



**The information below provides an overview of the immigration steps you can begin to work on today. [Click here for a PDF version.](#)**

**Step 1. Pay your [Enrollment Deposit](#)**

**Step 2. Submit your Undergraduate or Graduate Student I-20 Request Form**

After receiving your Admission Letter, Anna Maria College will send a **Next Steps** email that will provide an I-20 request form. Your Bank Statement and Passport should be uploaded with the form. The bank statement should show that you have access to the funding needed to complete your first year of studies at the College. A scanned copy can be sent to [internationaladmissions@annamaria.edu](mailto:internationaladmissions@annamaria.edu) or uploaded with the request form.

**Step 3. Obtain an Immigration Document**

Our Enrollment office will issue your immigration document (I-20). This generally takes 2-3 weeks. We will add the completed document to your admission portal so that you can access this when it is completed. Visa appointments can take time. Please use [this link](#) to check the processing time at various embassies and consulates. Bank Statements (Certificate of Finance) should be dated within three (3) to five (5) months of the start term (March if you are starting in Fall, September if you are starting in Spring). The deadline to process an I-20 for the spring term is **December 1**. The deadline to process an I-20 for the fall term is **July 1**. Documents that arrive after these deadlines will likely require that we change your offer of admission to the next academic term.



#### Step 4. Apply for the Student Visa

After you receive your I-20, you will be ready to apply for your U.S. Visa. You must apply for your visa well in advance of your arrival. In some cases, it can take several weeks (and occasionally longer) to obtain the student visa. To apply for a U.S. visa, you will need to present the following documents at the U.S. embassy or consulate nearest to you:

1. Your Form I-20
2. The SEVIS Fee receipt ([Click Here to Pay](#))
3. A copy of your financial support documents, i.e. evidence that you have sufficient funds to meet the expenses of studying at Anna Maria, e.g. bank statement.
4. A valid passport
5. Passport-size photographs
6. Completed visa applications forms (Visa application forms are available on individual consular Web sites.)

An application fee and an interview will also be required.

#### Special Notes

- The U.S. Department of State has instructed U.S. consulates that they may issue an F-1 visa no more than 120 days in advance of the program start date. However, an application for an F-1 visa can be submitted more than 120 days in advance of the I-20 start date in order to accommodate long processing times. Check the website of the consulate where you will apply for a visa for detailed instructions.
- You must pay particular attention to the starting date noted on this document, as you must enter the U.S. by this date. If you cannot enter the U.S. by this date, contact the Office of the Admissions.
- In addition, you may enter the U.S. no more than 30 days prior to the starting date noted on the I-20 Form. If you try to enter the U.S. more than 30 days before the start date on your I-20, you may not be permitted to enter the U.S.
- Your I-20 will be uploaded in your admissions portal when completed. The I-20 is required when applying for an F-1 student visa at an American Embassy or Consulate and for entry into the United States. This I-20 has been produced by Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) and is an acknowledgement that your record is in the SEVIS system. The form includes your SEVIS ID number, which is the number in the upper right-hand corner above the bar code (usually starts with an N).
- All new students coming in F-1 status must pay a \$350 SEVIS fee prior to applying for your visa. The SEVIS payment (I-901) fee can be made [here](#). Please save a copy of the payment fee as you will need this along with your I-20 to enter the US.



- You were sent a letter with your Form I-20. Please read the letter in its entirety as it contains important information regarding F-1 visa processes and procedures. [Click Here](#)

### Canadian Students

- Canadian citizens do not need visas to study or participate in an exchange program in the U.S. However, Canadian students do need to obtain an I-20 (or DS-2019) Certificate of Eligibility from the university, school or exchange program they plan to attend. Upon receipt of the I-20 (or DS-2019), the student will be registered with SEVIS, the student tracking system, will be assigned a SEVIS number, and will be required to pay a registration fee. When crossing the border to begin their study or exchange program in the United States, the student will need to provide the Officer at the port of entry:
  - A Canadian passport;
  - The original I-20 (or DS-2019) certificate;
  - Proof that the SEVIS fee has been paid;
  - Proof of ability to pay school fees and living expenses in the United States; and
  - Proof of ties to Canada.

### Step 5. Fill Out the [Transfer Release Form](#) (for International Students with a valid F-1 Visa in place)

The following are additional requirements necessary to transfer your F-1 Visa:

- You must currently be maintaining F-1 status
- You must have an offer of admission from Anna Maria College
- If you already graduated or completed OPT, you must still be within your 60-day grace period



## Step 6. Prepare for your Visa Interview

Bring copies of your acceptance letter, financial aid offer, passport and I-20. You will need these for the interview. You can access them in your admission portal. You should have also paid your I-901 SEVIS fee before your visa interview. If you have not paid the I-901 fee, **here is the link** with information about how to pay the I-901 fee for your F-1 visa.

### F1 Visa Interview Dos:

- **Do bring all required documentation.** According to the **US State Department**, you are required to bring the following:
  - Passport valid for travel to the United States
  - Nonimmigrant Visa Application, Form DS-160 confirmation page
  - Application fee payment receipt, if you are required to pay before your interview.
  - Photo – You will upload your photo while completing the online Form DS-160. If the photo upload fails, you must bring one printed photo in the format explained in the photograph requirements.
  - Form I-20 Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status
  - Acceptance Letter
  - Financial Aid Offer (if applicable).

You may be required to present additional documentation. The State Department advises checking with the embassy or consulate where you will interview to verify required documentation. Additional documentation may include:

- Transcripts, degrees, or certificates
- Standardized test scores. Please make the Consular staff aware that we are a test optional school. There is test optional [information at this link](#).
- Proof of your intent to depart the USA upon completion of your study. It is extremely important that you make clear that you have NO plans to stay in the US after you finish school.
  - You can do this in a variety of ways. Some include simple statements
    - “My family needs me to assist in their business as soon as I return.” (If your family has a business))
    - “My work in my program is directly tied to my interest in a career in your major. Business, Health Science, Criminal Justice, Law, Medicine, Social Work, Psychology, Nursing, etc. I feel that I can best do this in my home country.”
- Proof of how you plan to pay for your study (bank statement, sources of income, etc.)



- **Do re-read your visa application before the interview to remember your answers.**

It is easy to get flustered and forgetful in the moment of the interview, so taking some time to review your application beforehand will help you to stay on track when you answer questions.

- **Do practice.**

You can expect your interview to cover questions about your study plans, college of choice, academic capability, personal finances, and post-graduate plans. Ask a friend or relative to do a practice interview with potential questions. It will help you to be more relaxed and confident on the big day.

- **Do clarify any doubts you have about your program.**

Be prepared to answer specific questions about your program of study. If you have any doubts, contact your admissions department before you go in for your interview. Spend time learning a little more [about Anna Maria College](#). Be able to state that you learn best in a small school. That our location near Boston and Worcester (the second largest city in New England) is attractive to you. That the college's location also provides access to students at 5 other colleges in the Worcester area. Learn more about the campus by [completing a Virtual Tour](#).

- **Do tell the truth.**

One of the top reasons for F1 visa rejection is presenting untrue information. Avoid temptations to gloss over details or exaggerate to make your case more appealing.

- **Do be prepared to make further payment for your Visa if necessary.**

There is a chance you will be charged additional fees for your visa. Be prepared with a check or credit card in the event that you need to make a payment.

- **Do stay calm and take your time.**

A great way to stay calm is to take a deep breath each time you are about to start speaking. Deep, conscious breaths will keep you centered and grounded throughout the process.



## And a few Dont's

- **Don't be too casual**

Wear proper business attire for your interview, as if you are interviewing for a job. It will show you are professional, serious, and prepared.

- **Don't stress out.**

Find a way to stay calm and centered and the whole process will be a lot easier! Prepare your documentation well in advance to avoid last minute scrambling, and be sure to review all of your information. Get to bed early the night before and leave with plenty of time to arrive early to your embassy or consulate.

- **Don't rely on the internet for the most up-to-date information.**

This might sound strange, but visa requirements change frequently. Although you will find useful resources online, it is important to contact your embassy or consulate for the most up-to-date requirements.





## Questions?

### **Please contact one of our DSOs (Designated School Official)**

Sarah Curry at [Scurry@annamaria.edu](mailto:Scurry@annamaria.edu) – Undergraduate or Graduate

John Delaney at [JDelaney@Annamaria.edu](mailto:JDelaney@Annamaria.edu) – Continuing Students

John Hamel at [jhamel@Annamaria.edu](mailto:jhamel@Annamaria.edu) – Undergraduate, Graduate or Continuing

John McLaughlin at [JMcLaughlin@annamaria.edu](mailto:JMcLaughlin@annamaria.edu) – Undergraduate or Graduate

Kelley Katinas at [ktarani@annamaria.edu](mailto:ktarani@annamaria.edu) – Continuing Students

### **International Arrival Form**

The college will post information for International Arrivals after December 1st. This information will assist you with transportation to the campus if needed. There is also [public transportation](#) available from the largest area National/International airport, Boston Logan International. An arrival assistance form will also be posted in August to assist students arriving to campus. For a full list of important Spring Academic Dates, please see the [Academic Calendar](#).