NEW SEVIS FEE PAYMENT REQUIREMENTS

Effective September 1, 2004, most F-1 and J-1 nonimmigrants starting “initial attendance” or to “begin a new program” (as marked on the form I-20 or DS-2019 form) or starting a new academic program in the U.S., with the exception of their dependents, will be required to pay a fee of $200 prior to applying for a visa when utilizing a form I-20 or DS-2019 at the U.S. Consulate and or U.S. Port of Entry. This is called a SEVIS fee for the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System; the automated system for collecting, maintaining, and managing information about nonimmigrant student and exchange visitors in the United States. International students and exchange visitors are subject to this fee, which will be used to administer and maintain the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).

Students and exchange visitors may pay either by check or money order (funds must be drawn from a U.S. bank) through the mail, or with a credit card via the internet. It is our understanding that the internet process is faster and you will receive your receipt needed for your U.S. Consulate appointment sooner through this method. Additional payment methods may be available at the U.S. Consulate that you plan to visit. Make a note of how long you must wait after obtaining the SEVIS fee receipt before making the visa appointment. Please refer to your I-20 /DS-2019 (box #2 on both forms) to find Louisiana State University’s school code (I-20) or Exchange Visitor Program number (DS-2019).

Continuing students and exchange visitors, that is those students returning to the U.S. to resume the same academic program and program level as before with an absence from the U.S. of less than five months, do not need to pay this fee prior to the visa fee for the U.S. Consulate visa renewal appointment (and at the U.S. Port of Entry) as long as your I-20/DS-2019 form indicates you are “continuing” your same academic program when you departed the U.S. less than 5 months before (see item #2 on the I-20 form and item #3 on the DS-2019 form).

Exchange visitors (J-1s) who are exempted from this fee are those who are in federally sponsored government programs (Fulbright, Institute of International Education, LASPAU, etc.).

It is our understanding from the U.S. Department of State that persons who pay the fee, and are denied a visa, may then reapply for a visa to attend the same type of program within twelve months without needing to pay the SEVIS fee again. The original SEVIS fee receipt from the first payment will suffice for the second U.S. Consulate appointment.

Please visit the following web sites for more up to date and new information, and instructions on how to complete the process of paying the SEVIS fee:

• www.fmjfee.com

You may contact the following e-mail address for more information and with questions concerning the process of paying the SEVIS fee:

• fmjfee.SEVERIS@dhs.gov