
- 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



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



Inspection at Port of Entry

Secondary Inspection

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

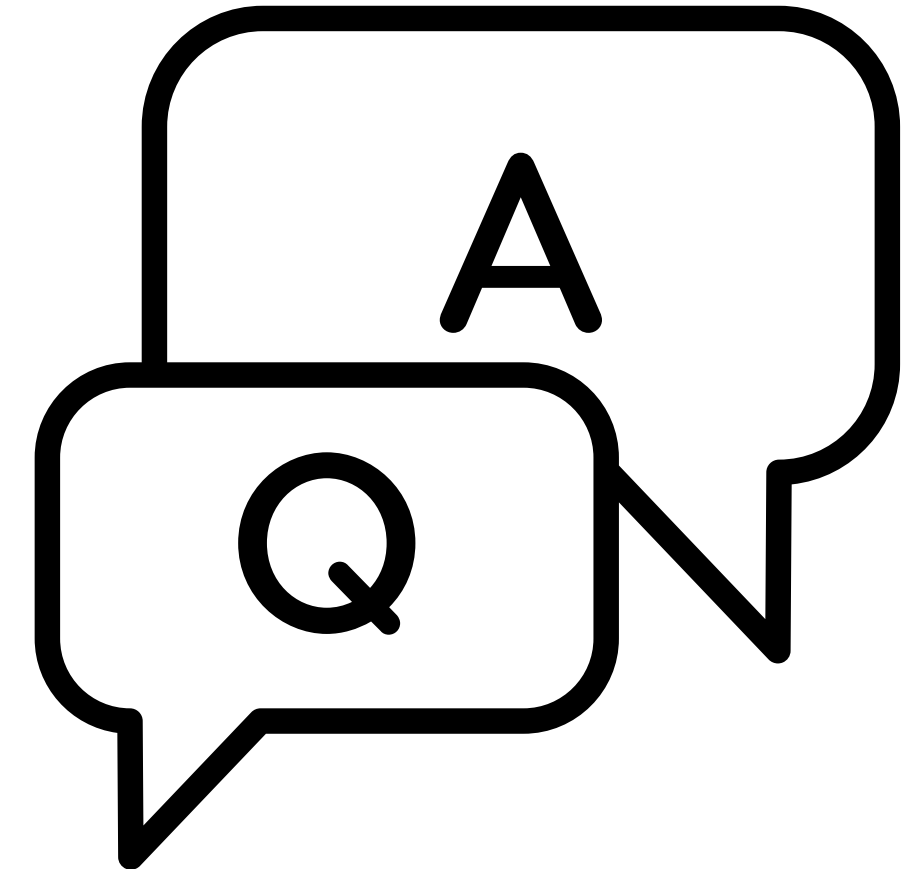


Global Ambassadors

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?




Admission to U.S.

Assigns I-94 number and admission status:

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

I-515A


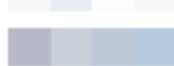


- Temporary admission
- Must contact a DSO (ISSS team) to comply



U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Securing America's Borders

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



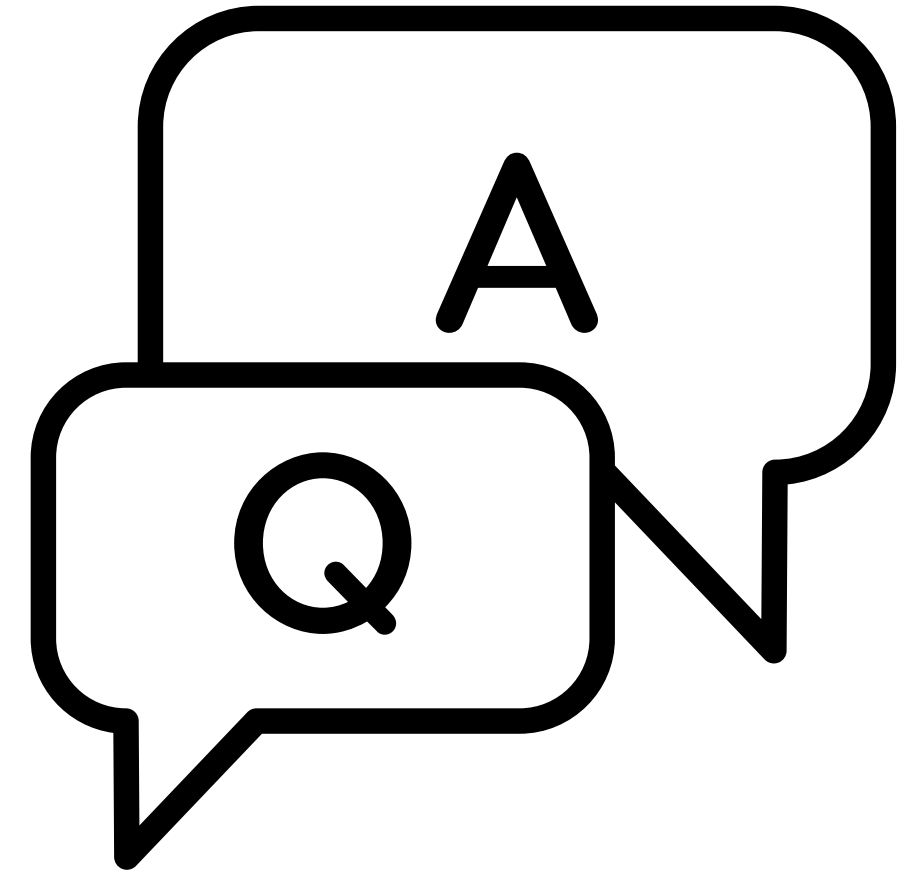
Port of Entry Tips

- Review International Student Arrival Guide
- 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 in case of emergency
 - After hours: 410-455-5555 ask to speak to “ISSS”
- Check your I-94 record



Global Ambassadors

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



COVID -19 Vaccination Requirements

- Proof of vaccination **BEFORE** traveling to the U.S. is now required
- Present vaccination information to airline and/or U.S. Customs and Border Protection, **NOT** ISSS or during visa interview
- Effectively vaccinated = **two weeks after** single dose series, 2 - dose series, or accepted mix and match series 17 days apart
- Exemptions for countries with "limited availability"



Approved Vaccines

- Effectively vaccinated = two weeks after single dose series, 2 - dose series, or accepted mix and match series 17 days apart

Accepted COVID-19 Vaccines

	Vaccines Approved or Authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration	Vaccines Listed for Emergency Use (EUL) by the World Health Organization
Single dose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Janssen/J&J	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Janssen/J&J
2-dose series	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Pfizer-BioNTechModerna	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Pfizer-BioNTechModernaAstraZenecaCovaxinCovishieldBIBP/SinopharmSinovac



Limited Availability Exemption

- Must provide proof plan to get vaccinated within 60 days of arrival.
- UMBC will provide this.

Citizens of the following countries are not exempt:


- China
- India
- Bangladesh
- South Korea

Afghanistan	Djibouti	Libya	Sierra Leone
Algeria	Egypt	Madagascar	Solomon Islands
Angola	Ethiopia	Malawi	Somalia
Armenia	Gabon	Mali	South Sudan
Benin	Gambia	Mozambique	Sudan
Burundi	Ghana	Myanmar	Syrian Arab Republic
Burkina Faso	Guinea	Namibia	Togo
Cameroon	Guinea-Bissau	Nicaragua	Uganda
Central African Republic	Haiti	Niger	United Republic of Tanzania
Chad	Iraq	Nigeria	Vanuatu
Congo	Kenya	Papua New Guinea	Yemen
Cote d'Ivoire	Kiribati	Senegal	Zambia
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Liberia		




Questions about your vaccination?


- Complete U.S. CDC's Travel Assessment

 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDC 24/7: Saving Lives, Protecting People™

Search COVID-19

COVID-19

 Your Health Vaccines Cases & Data Work & School Healthcare Workers Health Depts Science More

Travel Assessment 

Find out what is required to board a flight to the United States – Vaccine Type
(Noncitizen nonimmigrant)

Updated Nov. 10, 2021 Languages ▼ Print

[Back to Start the Quiz](#)

You indicated that you are:

- A noncitizen nonimmigrant

Were you vaccinated with an accepted COVID-19 vaccine?

- [1 dose of Janssen/Johnson & Johnson](#)
- [2 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech, or Moderna](#)
- [2 doses of AstraZeneca, Covaxin, Covishield, BIBP/Sinopharm, or Sinovac](#)
- [A combination of 2 doses of accepted COVID-19 vaccines given at least 17 days apart](#)
- [Full series of an accepted COVID-19 vaccine \(not placebo\) in a clinical trial](#)

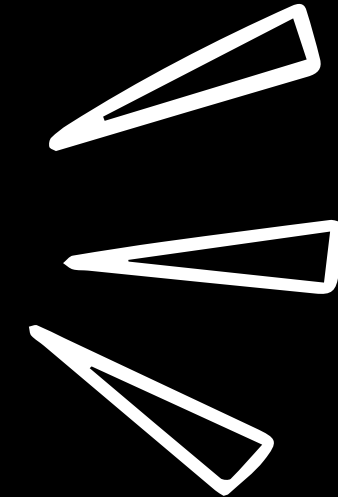
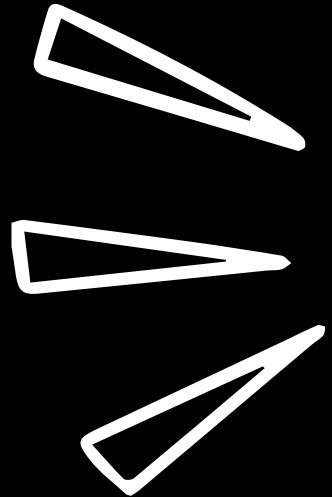


Resources

- NAFSA Ten Points to Remember When Applying for a Student Visa
 - Be sure to checkout the videos at the bottom!
- International Student & Scholar Services- “F-1 Visa Process” www.issc.umbc.edu
- U.S. Department of State Student Visa Page
- Your local embassy or consulate is always the best source of information



Fall 2022 Considerations



Things To Consider For Fall 2022

- Visa or visa interview appointment by early August
- The earliest you can arrive in the US is 30 days before your I-20 program start date
- **Must enter US by August 31st**
- Be informed of travel and vaccine requirements in your home countries as well as in the U.S.
- Full time enrollment required (UG: 12 credits, Graduate: 9 credits)
- Must take at least **one** hybrid or in person class
- UMBC is offering a combination of in person, hybrid and online courses

Transfer Students:

- Students currently in F-1 status in the U.S. transferring to UMBC from another institution
- Please follow regular I-20 transfer guidelines
- Planning to travel home? Already at home and planning to return for Fall 2022?

Contact us: iss.umbc.edu/contact



Entering the US after Deferring To Fall 2022

What happens to your I-20?

- Program dates must be adjusted
- Updated financial documents required if originals are over 6 months old
- SEVIS fee is valid for one year

Graduate Assistants (RA, TA etc)

- Work directly with department on updating your GA offer

Entry to the US

- Fall 2022 semester begins August 31st
- Only able to enter the U.S. 30 days before the start of Fall 2022
- “Earliest Admission Date” section on your I-20
- Fall 2022 semester - August 1st



Deferring Your Admission To a Future Semester

Undergraduate Students:

- Contact UMBC Undergraduate Admissions - admissions@UMBC.edu

Graduate Students:

- Submit a Deferral of Admission Form
- Contact Graduate Admissions with additional questions: gradschool@umbc.edu

Your I-20 must be adjusted to reflect your new start date



Requesting a UMBC I-20



1

**LOG IN TO
ISSS PORTAL
WITH
MYUMBC
CREDENTIALS**



2

**SELECT "NEW
F-1 STUDENT
REQUEST"**



3

**UPLOAD
REQUIRED
DOCUMENTS:
FINANCIALS +
PASSPORT.**



4

**RECEIVE
SIGNED
ELECTRONIC I-
20**



5

**PAY SEVIS
FEE +
SCHEDULE
VISA
APPOINTMENT**



Funding Your Studies

Undergraduate

- Merit scholarships available based on GPA, test scores, application materials
- Contacted directly by Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships after admission
- scholarships.umbc.edu

Graduate

- Funding in the form of Graduate Assistantships (RA,TA)
- Not guaranteed and very competitive
- Funding is up to your specific department
- Contact information for your department: [UMBC Graduate Programs](#)



Upcoming Events

A decorative graphic consisting of two groups of three white triangles. The group on the left has triangles pointing right towards the text, while the group on the right has triangles pointing left towards the text. The triangles are arranged in a slightly curved, fan-like pattern.

Upcoming Information Sessions

Admitted Undergraduate Student Information Session

Tuesday, April 26th at 9:00am

Coming in June:

Fall 2022 Predeparture Orientation

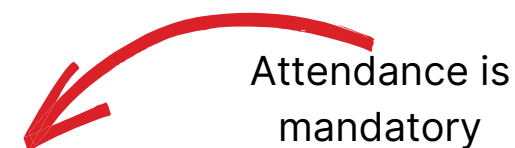
Coming in July:

Fall 2022 Predeparture Orientation

Coming in August:

International Student Orientation Session 1 + Session 2

Wednesday, August 24th at 9:00am + Friday, August 26th at 9:00am



Attendance is
mandatory



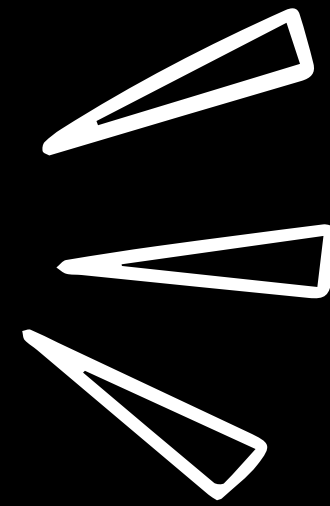
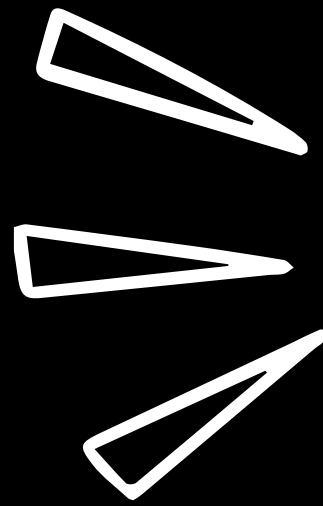
[Check out our new student arrival guide.](#)



Ask

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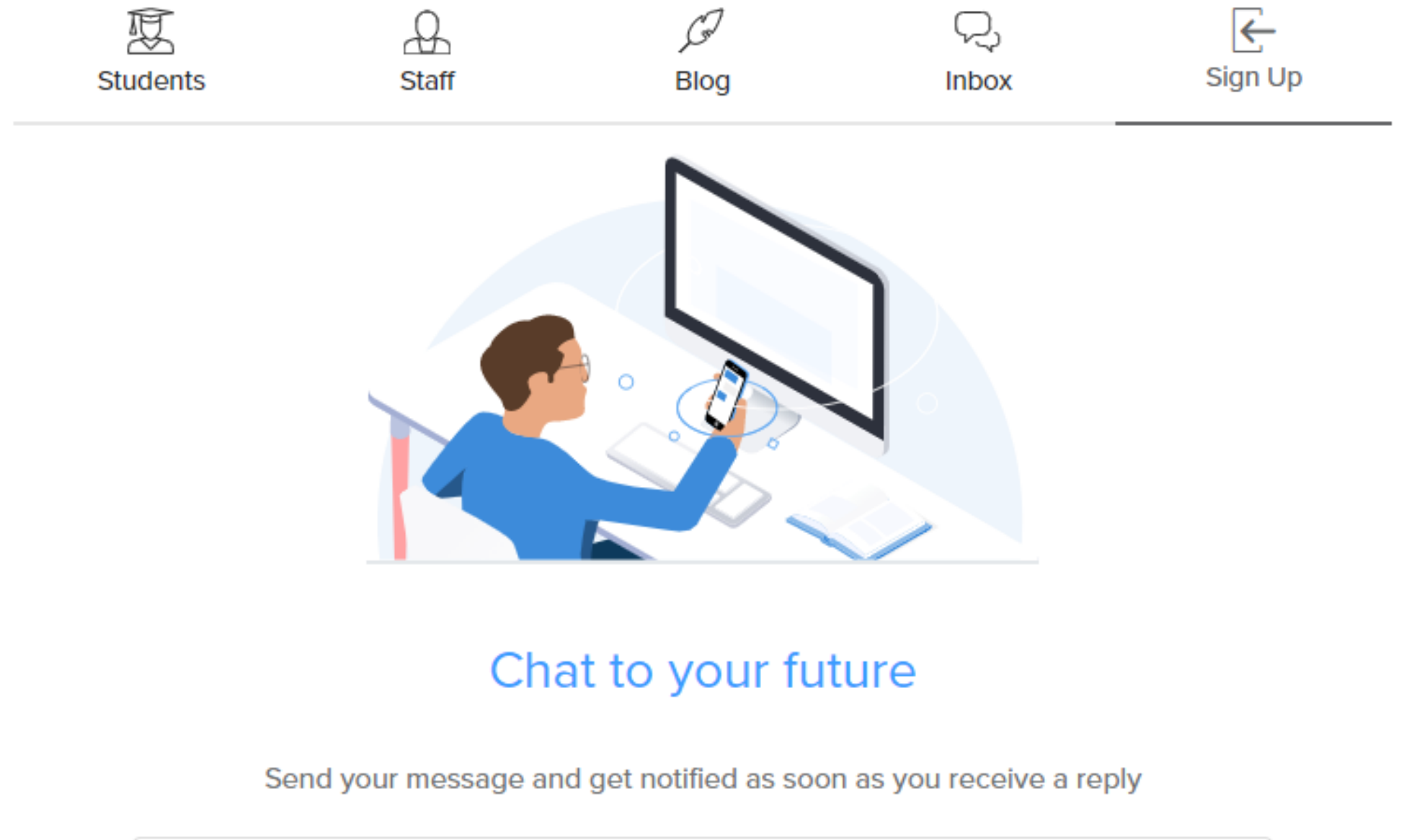
Student!



Ask a current student on Unibuddy!

Have a question about student life or navigating UMBC?

- Global Ambassadors answer your questions about student life and the campus experience at UMBC!
- There are 11 student ambassadors from different home countries, areas of study and with a wide variety of personal interests



[Click here to meet and chat with the Ambassadors!](#)



How Global Ambassadors can help

Global Ambassadors can:

- Discover more about UMBC campus life
- Connect you with UMBC resources
- Learn about US & UMBC classroom culture and student life in the US!

Global Ambassadors cannot:

- Provide immigration support
- Help you get a job or provide CPT/OPT advice
- Offer academic advising or pick your classes for you

✧ ...BUT they can connect you with teams who will help you with these things! ✧



Meet other new students on Unibuddy Community!

Join the Fall 2022 UMBC Admitted Students group

Chat with other admitted students as well as our UMBC Global Ambassadors.
Get to know your classmates and talk about student life at UMBC!

How to join:

- Create your Unibuddy account. **Use this link!**
 - You must create your account with the email account you provided UMBC when you applied. If you provided multiple email addresses when you applied, make sure you try all options

Is there a Unibuddy Community app or can I access via web browser?


- After you set up your account, You can access the group anytime via web browser here or **download the Unibuddy Community app!**
 - Download Unibuddy Community on the Google Play Store here
 - Download Unibuddy Community on the Apple App Store here

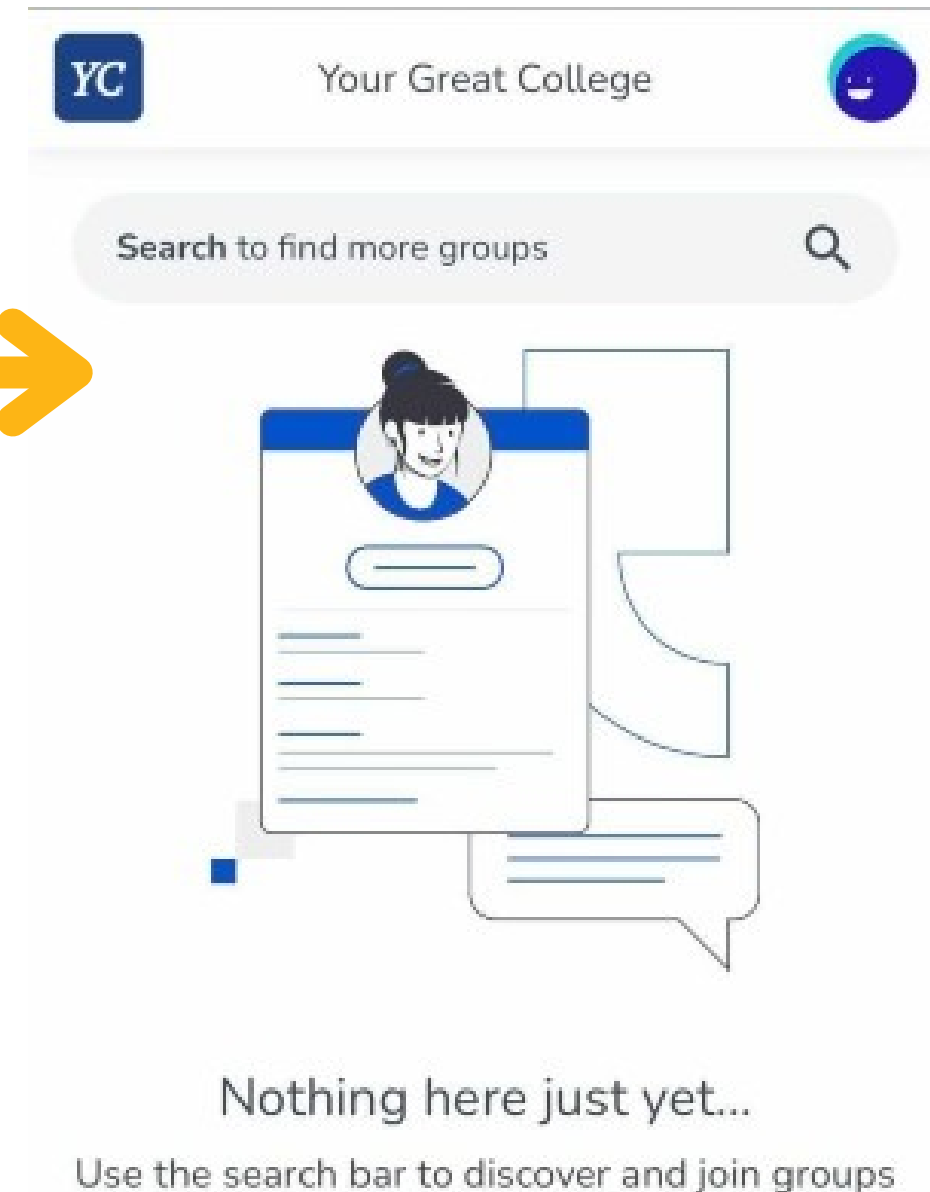


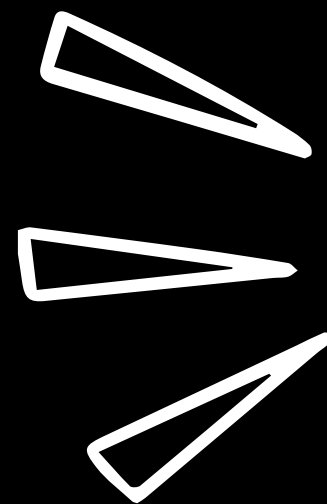
Getting started with Unibuddy Community

Using the UMBC Admitted Students Unibuddy Community group

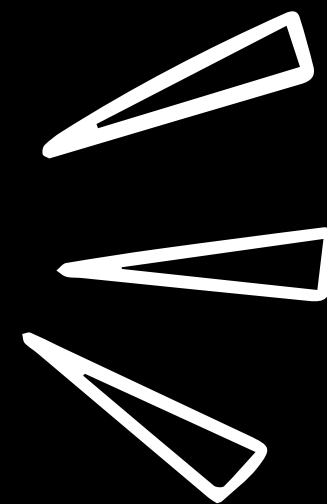
How to start chatting:

- After you create your account and accept the invite to the group and are logged in you will see this screen. 
- To see all the channels, select the **search** bar
- Choose a channel and **start chatting with other students!**





Q&A



Follow us on social media!

We're online! Follow us to learn about ISSS activities.



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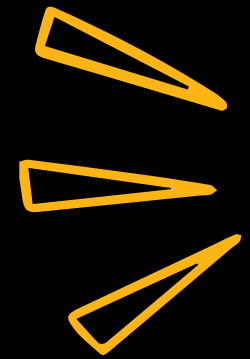
Instagram:
@umbc_iss

✧ **Keep up** with events at ✧
✧ UMBC ✧





Congratulations!



We look forward to seeing you in Fall 2022!

