



Media Note

Office of the Spokesman

Washington, DC

February 14, 2006

Student Visas: Secure Borders and Open Doors in the Information Age

The Department of State is pleased to announce we have extended the length of time foreign students may be issued student visas. This is one of the elements of the recently announced Rice-Chertoff Joint Vision which will enhance border security while streamlining security processes and facilitating travel for visitors to the United States.

Students applying for initial-entry F-1, F-2, and M-1 and M-2 visas may now be issued those visas up to 120 days before their academic program start date (as compared to 90 days under previous regulations). J-1 and J-2 visitors may be issued visas at any time before the beginning of their programs.

These changes apply only to initial-entry students. Continuing students may apply for new F or M visas at any time, as long as they have maintained their student status and their Student and Exchange Visitor Information (SEVIS) records are current.

As part of the Joint Vision announced by Secretaries Rice and Chertoff, this change reflects our ongoing commitment to ensuring the safety of our citizens and our visitors by keeping our borders secure, while also taking significant steps to ensure that our doors remain open to those seeking to visit, study or conduct business in the U.S.

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