



INTERNATIONAL SERVICES OFFICE
UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER
209 Morey Hall, Rochester, NY 14627
Telephone: (716) 275-2866, Fax: (716) 244-4503
E-mail: questions@iso.rochester.edu
Web Site: <http://www.iso.rochester.edu>

TIPS FOR APPLYING FOR A STUDENT VISA

NAFSA: Association of International Educators offers the following tips when applying for a student visa:

Ties to Your Home Country: Under U.S. law, all applicants for non-immigrant visas are viewed as intending immigrants unless 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 hometown, homeland, or current place or residence: job, family, financial prospects that you own or will inherit, investments, etc. You may be asked 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, and there is no magic explanation or single document, certificate or letter that can guarantee visa issuance.

English: Anticipate that the visa interview, should there be one, 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. Do not bring parents or family members with you to the interview. The consular official will want to interview you, not your family. A negative impression is created if you are not prepared to speak on your own behalf.

Academics: Know the academic program to which you have been admitted and how it fits into 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 U.S. consular official that you are indeed planning to study, rather than to immigrate. You should be able to explain how studying in the U.S. relates to your future professional career **when you return home**.

Be concise: Because of the volume of applications received, all consular officers are under considerable 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 or two 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.

Supplemental Information: It should be clear at a glance 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 at best.

Not All Countries are the same: Applicants from countries suffering economic problems or from countries where many students have remained in the U.S. 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 U.S.

Financial Documentation: If you are receiving funding from the University of Rochester, your home university, your employer, or from the government, be prepared to present the appropriate letters or

