



ACADEMIC STUDIES ABROAD

Student Visa Information for Spain

Do I need a Student Visa?

- **If you have a US passport and your program is more than 90 days long (most Semester and all Academic Year programs are), you MUST obtain a Student Visa.**
- **If you have a US passport** you can spend a maximum of 90 days in the [Schengen Area](#) of Europe (including Spain) within a 180-day period as a Tourist, with no prior visa. Therefore, US citizens going on a program that's less than 90 days long do not need a Student Visa.
- **If you have a passport from a country in the European Union:** You may not need a Student Visa, even if your program is more than 90 days long. Check with ASA.
- **If your passport is from a country besides the US and European Union:** You will need a Student Visa to study in Spain for more than 90 days. You may also need a visa to study in Spain for under 90 days.

Your Passport

- **YOU MUST SURRENDER YOUR PASSPORT. THE CONSULATE WILL KEEP IT WHILE PROCESSING YOUR VISA, AND YOU CANNOT GET IT BACK UNTIL IT'S FINISHED PROCESSING (AT LEAST 2 MONTHS). DO NOT plan any international travel during the 4 months leading up to your ASA program (including Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean) because it may interfere with your visa process.** If you have an international trip planned, call us ASAP at 617-327-9388. You can fly domestically during the visa process if you have a [Real ID](#).
- **CHECK YOUR PASSPORT'S EXPIRATION DATE. Your passport must be valid for at least 1 year beyond the date you plan to return home from abroad.**
- **YOU CAN'T APPLY FOR A VISA WITHOUT A VALID PASSPORT. IF YOU DON'T HAVE A VALID PASSPORT, APPLY FOR ONE IMMEDIATELY BY EXPEDITED SERVICE.**

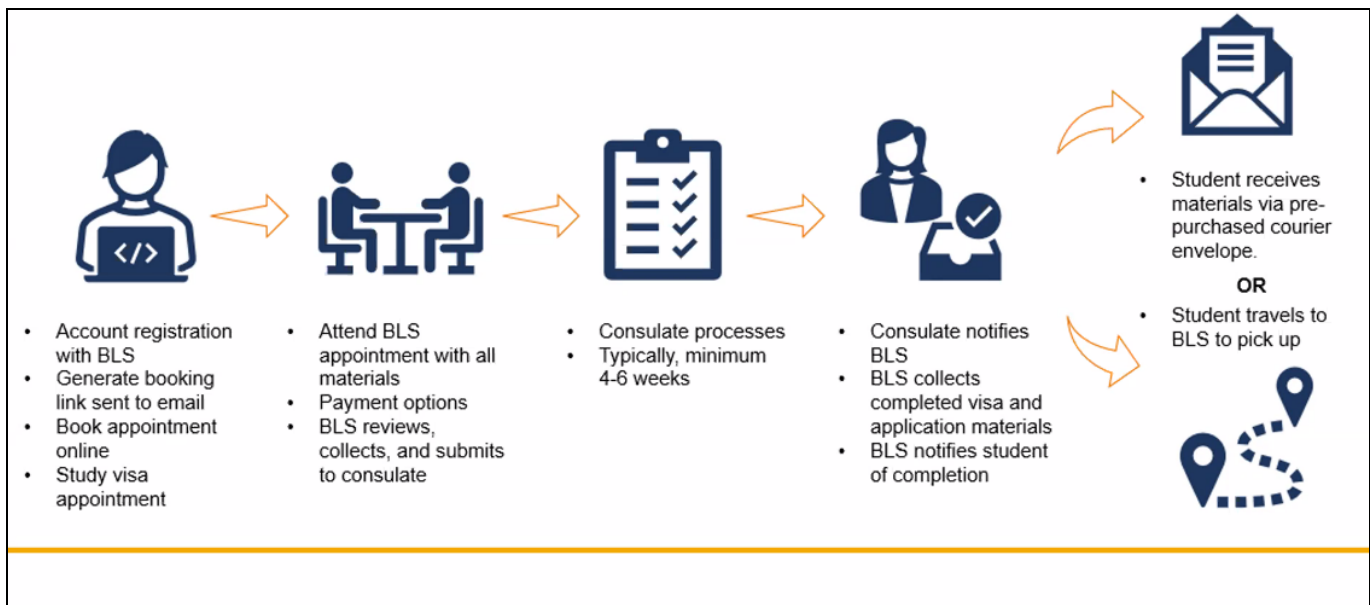
Where do I apply for a Student Visa?

Visas are issued by the **Consulate General of Spain**. Spanish Consulates in the continental US now outsource visa appointments to a company called BLS. There are 8 locations in the continental US, each covering a jurisdiction of several states. **You must apply in person by appointment at BLS**. You must have a current and valid Student ID showing you attend a college/university in the jurisdiction where you want to apply, or have documentation showing you reside in one of those states.

Do I need to go to BLS in person?

YES, you'll have to make 1 or 2 trips to BLS in person. Check the distance from where you live. Your parent(s) can't go in your place, but they can go with you. Some (but not all) BLS locations will ship your passport and visa back to you for a fee, so you may have to pick up your visa in person as well. A LIST OF JURISDICTIONS AND THEIR WEBSITES IS AT THE END OF THIS DOCUMENT. VISIT YOUR

CONSULATE'S WEBSITE TO FIND OUT YOUR CONSULATE'S PROCEDURE. IF THEY OUTSOURCE TO BLS, ALSO CONSULT THE BLS WEBSITE FOR A DOCUMENT LIST.



When to apply? How long will it take?

YOU **MUST APPLY AT LEAST 2 MONTHS BEFORE DEPARTURE.**

YOU MUST SURRENDER YOUR PASSPORT. BLS WILL HOLD YOUR PASSPORT WHILE YOUR VISA IS PROCESSED AND YOU CANNOT GET IT BACK UNTIL THE VISA IS FINISHED PROCESSING.

There may be delays during the holidays or at other busy times.

Rush or expedited visa processing is NOT available.

How do I make a Visa Appointment?

Your BLS website will have a Make Appointment link. [Click here for helpful tips on BLS appointments](#). Blocks of new open appointments are typically released 2-4 weeks ahead.

Don't delay in requesting an appointment and preparing your documents! If you're late, you may find there are no appointments available.

Once you have a visa appointment, notify ASA immediately. There are several documents we have to send you, which can take a couple weeks to obtain.

At least 3 weeks in advance, prepare your documents. Most are documents you must obtain on your own.

Can I work while I'm abroad?

No. To legally work in Spain, you need a work visa/permit.

How long will my visa be valid for?

The new policy as of May 20, 2025 is that visas for students staying for 1 semester should be valid from approximately 30 days before the start of your studies, to approximately 15 days after the end of your studies. Visas for students staying for 2 semesters (academic year) should be valid for 364 days starting approximately 30 days before the start of your Fall studies. However, these students still need to apply for a TIE (Foreigner Identity Card) within 30 days of arriving in Spain. A TIE must be obtained to stay for the full academic year.

Visa Policies

It is THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY to obtain a Student Visa. Read this document carefully.

The Spanish Consulates are government institutions, and visa requirements are dictated by the Spanish government. No one can speed up the processing of your visa or influence visa procedures or requirements. You must comply with the Immigration policies of any foreign country you want to visit.

Visa requirements are subject to change without prior notice. Procedures and documents vary by Consulate. This document may not be 100% up to date. **CHECK YOUR CONSULATE'S WEBSITE & BLS WEBSITE FOR THE MOST UP TO DATE VISA REQUIREMENTS.**

If a Student Visa is required for you, you will not be allowed to attend the ASA program without a visa and are subject to ASA's cancellation policy and unrecoverable costs even if you don't obtain a Student Visa.

Required Documents

BEGIN PREPARING THESE DOCUMENTS AT LEAST 3 WEEKS AHEAD! DOCUMENTS VARY BY CONSULATE. CHECK YOUR CONSULATE'S WEBSITE & THE BLS WEBSITE FOR A LIST.

THE FOLLOWING ARE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO OBTAIN:

- **"Application for National Visa" Form filled out by you** Download from the Consulate or BLS website. **It should say "Solicitud de visado nacional" OR "Application for long-term visa" OR "Application for National Visa" at the top.** Type in your answers and PRINT FIT TO PAGE. **CLICK HERE FOR AN ANSWER KEY to fill it out.** (Submit 1 original + 1 photocopy)
- **1 recent, official passport photo** taken within the last year, NO SMILING, showing the top of your head to the bottom of your chin, without any hats or sunglasses. Photographs must be recent, color photos and have a white background. Must be official passport photos taken at Walgreens, CVS, the post office, etc. Snapshots or photos printed from your computer are not accepted!
- **Your actual passport** This must be surrendered at your visa appointment. BLS will keep it until your visa is finished processing (at least 2 months). Passport requirements: Must be signed by you and be valid at least 1 year beyond the date you plan to return home from abroad. Must have at least 2 blank pages to which your visa can be affixed. Passports issued more than 10 years ago won't be accepted.
- **Photocopy of your passport's picture page and signature page** IT IS ESSENTIAL YOU PREPARE THIS PROPERLY. HERE'S THE BEST WAY: 1) Open your passport to the signature and picture page. If you haven't signed the signature page, sign it now in ink. 2) While open to the signature and picture page, lay it flat in the middle of a photocopy machine or scanner, and make a photocopy or scan. If you scanned it, print the scan. 3) Check what you printed to make sure NO EDGES OF THE PASSPORT ARE CUT OFF! AND NO FINGERS OR OBJECTS IN THIS IMAGE! 4) Check your Consulate's & BLS websites to see if this needs to be notarized by a Notary Public.
- **Proof of Student Status or Residency in your Consulate's jurisdiction** Consult your Consulate's website & BLS website for how to fulfill this requirement, as it varies. NOTE!! If your Student ID card is DIGITAL, you cannot use it to prove your student status. If your Student ID card is digital, you can instead obtain a notarized letter from your

Registrar's Office verifying your full-time current enrollment/student status. *Letter must be in Spanish*; if in English it must be translated into Spanish by a certified translator. Allow time to find a translator and get it translated. Try this [translation service from BLS](#) or the [American Translators Association](#) (fee applies) *(Submit original + 1 photocopy)*

- **Visa Fee & BLS Fees (non-refundable)** \$160 is currently the visa fee FOR US CITIZENS; fee differs if you're not a US citizen. BLS also charges a service fee (~\$18). Some BLS locations also charge a text message fee (~\$5, to send you updates about your visa status). Some (but not all) locations offer courier service to ship your passport and visa back to you (~\$35). Historically, most BLS locations have taken cash or debit card only, but check your BLS website, INCLUDING THE POP-UP on the homepage. They often post important updates in that pop-up! *Subject to change. Always check your BLS website for up-to-date fees & payment methods.*
- **Proof of Financial Means** is required to show you can support yourself while in Spain: at least US\$700 per month of your stay. CHECK YOUR CONSULATE'S WEBSITE & BLS WEBSITE FOR THE REQUIREMENT. Partial months should be rounded up – ex: if you're staying for 4.5 months, you must show you have financial means for at least 5 months. You can convert euros to dollars at: www.xe.com
 - o **OPTION 1:** Most recent 3 consecutive checking or savings bank statements for an account IN THE STUDENT'S NAME with the final balance on each statement showing at least the required amount as stated on the Consulate & BLS websites (round up partial months). *(Submit original + 1 photocopy of each statement)*
 - o **OPTION 2:** Most recent 3 consecutive checking or savings account statements from a parent's account, PLUS these 3 items: A) notarized copy of parent's driver's license; B) notarized or certified copy of student's birth certificate proving parental bond (or document proving guardianship); and C) notarized affidavit from the parent – must be in Spanish, or if in English it must be translated into Spanish by a certified translator
Here are links to parental affidavit templates we have created which are in Spanish:
 - [Template for Consulates requiring US\\$700 per month](#)
 - [Template for Consulates requiring €600 per month](#)Please read your Consulate's website & the BLS website for their specific financial requirements! *(Submit original + 1 photocopy of each document)*
 - o **OPTION 3:** Proof of financial aid or scholarship showing at least the required amount as stated on your Consulate's website & the BLS website (round up partial months). Example: an original, signed letter from your college/university's financial aid office. It may take your school's financial aid office several weeks to issue this. If in English, it must be translated into Spanish by a certified translator (see the Consulate & BLS websites for translation referrals) *(Submit original + 1 photocopy of each document)*
- **Proof of Accommodation, if you're not living in ASA housing** If you ARE going to live in ASA housing, we'll provide you a letter in Spanish that fulfills this requirement. If you ARE NOT going to live in ASA housing, we can't provide you with a letter. Instead, you'll need to provide ONE of the following as proof of accommodation *(original + 1 photocopy)*:
 - o Signed lease for your stay
 - o Hotel/tourist apartment reservation for your stay
 - o If staying with a friend or family, "Acta de manifestaciones" in Spanish issued by a Notary Public in Spain (your friend or family in Spain would have to obtain this for you)
- **Credits Letter from Home Institution** Only required by certain Consulates such as Chicago – check your Consulate's website. If required, you'll need to obtain a letter in Spanish from your Study Abroad Advisor at your home institution, stating that the credits you earn in Spain will be transferred to your degree program at your US college/university. Must be in Spanish – if in English it must be translated into Spanish by a certified translator *(Submit original + 1 photocopy)*
- **Medical Certificate completed by a Doctor** Download the [TEMPLATE and instructions here](#). You will need an appointment with a medical doctor. Must be completed by the doctor by hand within 90 days of your visa appointment. Must bear the doctor's signature, stamp, and license number. **ONLY USE THE TEMPLATE! DO NOT HAVE THE DOCTOR ISSUE THEIR OWN/SEPARATE LETTER!** Your campus health center may be able to help. *(Submit original + 1 photocopy)*
- **Disclaimer Form** Download from the BLS website. It can usually be found by navigating Visa Type→National Visa→Student Visa→Download Form *(Submit original + 1 photocopy)*
- **If you're not a US citizen, you must provide proof of Green card or US visa. Green card/visa must allow you to re-enter the US after your program is over and remain valid for at least 3 months beyond your planned return date from Spain.** If applying in person, bring your original green card or US visa, plus a notarized photocopy. If applying by mail, provide a notarized photocopy. If your US visa is affixed to an old passport, also provide a notarized photocopy of your old passport's picture page. *(Submit 1 original + 1 photocopy)*
 - o If you're an F-1 visa holder, you must bring a notarized photocopy of your up to date I-20. *(Submit 1 original + 1 photocopy)*

- Next 1-2 items are required ONLY if going to Spain for more than 180 days (e.g. ACADEMIC YEAR).
****NOT REQUIRED FOR ONLY ONE SEMESTER****
 - **FBI Background Check** (*State or Local Police checks are NO LONGER ACCEPTED*)
 - Dated no more than 6 months before arrival into Spain and no more than 5 months before visa application date
 - Must show you do not have a criminal record for the last 5 years
 - Must be verified by fingerprint comparison (recommend electronic fingerprints instead of the “old style” ink+fingerprint card – will make it faster and reduce chances of rejection)
 - [Apply online](#), it’s the fastest option
 - [Legalized with an Apostille](#) from the U.S. Department of State (THIS CAN TAKE AT LEAST 12 WEEKS or try [this service](#) which is faster)
 - *An Apostille is like an international notary. It shows that your background check document is genuine on a government-to-government level.*
 - Using a [channeler](#) to get the FBI Background Check expedited can make it faster
 - Must be professionally translated into Spanish by a certified translator. Try this [translation service from BLS](#) or the [American Translators Association](#) (fee applies)
 - Send one copy of background check to the translator and another copy to be Apostilled so both processes move forward concurrently – this will save time!
 - The translation does not need an Apostille and the Apostille does not need a translation
 - DO NOT undo any of the staples or bindings of these documents, as this will nullify them! Take care to keep these safe and clean, as documents showing any kind of damage will be rejected
 - If you’ve resided in any country besides the US in the last 5 years, a national background check from that country or countries is also required (apostilled & professionally translated into Spanish)
 - You MUST enter the Spanish territory during the period of validity of your visa. If you arrive in Spain before your visa validity, you will need to leave the Schengen Area (for example, fly to the UK and back) and re-enter Spain to establish your date of entry during the visa.
 - *Submit original + 1 photocopy*
 - **If you’ve spent more than 6 consecutive months in any other country during the last 5 years, you must also submit your police records from that country**, legalized with the Apostille Certification and translated into Spanish. If the country is not part of the Hague Convention the document must be legalized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and then by the Spanish Consulate in that country.
- **ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS MAY BE REQUIRED. REVIEW YOUR CONSULATE’S WEBSITE & YOUR BLS WEBSITE CAREFULLY!**
- **ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS MAY BE REQUESTED BY BLS OR THE CONSULATE DURING OR AFTER YOUR VISA APPOINTMENT. CHECK YOUR EMAIL AND JUNK/SPAM DAILY UNTIL YOUR VISA IS APPROVED.**

THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED BY ASA:

- **Proof of Acceptance/Admission** This can take us 2 weeks to get, thus we need at least 2 weeks notice of your visa appointment date. ASA is not responsible if we do not receive sufficient notice of your appointment date. (*Submit 1 original + 1 photocopy*)
- **Proof of Health Insurance** (*Submit 1 original + 1 photocopy*) NOTE: This is NOT provided for students from University of Minnesota Duluth – UMD students need to obtain this from UMD.
- **Proof of Accommodation (Housing)** (*Submit 1 original + 1 photocopy*) NOTE: This is NOT provided for students who arrange their own independent housing abroad.
- **Proof of Payment for Tuition/Registration Fees** (*Submit 1 original + 1 photocopy*)

IF YOU’RE A MINOR

Additional documentation will be required. Read your Consulate’s website & your BLS website carefully.

IF YOU DON’T HAVE A US PASSPORT

Read [this important guidance](#).

AFTER-ARRIVAL STEPS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR STUDENTS

****THIS PARAGRAPH NOT APPLICABLE IF YOU'RE GOING FOR ONE SEMESTER****

If you will study in Spain for more than 180 days (a full academic year), in order to legally stay in Spain for the full 2 semesters, students need to bring all the original visa documents with them to Spain and then present them to the local immigration office within 30 days of arriving in Spain to apply for a TIE (Foreigner Identity Card). Students who fail to get a TIE cannot legally stay in Spain for the full academic year, so it is very important that this step be completed as soon as possible after arriving. **IMPORTANT: Your Apostilled FBI Background Check must be dated no more than 6 months before arriving in Spain – if it expires you would need to get a fresh one just before departing for Spain.**

VISA ACTIVATION STEPS / PRE- AND POST-PROGRAM TRAVEL GUIDELINES

Please see your program's [Site-Specific Guide](#) for requirements.

Reminders & Tips!

- If you're flying to the Consulate, you'll need a [Real ID](#) to fly home because the Consulate will keep your passport.
- A Student Visa is a type of LONG TERM VISA (also called a NATIONAL VISA).
- Read your Consulate's website AND your BLS website carefully. This document is only a general guide. CHANGES TO VISA REQUIREMENTS CAN HAPPEN AT ANY TIME and the BLS/Consulate websites are the most up-to-date source of information.
- Start compiling your documents and filling out the visa application form **3 WEEKS AHEAD!**
- **Don't forget your photocopies!** The Consulate requires one set of originals PLUS one set of photocopies.
- **Keep copies of everything for your records.**

Spanish Consulates & BLS Locations in the United States & Puerto Rico

► CONSULATE GENERAL OF SPAIN – BOSTON

Jurisdiction: Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont

Homepage: <https://www.exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/boston/en/Consulado/Paginas/index.aspx>

Visa page: <https://www.exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/boston/en/ServiciosConsulares/Paginas/Consular/Visado-de-estudios.aspx>

BLS Boston: <https://usa.blsspainvisa.com/boston/>

► CONSULATE GENERAL OF SPAIN – CHICAGO

Jurisdiction: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin

Homepage: <https://www.exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/chicago/en/Consulado/Paginas/index.aspx>

Visa page: <https://www.exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/chicago/en/ServiciosConsulares/Paginas/Consular/Visado-de-estudios.aspx>

BLS Chicago: <https://usa.blsspainvisa.com/chicago/>

► CONSULATE GENERAL OF SPAIN – HOUSTON

Jurisdiction: Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas

Homepage: <https://www.exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/houston/en/Consulado/Paginas/index.aspx>

Visa page: <https://www.exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/houston/en/ServiciosConsulares/Paginas/Consular/Visado-de-estudios.aspx>

BLS Houston: <https://usa.blsspainvisa.com/houston/>

► CONSULATE GENERAL OF SPAIN – LOS ANGELES

Jurisdiction: Arizona, Colorado, Utah, Southern California (THESE COUNTIES ONLY: Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura counties)

Homepage: <https://www.exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/losangeles/en/Consulado/Paginas/index.aspx>

Visa page: <https://www.exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/losangeles/en/ServiciosConsulares/Paginas/Consular/Visado-de-estudios.aspx>
BLS Los Angeles: <https://usa.blsspainvisa.com/losangeles/>

► CONSULATE GENERAL OF SPAIN – MIAMI

Jurisdiction: Florida, South Carolina, Georgia

Homepage: <https://exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/miami/en/Consulado/Paginas/index.aspx>

Visa page: <https://www.exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/miami/en/ServiciosConsulares/Paginas/Consular/Visado-de-estudios.aspx>

BLS Miami: <https://usa.blsspainvisa.com/miami/>

► CONSULATE GENERAL OF SPAIN – NEW YORK CITY

Jurisdiction: Connecticut, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania.

Homepage: <https://exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/nuevayork/en/Consulado/Paginas/index.aspx>

Visa page: <https://www.exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/nuevayork/en/ServiciosConsulares/Paginas/Consular/Visado-de-estudios.aspx>

BLS New York City: <https://usa.blsspainvisa.com/nyc/>

► CONSULATE GENERAL OF SPAIN – SAN FRANCISCO

Jurisdiction: Alaska, California (only counties NOT listed under Los Angeles jurisdiction), Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming, Pacific Islands (Guam, American Samoa, Mariana Islands, US Minor Outlying Islands)

Homepage: <https://exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/sanfrancisco/en/Consulado/Paginas/index.aspx>

Visa page: <https://www.exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/sanfrancisco/en/ServiciosConsulares/Paginas/Consular/Visado-de-estudios.aspx>

BLS San Francisco: <https://usa.blsspainvisa.com/sanfrancisco/>

► CONSULATE GENERAL OF SPAIN – SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO (DOES NOT USE BLS. APPLY DIRECTLY TO THE CONSULATE)

Jurisdiction: Puerto Rico, Vieques, Culebra, and the North American Virgin Islands

Homepage: <https://www.exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/sanjuandepuertorico/es/Paginas/index.aspx>

Visa page:

[https://www.exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/sanjuandepuertorico/es/ServiciosConsulares/Paginas/index.aspx?scco=Puerto+Rico+\(EEUU\)&scd=253&cca=Visados&scs=Visados+Nacionales+-+Visado+de+estudios](https://www.exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/sanjuandepuertorico/es/ServiciosConsulares/Paginas/index.aspx?scco=Puerto+Rico+(EEUU)&scd=253&cca=Visados&scs=Visados+Nacionales+-+Visado+de+estudios)

► CONSULATE GENERAL OF SPAIN – WASHINGTON DC

Jurisdiction: Maryland, North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, District of Columbia

Homepage: <https://exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/washington/en/Consulado/Paginas/index.aspx>

Visa page: <https://www.exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/washington/en/ServiciosConsulares/Paginas/Consular/Visado-de-estudios.aspx>

BLS Washington DC: <https://usa.blsspainvisa.com/washington/>