

## Applying for Your Student Visa: Thailand

### What is a visa?

A visa is official authorization allowing you to enter a country and travel, work, live, or study there for a specific period of time. Generally, a visa is an elaborate stamp that is sealed onto one of the pages of your passport. Visas are issued to American citizens by a foreign country's Embassy or Consulate located in the United States. Every country has its own regulations governing the issuance of visas.

### Do I need a visa to go to Thailand?

A visa is required for any persons who wish to study in Thailand, so you (and your dependents, if applicable) will need to obtain a visa for your period of study in Thailand. Students should apply for the “Non-Immigrant Visa”, category: ED.

### What do I need to apply for a visa?

You will need the following documents to apply for your visa:

- **A valid passport**, with validity 6 months past the date of your visa expiration
    - ◆ Please see page 1 in the Study Abroad Handbook for information on how to apply for a passport.
    - ◆ Apply early for your passport! It may take 6-8 weeks to process your application.
  - **A completed visa application form**. This form is available on the Thai embassy's web site at: <http://www.thaiembdc.org/> under “Consular”.
  - **Two passport-size photographs (2” x 2”)**. Photos must be taken within the last 6 months and be a full-face view, taken against a light-colored background.
  - **Proof of sufficient funds**, such as a copy of a recent bank statement showing a balance of at least \$500 per person and US\$1,000 per family.
  - **Letter of Acceptance from a Thai University**
    - ◆ Inquire about this letter at UM’s Study Abroad office in the International Center.
  - **A processing fee of USD\$65 (3 month/single entry) or USD\$175 (1 year/ multiple entry)** If submitting by mail, pay by money order only; if submitting in person, pay in cash or with a money order.
- ▶ **Attention:** This list may not be all-inclusive! Verify this information with the Thai consulate with jurisdiction for your state, as the application process can change or may even vary by consulate.
- ▶ You will also find answers to many of your visa-related questions at:

<http://www.thaiembdc.org/consular/visa/>

### How do I obtain a visa?

#### A. In person

- Take the above documents to the Thai consulate that has jurisdiction over your state of residence.
- Call the consulate before you visit to verify hours of operation and location.
- The Thai embassy suggests that it takes 48 hours to process a visa application when you apply in person. However, you should avoid waiting until the last minute, as omitting one document or failing to complete a form completely may delay the processing of your visa for weeks.

#### B. Via mail

- Send all documents, including your passport, in a FedEx, US Overnight Mail, or other express mail service that provides a tracking number for your parcel, to the embassy. **Keep a photocopy of all documents, including your passport, for yourself.**

- Be sure that any visa fees are in the form of a money order--consulates will not accept personal checks.
- Be sure all documents are in order. Missing documents may cause delays in the processing of your application.
- Enclose a *postage paid* FedEx/US Overnight Mail envelope *addressed to yourself*. The consulate will only return your visa and documents if you provide a return envelope. The self-addressed envelope may also be a USPS (US Postal Service) Express Mail Flat Rate Mailing Envelope with \$17.50 postage stamp (metered stamps will not be accepted).
- Consult the consulate about the time it will take to process you application. Apply early, as any errors may delay the processing of your visa for weeks.
- Do not leave the country until you have received your passport and visa.

### **General tips for applying for a visa:**

Foreign embassies and consulates in the US receive hundreds of inquires every day so contacting them can be a trying experience. Have patience. Some consulates only receive visitors or calls during certain hours of the day or on certain days of the week; visit their website to learn their hours or call back at different times of the day. You may find that you are placed on hold or that your call is never forwarded to the appropriate person. Don't be discouraged: be persistent, but polite. Remember that US consulates in foreign countries operate in a similar fashion!

### **Thai Consulates in the US:**

If the appropriate consulate is not listed below, visit: <http://www.thaiembdc.org/> for a listing of other Thai Consulates.

#### **Royal Thai Embassy: Washington, D.C.**

**States Served:** Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Montana, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia, Wyoming

**Address:** 1024 Wisconsin Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20007

**Phone:** (202) 944-3600 **Fax:** (202) 944-3611

**Website:** <http://www.thaiembdc.org/>