

CHINA GATEWAY

China Travel Guide

China Visa Application

A visa is required for a U.S. citizen to visit China. Faculty and staff wishing to conduct business for The Ohio State University in mainland China will generally require a business visa (F visa). The following provides information about the application process.

The Ohio State China Gateway also can provide support for visa application such as generating invitation letters.

Warning: Visa application policies periodically change. Please check with the nearest consulate for the latest information.

China Business Visa (F)

A business visa is required if, for up to six months, you intend to participate in business activities as an employee of an overseas organization; investigating and establishing a business activity; lectures, studying or attending training (including internships). In some situations, international visitors with a need to travel frequently in and out of China over a longer period may be granted a 12-month visa.

To obtain an F-visa, you must have an invitation letter from a Chinese organization that you will be working with or a reference letter from your employer explaining the purpose of the visit. The individual writing the invitation letter should check that their invitation complies with all regulations.

The business visa (F) has been used as a “catch all” option over the years. Visa issuing offices seem to have been willing to issue them relatively easily and often for longer durations (12 months) than a tourist visa.

Requirements for China Business Visa (F) Application

Please refer to <http://www.nyconsulate.prchina.org/eng/lqz/VisasforChina/> for China Business Visa Requirements and Application Forms.

How to Apply

A preferred method for securing a visa is to go through a visa service agency to assist in the application process for a visa to China. Preferred vendors include:

Travisa: <http://travisa.com/>

Washington Passport and Visa Service: <http://www.wpvs.com/>

(The OSU China Gateway has no special relationship with these agencies. This recommendation is simply for your convenience and fully optional.)

Processing Time

Generally, visas can be issued and the passport can be returned in one week. Express service (2-3 days) and Same Day Service are also available at agencies for an additional charge.

Accommodation and Transportation

(The Ohio State China Gateway can provide recommendations for logistics including hotels, transportation, currency and locations for a cultural experience.)

Accommodations

Western Hotels are available in most first tier and second tier cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu, Wuhan, Chongqing, Xi'an, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Xia'men and almost all the capital cities of each province.

Hotel reservations for international visitors can be easily and conveniently made in China. You can book hotels through a travel agency, a booking center or by directly contacting the hotel. Ctrip at <http://english.ctrip.com/index.asp> is a commonly used website for booking domestic flights and hotels.

Transportation

Between cities, air flight and high-speed train are the best ways for middle to long-distance travel. Flights and high-speed train tickets can be booked online. Within most big cities, public transportation, such as the metro system and taxis, is easily accessible. Taxis are cheaper compared to the U.S. and are available 24 hours per day 7 days per week.

Chinese Etiquette

The OSU China Gateway can provide consultation on cultural differences and assist in making your trip as smooth as possible.

The differences in the social niceties of China in comparison to those of the Western world can be somewhat of a culture shock. The following is an introduction to the daily manners and courtesies of social life in China.

Greetings

- **Handshake:** Many Western countries accept hugs and kisses as a popular form of greeting although a handshake is still the formal way of greeting people. In China, a handshake or a simple and kind salutation is common.
- **Gifts:** In formal meetings with Chinese government officials or college professors and administrators, gifts are commonly expected. University gifts such as T-shirts or U.S. local souvenirs are good choices. Scarlet and gray gift items are fine. Clocks and shoes are considered offensive in Chinese culture.
- **Form of Address:** A form of address is to some extent a reflection of social climate. In China, various forms of address are used according to circumstances. Choosing the appropriate and correct form shows your knowledge and high respect to others. Generally, for Chinese people it should be in accordance with convention and care much about the personal favor of the people being addressed.
- **Job Title:** You can call someone directly by his job title or put it before his surname or full name. This is often used in the workplace and on more formal occasions. Generally, you can call others by their family name or full name by putting the Mr. or Ms. in front. This is the general address most widely used in companies, hotels, stores, restaurants, karaoke, bars and other places.

Making Introductions

- Being introduced: If someone is making the introductions, to introduce yourself is considered disrespectful. When it is your turn to be introduced, smile and look at the people also being introduced with ease. After being introduced, you can shake hands with each other and give mutual greetings, sometimes with an exchange of business cards.
- Self-introduction: With regard to introducing yourself there is little difference between China and elsewhere. It is considered polite to give your full name, job position and your place of business, especially on more formal occasions. Only your full name with a simple greeting is enough on informal occasions.
- Business card exchange: In China, dual-sided Chinese business cards should be printed with English on one side and Chinese on the other even if the people you are meeting read and write English. When exchanging business card, it is best to stand up, hold it with both hands on the edge of the card (sign of respect), make sure the translated side up, facing your contact so that he/she can read it. During the introduction and exchanging of business card, it is polite to study the card for a few minutes and then put it on the table next to you or in a business card case.

Table Manners

A multitude of etiquette considerations occur when dining in China. There are some special differences from customs in western countries.

- A round dining table is more popular in China than a rectangular or square one because many people can be seated comfortably around it and conveniently face one another. The guest of honor is always seated to the right of the host; the next in line will sit on his left. Guests should be seated after the host's invitation.
- Dining will only begin once the host and all his guests are seated. The host should actively take care of all his guests, inviting them to enjoy their meal.
- On a typical Chinese dining table there is always a cup, a bowl on a small dish, chopsticks and spoons. Dishes are always presented in the center of the table.
- Apart from soup, all dishes should be eaten with chopsticks. The Chinese are particular about the use of chopsticks. There are many no-no's such as twiddling and licking them, using them to stir up the food, gesturing with them or pointing them at others. Never stick chopsticks in the center of rice, as this is the way to sacrifice and is therefore considered to be rude.
- Keep your dining speed on pace with other people. Never smoke when dining.
- A formal Chinese dinner is always accompanied by tea, beer or an alcoholic beverage. When other people fill your cup or glass, you should express your thanks. Guests cannot pour tea or wine themselves.
- A toast to others is a characteristic of Chinese dining. When all people are seated and all cups are filled, the host should toast others first, and then deliver a simple invitation to let the dining begin. During the dinner, after host has given the toast, you can toast anyone from the most senior level individual at the table on down the line. When someone toasts you, you should immediately stop eating and drinking to accept and toast in response. If you are far from someone you want to toast, then you can use your cup or glass to tap on the table to attract attention rather than raise your voice. However, it is impolite to urge others to drink.
- If you are invited to a formal banquet, the meal should not be eaten completely, or you will give the host the impression that he has not provided a good banquet and the food was insufficient. After dining, guests should leave once the host has left the table.

Contact Us

Phoebe You
Director and Chief Representative
Tel: +86 21 5175 1506
Cell: +86 13636389698
Email: phoebe.you@oia.osu.edu

Adella Ma
Business Development Manager
Tel: +86 21 5175 1505
Cell: +86 15901985162
Email: Adella.ma@oia.osu.edu

Address

OSU China Gateway Shanghai Representative Office
12/F Platinum, 233 Tai Cang Road, Shanghai 200020, P.R. China
Fax: +86 21 51757799

Address in Chinese

中国上海市黄浦区太仓路233号新茂大厦12楼
邮编200020
传真：+86 21 51757799