

Tips for Your Visa Interview

Your visa interview will likely be very short (typically 3-5 minutes) and will be conducted in English. It is important to stay calm, be polite, speak clearly and prepare for the questions that you may be asked. You should dress well and have a positive attitude when speaking with the consular officer. During the short interview, there are a few things that you must be able to articulate to the consular officer:

1. You are a bona fide student and your primary reason for entering the U.S. is to study.
2. You are able to pay for your education in the United States.
3. You plan to return to your home country after you complete your studies.
4. You do **not** plan to permanently immigrate to the United States.

Some questions that you should think about before your interview are:

1. Why do you want to study in the U.S., and more specifically at UW-La Crosse?
2. What subjects do you plan to study and why?
3. How will you pay for your studies?
4. How long do you expect to study at UWL?
5. How will a degree from UW-La Crosse help you with your future goals?
6. Do you have employment plans in your home country after you graduate? What are they?
7. What other ties to you have to your home country? (e.g. family, property, community, etc.)

Be sure to bring the following items with you for your visa interview. Also check with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate for other requirements in your country (www.usembassy.gov).

- Form I-20** (sign the form under Item 11)
- A passport valid for at least six months**
- Your UWL admission letter**
- Two 2x2 inch (5x5cm) photographs**
- Completed visa application**
- A receipt for the visa application fee**
- 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.
- Proof of funding** Financial evidence that shows you have sufficient funds to cover your tuition and living expenses for at least the first year of study. Your I-20 shows the estimated cost of study for your program. The funding source/s listed on your I-20 should match the documents you bring to your visa interview.

It is also important to begin the process of applying for a visa as soon as you can. In some cases, it can take several weeks for your visa to be processed if approved. You can apply for a visa up to 120 days before the start of the semester.