**PREPARING FOR YOUR VISA INTERVIEW**

Please read this document for important information concerning your visa interview.

**You must do the following before your visa interview:**

* **Pay the $350 SEVIS fee online** ([www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com)). The SEVIS fee must be paid no less than 3 days prior to your visa interview. Print the payment confirmation page.
* **Prepare the following documents** which are required for the visa interview:
* DS-160 confirmation page with barcode – make sure the page is printed clearly and not wrinkled, the visa officer will need to scan the bar code.
* Official passport – *must be valid for at least 6 months from your planned date of entry to the US. At least one full page in the passport should be blank (no stamps).*
* **ORIGINAL** I-20 form – must be signed by the student. *Students who attend the interview with a copy of the I-20 may be turned away or experience significant delays in receiving a visa.*
* $350 SEVIS fee payment confirmation page
* Visa Application Fee payment confirmation number - or receipt
* Official university transcript – must be in original sealed envelope
* Original financial and/or bank statements (same as the statements that were provided to the SUNY campus for I-20 issuance)
* Turkish Kimlik
* Letter from the SUNY campus stating the student is enrolled in a dual diploma program (admission letter, typically issued with the I-20 form), along with any documentation/letter received from the SUNY campus in support of your visa application.
* TOEFL score report (photocopy is sufficient) – not required, recommended.
* Any information or documents that demonstrate your intent to return to Turkey after finishing your degree.

**Please read below for important information regarding your visa appointment:**

* Students should appear at the Consulate or Embassy (as specified in your appointment confirmation email) **approximately 30 minutes** **before** their scheduled interview time.
* For addresses or directions to the Consulate or Embassy:
	+ Consulate in Istanbul: <http://istanbul.usconsulate.gov/location_info.html>
	+ Embassy in Ankara: <http://turkey.usembassy.gov/contact.html>

**Know what to expect during the interview:**

* You are enrolled in an English language program, therefore you should interview in English.
* The interview will be very short (probably 2–3 minutes).
* You will be interviewed alone. No family members, friends or representatives can be present.
* You will be asked short, rapid questions.
* The consular officer will make a decision as soon as the interview is finished.

**Know what the consular officer is looking for during the interview:**

* Evidence that you have the ability and intention to be a full-time student at your SUNY campus
* Evidence that you have adequate financial resources to pay for your educational and living expenses
* Evidence that you intend to go to the U.S. only to study— not to work illegally
* Evidence that you do not intend to immigrate to the U.S.

**Know what the consular officer expects from you:**

* Honesty
* Short and direct answers, not a memorized speech
* English language skills to succeed in a competitive university
* Forms and documents as specified on the U.S. embassy or consulate’s website

**Know what kinds of questions you might be asked during the interview. Be prepared to answer them quickly and confidently:**

* What is your secondary school (university) cGPA (cumulative grade point average)?
* What is a dual diploma program?
* How will completing a dual diploma benefit you (rather than receiving a diploma only from a Turkish university)?
* What is your major?
* Why did you choose this major?
* What do you expect to get out of your education?
* What are the job prospects for this major in your country?
* Do you intend to stay in the U.S. after graduation and work or pursue graduate study?
* Do you have any family in the U.S.?
* Do you have family members who studied in the U.S. and then returned to your home country?
* How do you and your family intend to finance your education in the U.S.?

*Please visit* [*http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/study-exchange/student.html*](http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/study-exchange/student.html) *for more information*

**Following your visa interview:**

* **The Consulate and Embassy return all passports and visas to the PTT location listed on your appointment confirmation email. You MUST bring a valid form of ID to collect your documents.**
* After the interview, passports with issued visas affixed inside will be returned via PTT. During the summer and other periods of high visa demand, it may take a few days or longer for your passport to arrive, so plan accordingly when scheduling your appointment. Remember, the US Embassy and Consulate are CLOSED during Turkish and US holidays. During this time, visas will not be processed (for a list of holidays visit <http://turkey.usembassy.gov/holidays.html>)
	+ **Note:** If a student’s passport will expire before the completion of the degree program, the visa remains valid and the student should travel with **both** the old and new passports. However, if the new passport is issued under a different or changed name, the student must apply for a new visa.
* **If ANY problems occur:** Please contact the SUNY Office in Turkey if there are any questions, or if:
	+ You do not receive a visa
	+ You are requested to supply further documentation which is unclear
	+ Your visa is delayed by a security clearance issue
	+ There are any other problems with visa issuance
* **Helpful web sites:** for detailed information about the visa application process, please visit the non-immigrant visa sections of the following websites:
	+ US Embassy in Ankara: <http://turkey.usembassy.gov>
	+ US Consulate in Istanbul: <http://istanbul.usconsulate.gov>
	+ For specific information regarding your dual diploma program, see the websites from both partner campuses (Turkey and SUNY), available at [www.suny.edu.tr](http://www.suny.edu.tr) (click ‘links’ from the menu at the top of the page)
	+ **The international student and scholar services pages within the SUNY campus web sites** provide very important information. Start with your SUNY campus web site, then search for “ISSS”or “international student and scholar services” or “international students.”