

Prepare for your interview at the United States Consulate

How you present yourself is important.

1. You must appear confident and knowledgeable.
2. You must be able to respond to questions accurately and confidently.
3. You must be honest.

Before the VISA Officer talks to you

1. Fill out your DS-160 completely and accurately. The VISA officer will review your document before speaking with you and make decisions based on information in the document. Information in your DS-160 can cause the Visa Officer to deny your application without further discussion.
2. Be prepared with copies of your transcripts, acceptance email letter, I-20, financial documents, passport, affidavit and/or declaration of finances, and exam scores in case the officer asks to see anything.
3. Your interview is a conversation – not a document review. Read the information below so you can discuss why you have specifically chosen Marist and why you specifically are pursuing your major.

Know why you chose to attend Marist College instead of another school.

Here are unique facts about Marist College. Be able to state why Marist is different than other colleges. Tell the interviewer the specific reasons you want to attend.

Do not use general statements like “Marist is highly reputed.” You can use any university name and make the same statement. Learn specific things. **A better answer would be** “Marist is highly reputed. *U.S News & World Report* ranks Marist as 11th Best College in the Regional Universities (North) classification. Get specific.

1. Marist is highly reputed. <https://www.marist.edu/about/marist-at-a-glance>
 - *The Princeton Review* lists Marist College in their book *Colleges That Create Futures: 50 Schools that Launch Careers by Going Beyond the Classroom*.
 - *U.S News & World Report* ranks Marist as 11th Best College in the Regional Universities (North) classification.
 - *The Princeton Review* rates Marist as one of the nation’s best 380 institutions for outstanding academics, top notch faculty, and magnificent scenery.
 - *Money Magazine* listed Marist as one of *Money Magazine’s* “Best Colleges” that deliver a great education, at an affordable price, that prepares students for rewarding careers.
 - *Kiplinger Personal Finance Magazine* Marist is rated 57th on the national list of top-ranked private colleges
2. Marist has multiple Joint Ventures with industry leader IBM. IBM maintains an office on site at Marist.
 - New York State awarded Marist a \$3 million grant to establish the New York State Cloud Computing and Analytics Center at Marist College as a Joint Venture with IBM. You get to study with this center. Some students get jobs here.
<http://www.marist.edu/publicaffairs/magazine/spring2013/maristdrive/nyscloudcomputingcenter.html>

- Marist's collaboration with IBM has created the Virtual Computing Lab that provides easy access to computing hardware and software needed for courses and projects. Students do not need to buy extra hardware or software. You can access top technology like the new IBM LinuxOne III mainframe with advanced security protocols, and IBM zEnterprise mainframes.
3. Know what professors are at Marist. Be able to name at least two, and what they teach.
 - Faculty with areas of specialty <https://www.marist.edu/computer-science-math/faculty>
 - Faculty Publications and Scholarly Activities [c6fa9438-28b4-43a5-bf8f-0e9e8b3a28e8 \(marist.edu\)](https://www.marist.edu/c6fa9438-28b4-43a5-bf8f-0e9e8b3a28e8)
 4. Marist's small, private campus in Hudson Valley, New York specializes in hands-on, small courses. Classes usually only have 25 students. This means you have easy access to professors.
 5. Marist offers easy access to New York City, and the New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania metro areas to attend conferences and develop a professional network.
 6. Experiential learning in classes lets students do projects in class that would be used in business. You get hands-on experience rather than just studying from a book. This is what employers want.
 7. Independent research and collaboration with professors on research is encouraged.
 8. Established community of international students and the on-campus International Student Services department supports your transition to Marist and your entire experience in the program.
 9. Marist alumni have successful careers. Explore alumni at this link.
<https://www.marist.edu/profiles?profileType=Alumni&school=Computer Science and Math>
 - Choose File Type = Alumni
 - Choose Academic School = Computer Science and Math
 - Click on specific alumni for information about that individual.

Tell why you have chosen your major.

- How does your Master's degree major relate to your Bachelor's degree?
- If your Master's degree major is a different field than your Bachelor's degree, why are you changing the field?

Know the courses you will take – especially the first semester courses.

- **MS in Information Systems**
 - MSIS first semester courses are:
 - Systems and Information Concepts in Organizations
 - Data Management I
 - Data Communications
 - Your full list of MSIS courses and course descriptions can be found online at <https://www.marist.edu/master-information-systems>. Scroll down the page, click on your Concentration
- **MS in Computer Science Software Development** [Complete program courses can be found here.](#)
 - MSCS First semester courses are:
 - Object-Oriented Programming in Java
 - Database Management Systems

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- Networking
- Your full list of MSCS courses can be found online at <https://www.marist.edu/computer-science-math/graduate/ms/software-devel/curriculum>
- **How you will pay for your studies and living expenses.** Be able to provide and explain documents about the way you will pay for your education.
- **Do you intend to return to your home country after you finish your studies and OPT?**
VISA officers assume each person interviewing wants to immigrate to the United States permanently.
It is your responsibility to explain why you plan to study, complete CPT and OPT, and they return to India.

Reasons for a VISA denial may include:

- Members of your family are immigrants to the U. S. A.
- Overstaying your VISA on a prior trip
- Insufficient money available from your sponsors to pay for all students they sponsor
- Other reasons based on your individual situation

Please watch these videos from the U. S. Consulate General discussing how to prepare for your U.S. VISA interview.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tn2STIFeFiU> Hyderabad

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hmlLR5FkaRE> Andhra Pradesh

Find the U. S Consulate in your country. <https://www.usembassy.gov/>