French Student Visa Application Checklist

Read all information that you receive regarding student visas carefully. Requirements could change at any time and can vary from consulate to consulate. It is your responsibility to investigate the visa requirements.

Under the new visa guidelines, you cannot enter France prior to the program start date. If you enter France before the official program start date, you could be refused at immigration. If you travel elsewhere within the EU first, you must enter France at an airport to have your student visa validated because train arrival does not include an immigration check.

Schedule the appointment at your consulate to apply for your visa while you are waiting for CampusFrance approval, as appointment times can fill up a month in advance.

- Your consulate appointment cannot be sooner than 90 days before your program start date.
- Plan your appointment far enough in the future to give you time to receive your CampusFrance approval (about 3 weeks), but soon enough to allow three to four weeks before your planned departure to receive your visa after the appointment.
- Consulates do not issue visas on the same day, and some may require a second in person visit to pick up your passport and visa once it has been issued.

Carefully review your consulate’s requirements and gather the necessary documents for the Long Stay Visa for Studies.

Visa requirements change often and vary from consulate to consulate. The following are the basic items (+photocopy of each document) required to apply for a student visa through the Chicago Consulate. Verify the latest requirements directly with the Chicago Consulate before submitting:

- Original passport
- Processing fee (cash is typically required)
- Proof of residence/study in consulate's jurisdiction (school ID, drivers' license, etc)
- Signed and completed application (download from consulate's website; see instructions on how to complete this application)
- Passport photo (this is SEPARATE from the ones you submitted to the Learning Abroad Center with your confirmation materials)
- CampusFrance approval message (sent to you by email) and payment receipt (web print out when you make payment via credit card)
- **Proof of Registration** or Letter of Enrollment in a US school/university*
- **Proof of Admission** to a French school/university*
- **Financial Guarantee**
- **Academic Year Students Only:** [Completed OFII Residence Form](download from consulate's website.)**
- Travel itinerary
- A self-addressed prepaid USPS EXPRESS MAIL envelope from the USA POST OFFICE. NOTE – only a USPS express envelope will be accepted!

*The Learning Abroad Center will provide these items (all in one letter) to all confirmed program participants in early November for spring semester and early June for fall semester or academic year. We cannot release these documents to you until you have confirmed your place on the program.

**The Chicago Consulate accepts the Learning Abroad Center verification of enrollment and financial guarantee letter. Other consulates may require the bank statement or other listed proof of financial guarantee, and students should bring one of these verification types listed on the consulate’s web site.

** This form will be authorized by the consulate and returned to you with your passport and your visa. Bring this completed and stamped form with you to France and submit it to the Immigration authorities. You will have to complete the OFII process once in France. This entails registering with the Immigration Service, completing a medical exam, **paying a 55 Euro tax (fees are subject to change)**, and submitting the OFII Residence Form to immigration officials. The on-site staff will facilitate this process. Semester students should NOT select the OFII process. It is time-consuming, has an added expense, and can interrupt travel schedules during breaks without notice and with no option to postpone the mandatory OFII visit.

If your consulate requires further documentation from the University of Minnesota or Paul Valery University/University of Montpellier, please contact us as soon as possible.

- Attend your appointment at the consulate. Keep in mind that you must have CampusFrance approval and their email confirmation in order to attend your consulate appointment.