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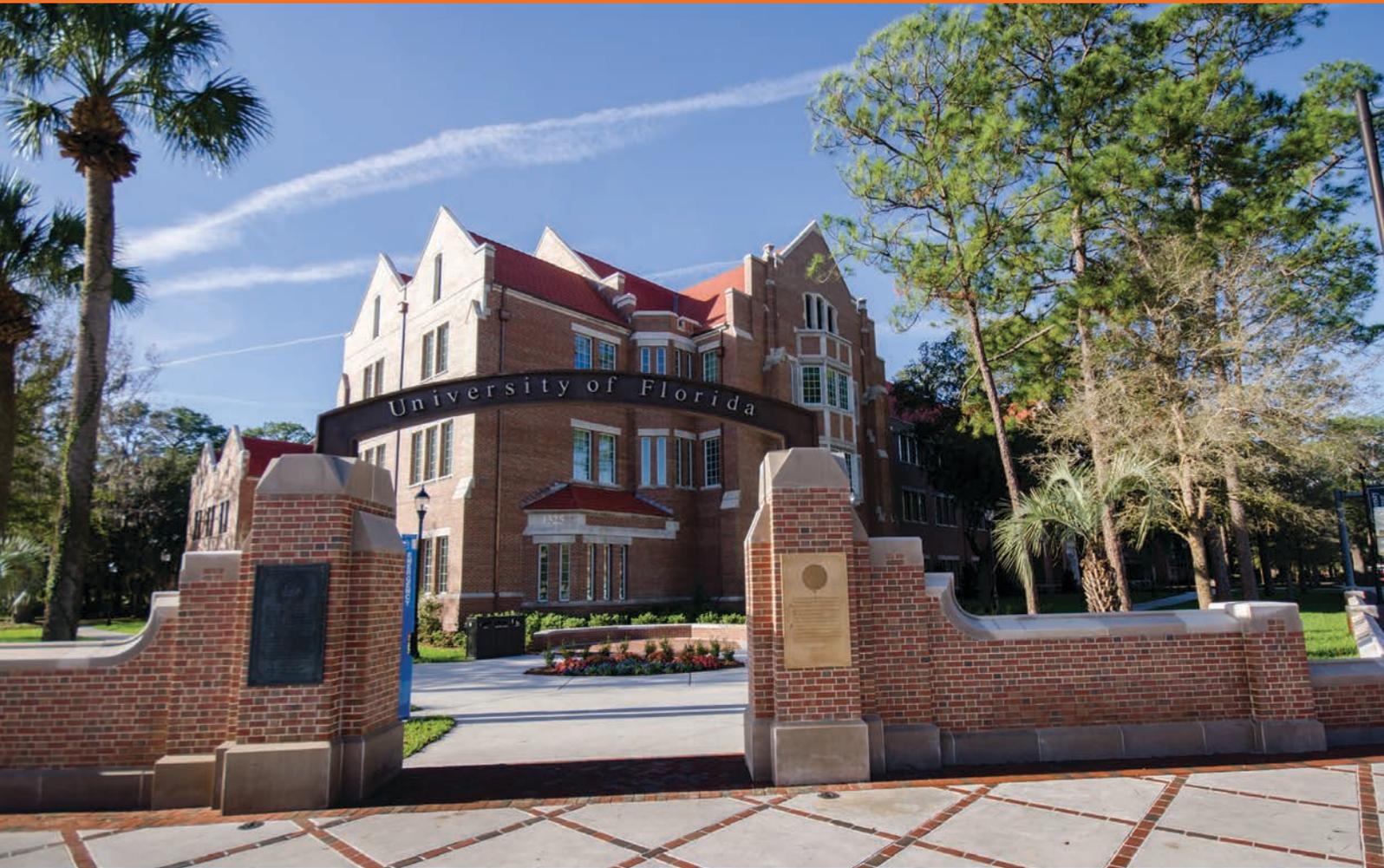
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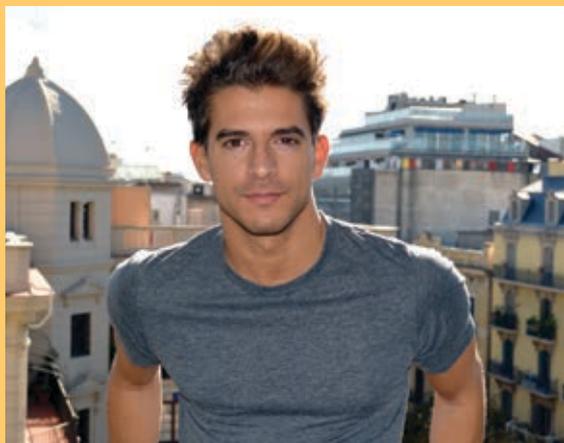
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WHAT YOU SAID!

Study in the USA® magazine helps me a lot to pursue my dreams studying in the U.S. It has been a dream of mine. I have been working hard to get me there.

 *Citra* FROM INDONESIA

Study in the USA® has brought me a lot of ideas about USA. I have learnt about the many opportunities being offered to U.S. international students.

 *Malakew* FROM HOLLAND

You're doing a great job. I am a school counselor and I had received a copy of Study in the USA magazine during the last fair in Bangkok. I'll make it sure that our high school students are updated on the information about getting into U.S. universities.

 *Junjun* FROM THAILAND

I'm studying in Wroclaw, Poland, but I want to start some studies in the USA in 2 years time. First of all, I want to know the language very well and then go abroad. There are some colleges I'm interested about. They sent me some folders and I'm amazed about some offers. In my opinion, your website is very helpful. I have a wide range of variety of all offers I received and I can choose exactly what I want to study. Thank you :)

 *Paulina* FROM POLAND

I really liked your magazine because it is easy to read and you have useful tips for international students. I liked the article on preparing for the visa interview and education expenses. Keep up the good work!!

 *Gianina* FROM ITALY



Your site answers all questions that may arise in my mind. Therefore I am satisfied. Just keep it up.

 *leah* FROM KENYA

My advisor gave me a copy of your magazine, and it helped me a lot in deciding to study in the United States. Thanks for your inspiration! :)

 *Senko* FROM JAPAN

Dear Reader,

There has never been a better time to study in the United States. Today's global economy needs professionals with international experience and an excellent command of the English language. Choose to study English at an EnglishUSA or UCIEP member program, and you can be assured that it meets the highest standards for instructional quality and services to students.

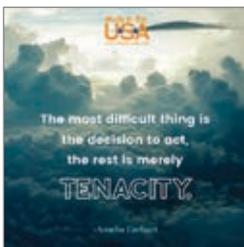
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WHY STUDY IN THE USA®

“The education system in the USA is very flexible, offering courses and topics that broaden our worldviews, helping us realize our true selves and dreams.”

—Elene Beridze from Georgia, studying Political Science/Criminal Law at Manhattanville College

WHAT would it mean to have an American university listed on your resume? Why would potential employers pause and take notice of your education credentials from the United States?

It would mean that you have advanced English language skills and valuable intercultural experience. It would show that you studied within one of the best higher education systems in the world, with access to advanced technology and research. They would know that you received in-depth instruction, learned to problem-solve and have knowledge of modern practices within your field.

It would mean that you have more opportunities.

Studying in the United States and abroad doesn't just give you tangible degrees and certificates. Your experience says something about who you are. Living and studying in another country—especially where your language isn't spoken—is challenging, requires courage and a positive attitude. Sometimes these characteristics are more influential than your degree.

You may be pleasantly surprised to find that the images from films and television programs are not always true. Americans come in a variety of sizes, colors, and shapes. In general, they are very friendly and will be interested in learning about you and your country.

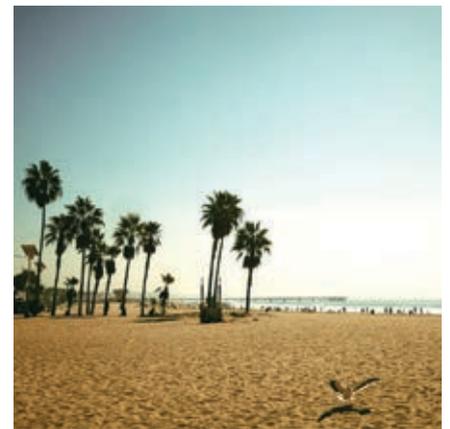
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Use this **Study in the USA®** magazine and **StudyUSA.com** to help you embark on this exciting academic voyage and make your next decision—where to study as an international student. ★

LIVING AND STUDYING IN ANOTHER COUNTRY—ESPECIALLY WHERE YOUR LANGUAGE ISN'T SPOKEN—IS CHALLENGING AND REQUIRES COURAGE AND A POSITIVE ATTITUDE.

“I love the diversity of the people here, as well as the quality of the teachers.”

—Cruzkaya Barbosa from Venezuela, studying English and Nutrition and Dietetics at Howard Community College



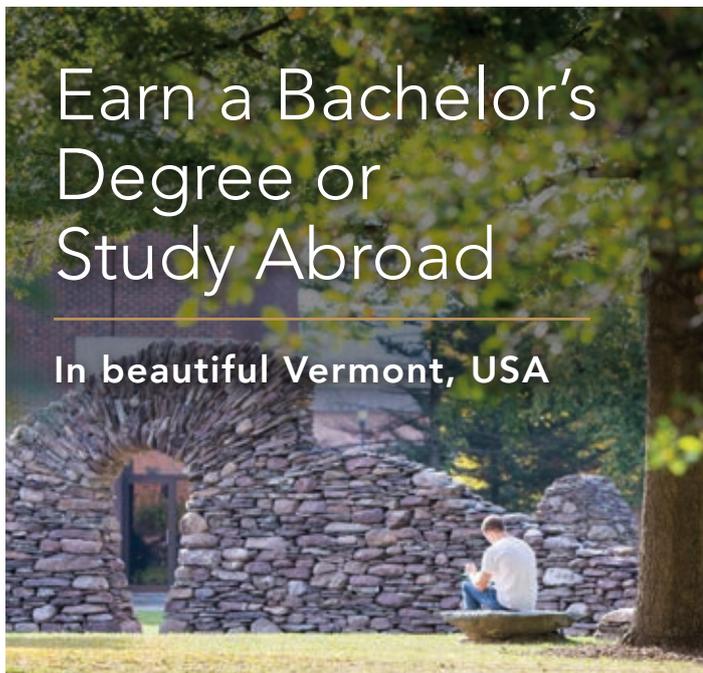
“I was surprised that students in the U.S. are free to present their points of view, and the teachers do not deny them; rather, they welcome the spirit by giving extra points and with class discussions.”

—Nhi Tran from Vietnam, studying English at the Intensive English Center (IEC) at St. Cloud State University



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UNDERSTANDING

THE AMERICAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

BY *Jennifer Privette*

The American education system offers a rich field of choices for international students. There is such an array of schools, programs and locations that the choices may overwhelm students, even those from the U.S. As you begin your school search, it's important to familiarize yourself with the American education system. Understanding the system will help you narrow your choices and develop your education plan.

The Educational Structure

Primary and Secondary School

Prior to higher education, American students attend primary and secondary school for a combined total of 12 years. These years are referred to as the first through twelfth grades.

Around age six, U.S. children begin primary school, which is most commonly called "elementary school." They attend five or six years and then go onto secondary school.

Secondary school consists of two programs: the first is "middle school" or "junior high school" and the second program is "high school." A diploma or certificate is awarded upon graduation from high school. After graduating high school (12th grade), U.S. students may go on to college or university. College or university study is known as "higher education."

Grading System

Just like American students, you will have to submit your academic transcripts as part of your application for admission to university or college. Academic transcripts are official copies of your academic work. In the U.S. this includes your "grades" and "grade point average" (GPA), which are measurements of your academic achievement. Courses are commonly graded using percentages, which are converted into letter grades.

The grading system and GPA in the USA can be confusing, especially for international students. The interpretation of grades has a lot of variation. For example, two students who attended different schools both submit their transcripts to the same university. They both have 3.5 GPAs, but one student attended an average high school, while the other attended a prestigious school that was academically challenging. The university might interpret their GPAs differently because the two schools have dramatically different standards.

Therefore, there are some crucial things

to keep in mind:

- + You should find out the U.S. equivalent of the last level of education you completed in your home country.
- + Pay close attention to the admission requirements of each university and college, as well as individual degree programs, which may have different requirements than the university.
- + Regularly meet with an educational advisor or guidance counselor to make sure you are meeting the requirements.

Your educational advisor or guidance counselor will be able to advise you on whether or not you must spend an extra year or two preparing for U.S. university admission. If an international student entered a U.S. university or college prior to being eligible to attend university in their own country, some countries' governments and employers may not recognize the students' U.S. education.

Academic Year

The school calendar usually begins in August or September and continues through May or June. The majority of new students begin in autumn, so it is a good idea for international students to also begin their U.S. university studies at this time. There is a lot of excitement at the beginning of the school year and students form many great friendships during this time, as they are all adjusting to a new phase of academic life. Additionally, many courses are designed for students to take them in sequence, starting in autumn and continuing through the year.

The academic year at many schools is

GRADING POLICY

Grade		Grade Point Value
A	93-100%	4.00
A-	90-92%	3.67
B+	87-89%	3.33
B	83-86%	3
B-	80-82%	2.67
C+	77-79%	2.33
C	73-76%	2
C-	70-72%	1.67
D+	67-69%	1.33
D	60-66%	1
F	0-59%	1
I	Incomplete	0

tip

"I like that schedules are flexible, classes are fun, and the variety of activities I can participate in."

—Xujie Zhao, from China, studying Computer Networking at Wentworth Institute of Technology

composed of two terms called "semesters." (Some schools use a three-term calendar known as the "trimester" system.) Still, others further divide the year into the quarter system of four terms, including an optional summer session. Basically, if you exclude the summer session, the academic year is either comprised of two semesters or three quarter terms.

The U.S. Higher Education System - Levels of Study

First Level: Undergraduate

A student who is attending a college or university and has not earned a bachelor's degree is studying at the undergraduate level. It typically takes about four years to earn a bachelor's degree. You can either begin your studies in pursuit of a bachelor's degree at a community college or a four-year university or college.

Your first two years of study you will generally be required to take a wide variety of classes in different subjects, commonly known as prerequisite courses: literature, science, the social sciences, the arts, history, and so forth. This is so you achieve a general knowledge, a foundation, of a variety of subjects prior to focusing on a specific field of study.

Many students choose to study at a community college in order to complete the first two years of prerequisite courses. They will earn an Associate of Arts (AA) transfer degree and then transfer to a four-year university or college.

A "major" is the specific field of study in which your degree is focused. For example, if someone's major is journalism, they will earn a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism. You will be required to take a certain number of courses in this field in order to meet the de-

gree requirements of your major. You must choose your major at the beginning of your third year of school.

A very unique characteristic of the American higher education system is that you can change your major multiple times if you choose. It is extremely common for American students to switch majors at some point in their undergraduate studies. Often, students discover a different field that they excel in or enjoy. The American education system is very flexible. Keep in mind though that switching majors may result in more courses, which means more time and money.

Second Level: Graduate in Pursuit of a Master's Degree

Presently, a college or university graduate with a bachelor's degree may want to seriously think about graduate study in order to enter certain professions or advance their career. This degree is usually mandatory for higher-level positions in fields like library science, engineering, behavioral health, and education.

Furthermore, international students from some countries are only permitted to study abroad at a graduate level. You should inquire about the credentials needed to get a job in your country before you apply to a postgraduate university in the USA.

A graduate program is usually a division of a university or college. To gain admission, you will need to take the GRE (Graduate Record Examination). Certain master's programs require specific tests, such as the LSAT for law school, the GRE or GMAT for business school, and the MCAT for medical school.

Graduate programs in pursuit of a master's degree typically take one to two years to complete. For example, the MBA (Master of Business Administration) is an extremely popular degree program that takes about two years. Other master's programs,

such as journalism, only take one year.

The majority of a master's program is spent in classroom study and a graduate student must prepare a long research paper called a "master's thesis" or complete a "master's project."

Third Level: Graduate in Pursuit of a Doctorate Degree

Many graduate schools consider the attainment of a master's degree the first step towards earning a Ph.D. (doctorate). But at other schools, students may prepare directly for a doctorate without also earning a master's degree. It may take three years or more to earn a Ph.D. degree. For international students, it may take as long as five or six years.

For the first two years of the program most doctoral candidates enroll in classes and seminars. At least another year is spent conducting firsthand research and writing a thesis or dissertation. This paper must contain views, designs, or research that have not been previously published.

A doctoral dissertation is a discussion and summary of the current scholarship on a given topic. Most U.S. universities awarding doctorates also require their candidates to have a reading knowledge of two foreign languages, to spend a required length of time "in residence," to pass a qualifying examination that officially admits candidates to the Ph.D. program, and to pass an oral examination on the same topic as the dissertation.

Characteristics of the U.S. Higher Education System

Classroom Environment

Classes range from large lectures with several hundred students to smaller classes and seminars (discussion classes) with only a few students. The American university classroom atmosphere is very dynamic. You will



freshman

Jane begins her undergraduate studies at Highline College



sophomore

She takes many prerequisite courses and earns her associate of arts (AA) degree from Highline College. She's ready to transfer to university!



junior

She transfers to Washington State University, majoring in Marketing.

She takes two quarters (one semester) of classes and realizes she would rather major in Computer Science. She meets with an advisor and officially switches majors.



senior

Jane graduates!

tip

[In the U.S.] I can decide on my major when I'm ready; and if I change my mind, there are still some general units that are accepted for every major and I just need to take additional classes to fulfill the requirements to transfer to a four-year university.

—Vy Cao, from Vietnam, Biochemistry at Alameda College (one of the Peralta Colleges)

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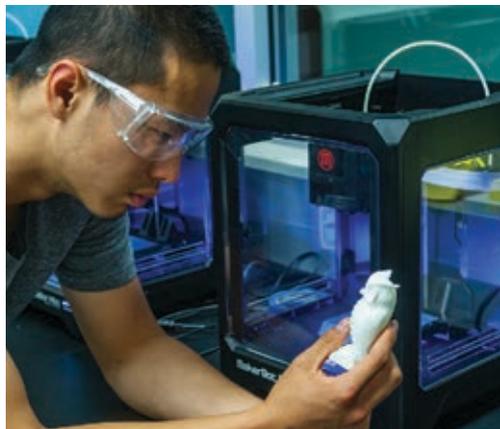
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be expected to share your opinion, argue your point, participate in class discussions and give presentations. International students find this one of the most surprising aspects of the American education system.

Each week professors usually assign textbook and other readings. You will be expected to stay current with the required readings and homework so you can participate in class discussions and understand the lectures. Certain degree programs also require students to spend time in the laboratory.

Professors issue grades for each student enrolled in the course. Grades are usually based upon:

- + Each professor will have a unique set of class participation requirements, but students are expected to participate in class discussions, especially in seminar classes. This is often a very important factor in determining a student's grade.
- + A midterm examination is usually given during class time.
- + One or more research or term papers, and/or laboratory reports must be submitted for evaluation.
- + Possible short exams or quizzes are given. Sometimes professors will give an unannounced "pop quiz." These may not count heavily toward the grade, but is intended to inspire students to keep up with their assignments and attendance.
- + A final examination will be held after the final class meeting.

Credits

Each course is worth a certain number of credits or credit hours. This number is roughly the same as the number of hours a student spends in class for that course each week. A course is typically worth three to five credits.

A full-time program at most schools is 12 or 15 credit hours (four or five courses per term) and a certain number of credits must be fulfilled in order to graduate. International students are expected to enroll in a full-time program during each term.

Transfers

If a student enrolls at a new university before finishing a degree, generally most credits earned at the first school can be used to complete a degree at the new university. This means a student can transfer to another university and still graduate within a reasonable time. ★

Jennifer Privette is the editor and assistant publisher of Study in the USA and StudyUSA.com.

TYPES OF U.S. HIGHER EDUCATION

1 STATE COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY A state school is supported and run by a state or local government. Each of the 50 U.S. states operates at least one state university and possibly several state colleges. Many of these public universities have the name of the state, or the actual word "State" in their names: for example, Washington State University and the University of Michigan.

2 PRIVATE COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY These schools are privately run as opposed to being run by a branch of the government. Tuition is usually higher at private schools than at state schools. Often, private U.S. universities and colleges are smaller in size than state schools.

Religiously affiliated universities and colleges are private schools. Nearly all these schools welcome students of all religions and beliefs. Yet, there are a percentage of schools that prefer to admit students who hold similar religious beliefs as those in which the school was founded.

3 COMMUNITY COLLEGE Community colleges are two-year colleges that award associate's degrees (transferable), as well as certifications. There are many types of associate degrees, but the most important distinguishing factor is whether or not the degree is transferable. Usually, there will be two primary degree tracks: one for academic transfer and the other prepares students to enter the workforce straightaway. University transfer degrees are generally associate of arts or associate of science. Not likely to be transferrable are the associate of applied science degrees and certificates of completion.

Community college graduates most commonly transfer to four-year colleges or universities to complete their degree. Because they can transfer the credits they earned while attending community college, they can complete their bachelor's degree program in two or more additional years. Many also offer ESL or intensive English language programs, which will prepare students for university-level courses.

If you do not plan to earn a higher degree than the associate's, you should find out if an associate's degree will qualify you for a job in your home country.

4 INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY An institute of technology is a school that provides at least four years of study in science and technology. Some have graduate programs, while others offer short-term courses.

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INTERVIEW

Why did you decide to study in the USA?

Because there are a lot more opportunities over here when it comes to careers and education. Also, the lifestyle in California attracted me.

Why did you choose Golden West College?

My older brother was an international student at Golden West College about a decade ago, as well. His experiences and recommendation, plus the friendly, inviting staff and faculty endorsed my decision to start my educational path at Golden West College.

What do you like best?

The atmosphere on campus. Everybody is helpful and comforting. Making friends is very easy here, and I'm not talking about just acquaintances.

What do you miss most?

My family and friends, and believe it or not, Bratwurst with Broetchen! Also, in the beginning it was the feeling of familiarity, but now I feel like I've found my second home in California.

What was your biggest surprise?

I was very bamboozled when I first got here and random people would greet me! I did not know that this was a thing in California, saying "Hi" to anyone, but I like it! For education, I would say receiving help so easily! In addition, the relationships students build with their professors, how easy some of them are to talk to, and how understanding they are!

... your biggest disappointment?

The high cost of groceries, which makes healthy living more difficult.

How have you handled: ... language differences?

I speak four languages and I did not think that English could be problem for me. But once I got here, I figured out that I still have to expand my vocabulary, especially, when it comes to colloquial language. My motto is to

just ask or write it down for later, if I can't use my google-translating app right away. Usually interesting conversations evolve through the language differences!

... finances?

Being financially dependent on my family is something I was and will not get used to. Thankfully, I am blessed to work on campus. Also, I have applied and received scholarships from my college that helped me focus more on my studies and feel less of a financial burden to my family. With guidance and patience, it all comes together.

... adjusting to a different educational system?

At first, it was challenging and confusing what a 4.0 GPA meant, but once I received my first unofficial transcripts it all made sense. You get adjusted quicker than you think!

What are your activities?

The international student program at Golden West College organizes many different activities for the students, like ice-skating, trampoline, pumpkin carving, celebration of colors (Holi Festival), and much more. Apart of that I am also a member of Alpha Gamma Sigma, the honor society of our school, where we go for beach clean ups, help out at soup kitchens, kayaking, zip lining and again do many more fun and noble things. In my first year, I was also part of student council as a delegate of the finance and student activities committee.

How easy or difficult was making friends?

I think it's easy but of course, it also depends on your personality. Especially among us students, I believe because we are all in the same boat, trying to receive a higher education. We study together, cry together, party together!

How relevant is your U.S. education to your personal goals and to the needs of your country?

My dream is to become a doctor of dental surgery and work with Doctors Without

Jassmin Davari from Germany is a senior, majoring in Pre-dental studies and Chemistry at Golden West College in Huntington Beach, California.



Borders. It would be the best of both worlds for me to work and help people while traveling the world.

What is your advice to other students who are considering a U.S. education?

In Persian, there's a saying that you cannot expect to enter any water and not get wet feet. I think you have to expect some struggles of course, because you are coming to a foreign country with different cultures than yours. However, it all comes down to you striving for a better future and your persistence. Just believe in yourself, come over here, get involved with the community and enjoy growing with new adventures! ☆

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INTERVIEW

Why did you decide to study in the USA?

I decided to study in the USA to experience a different culture, learn a new language and open my mind to the rest of the world.

Why did you choose?

I decided on the Intensive English Academy at College of the Desert (COD) because it is situated in Southern California, really close to the main cities with great weather all year long. What attracted me was the facilitated access from California community colleges to major well known universities. Palm Desert is a special place because it is safe, leisure-filled with welcoming people.

What do you like best?

How caring and helpful most of the professors are.

What do you miss most?

I miss the food from home.

How has this program helped you to handle future study at a U.S. university?

I have been in the USA for three years and my English improved since day one. I was able to transfer from the English Academy to college in only one semester.

What was your biggest surprise?

I was surprised by how fun and entertaining it is being active in the college community.

... your biggest disappointment?

Being reliable is not a common quality.

How have you handled: ... language differences?

Meet half way by using and improving English.

... finances?

Start working on campus and learn how to manage expenses.

... adjusting to a different educational system?

Trying hard until it becomes familiar and not giving up at the first challenge.

What are your activities?

Activities is the first priority for the Intensive English Academy to welcome foreign students. Sport days, beach trips, baseball games, host families and clubs filled these past three years.

How easy or difficult was making friends?

Making friends wasn't a challenge since Americans are very easygoing.

How relevant is your U.S. education to your personal goals and to the needs of your country?

My career goal is to become a civil engineer and travel around the world. U.S. education is giving me all the tools I need, in terms of learning experience, to accomplish my goals.

What is your advice to other students who are considering a U.S. education?

Before coming to the USA I thought I knew how the rest of this world was, but I was wrong. Studying abroad may be scary or terrifying, but I could not imagine a better way to mature and be aware of the infinite possibilities of happiness and success waiting out there. ★

Marco Zgliczynski from Italy is studying English at the Intensive English Academy and majoring in Civil Engineering at College of the Desert in Palm Desert, California.



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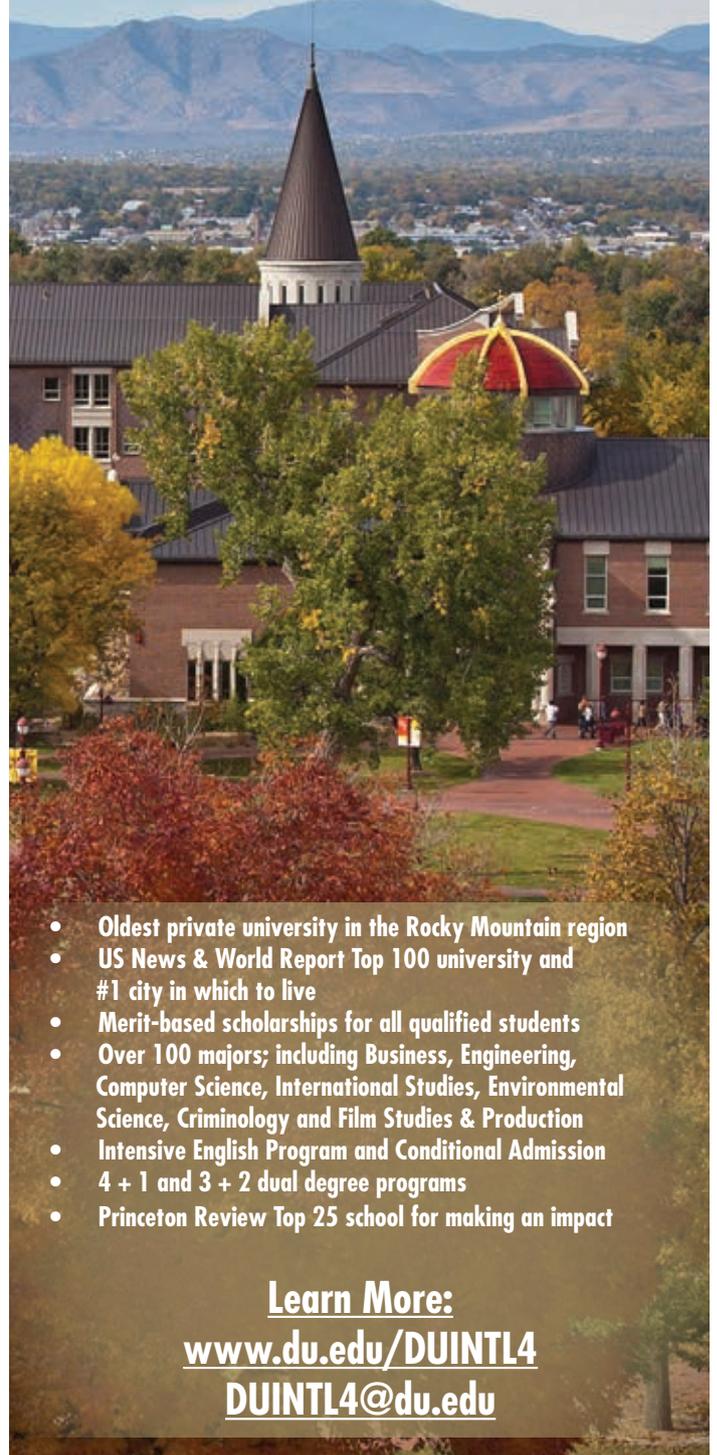
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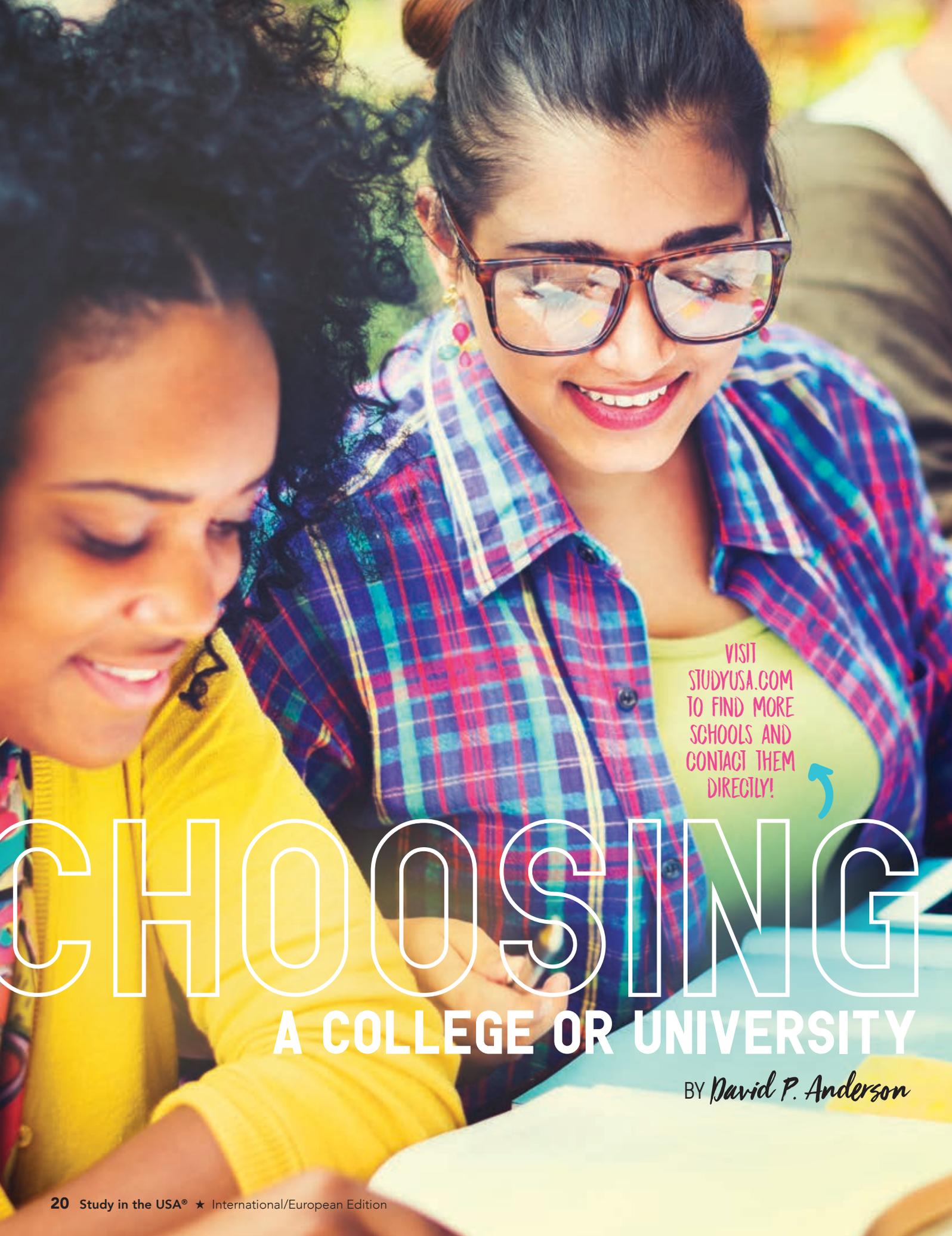


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CHOOSING

A COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY

BY *David P. Anderson*

The United States attracts millions of international students to its universities and colleges because the USA offers so many choices and some of the best facilities in the world. With more than 3,000 colleges and universities in the United States, there are many great school options for just about everyone, from community colleges to career schools to private, liberal arts colleges to large, public universities. Yet, because the choices are so varied, deciding which program to attend is not an easy choice. Therefore, you will have to determine your priorities.

It's important that you take extra care to find out about each school's degree programs, the geographic location, its size and the kind of people who study and teach there.

These considerations can be as valuable to you as the quality of the school's academic programs.

Begin your search early and consider your long-term goals

First, take plenty of time to research your potential choices. It is important to begin this process 12 to 18 months before you wish to begin your studies. (Keep in mind that the school year begins in August or September in the United States.)

You may need to consider that you will need three to nine months of an English as a Second Language (ESL) program to prepare for high-level academic work.

Educational Advisors

It helps to know where to find relevant information so you can narrow your search. Many students turn to educational advisors for guidance.

The United States government has advising centers (either sponsored through the Public Affairs Section of a consulate or embassy), as well as EducationUSA and Fulbright Commission offices throughout the world. Your country may co-sponsor a bina-

tional center with the United States government—these centers are a good resource. There are also not-for-profit organizations such as AMIDEAST and the Institute of International Education.

Many of these organizations do not charge a fee for advising.

Many countries also have private educational advising agencies, but they do charge a fee for services and represent only a certain number of universities. These companies generally have more resources than the non-profit advising offices, and have direct relationships with many intensive English programs and universities. For a fee, they can help you make a decision about which schools interest you and then help you through the application and visa process.

Internet

Because of the Internet, today's students have access to much more information than previous generations. The challenge can be that there is too much information, which can make finding reputable sources difficult. But just like this copy of *Study in the USA*, multilingual websites like **StudyUSA.com** are specially designed for international students like you. You will find comprehensive information about studying in the USA, such as how to choose a program, getting a visa, and the estimated costs of tuition.

There are also numerous featured profiles of universities, colleges and English language programs. From these profiles you can contact programs directly for more information and apply online.

Factors to Consider

We have gathered some criteria to help you throughout your search. All of these factors can be important, but depending on your preferences, some may be more significant than others.

1 ACADEMIC FIELD (MAJOR)

Unlike universities in most countries, at

WHAT KIND OF EDUCATION DO I WANT?

What are my career goals?

Am I willing to move away from home and live in a new country for four years or more?

Have I considered the total cost (including living expenses) for this education?

Have I determined what type of credentials my future career path requires?

Does my home country impose any regulations with respect to studying in the United States?

What types of student organizations interest me?

Do I have any particular religious affiliation that needs to be considered?

Are the American universities or career schools' degree programs recognized by the government of my country?

Where can I find information about American universities?

universities in the USA you do not usually have to decide your main field of study (major) when you first enroll. However, if you know what you wish to study, make sure that each of the universities to which you apply has an accredited program in this area. Almost all colleges and universities offer popular majors, such as business and information technology.

Aside from a few specialized institutions of higher learning, most colleges and universities in the USA offer a wide variety of subjects. It is nearly always possible to study your major and pursue other subjects at the same time.

2 DEGREES & GRADUATE SCHOOLS

Be sure in your research and application process that you are seeking information and applying to the correct degree program. If you have finished secondary school (high school), or have completed some university studies without having earned a degree, you are applying for undergraduate studies (this means for a two-year associate's degree or

"I chose the United States not only because it was a dream of mine, but also because of the quality of its universities and the desire to improve my English."

—Ricardo Primon Pereira de Souza, Brazil, University of Miami

a four-year bachelor's degree). For most of these programs, you do not have to apply for a specific degree, but just for admission to the college or university.

Master's and doctoral degrees are considered graduate programs, sometimes referred to as "post-graduate."

It is crucial that you make sure that the schools that interest you have the appropriate graduate degree. A degree program that is merely an evening or weekend program may not be intensive enough for you to maintain your status as a full-time student.

Furthermore, unlike undergraduate admissions, your application needs to be submitted directly to the department at the university to which you are applying.

For most graduate degrees, you will have to submit standardized test scores from exams such as the GMAT (for graduate business programs) and the GRE.

3 ACADEMIC STANDARDS & PRESTIGE (RANKINGS)

Admission to some U.S. colleges and universities—particularly the most famous and prestigious ones—is highly competitive, especially for international students. An educational advisor is useful in determining whether you have a realistic chance of being admitted. For the majority of students, it is more practical to find a quality institution

FACTORS TO CONSIDER

1 Academic Field/Major

2 Degrees & Graduate Schools

3 Academic Standards & Prestige (Rankings)

4 Location & Region

5 Total Cost for Your Education

6 Large University or Small College

7 TOEFL requirements (or TOEFL waivers)

8 Accreditation

where they will be academically challenged, rather than insisting on attending one of the top 50 universities in the United States.

Most colleges and universities base their admissions decision on academic performance. Your extracurricular activities will also be considered. Scores on standardized admissions tests are important, but your marks or grades from school are more important.

4 LOCATION & REGION

Geographic region and location can be highly influential. You will be living in the United States for possibly years and where you choose to study could affect your overall experience and your access to professional opportunities. Think about what you would prefer, or at least which areas are acceptable to you. Are you from a tropical climate? If so, you should consider whether you would enjoy living in New England, with world-class universities but a cold climate.

Some people are attracted to mountain areas, such as Colorado or Vermont, for skiing or snowboarding. Others wish to live near Florida's Atlantic coast or in Southern California so they can surf. Theater fans are drawn to cities like San Francisco or New York City. Some students prefer to live close to communities of their countrymen, making places like New York City and Los Angeles popular. Other students choose to be somewhere in "Middle America" where they can have an almost complete cultural immersion.

Be aware that the majority of universities are not located in the center of large cities such as New York City, San Francisco or Chicago. Many of the great universities, especially research universities—that attract thousands of international students each year—are in small cities and towns.

This can be a very big adjustment for students from huge cities, so take that into consideration.

If living in a metropolitan or large city is really important to you, there are hundreds of schools in the heart of major cities.

5 TOTAL COST FOR YOUR EDUCATION

Try to calculate the total cost for your studies, including living expenses. You can often get this information via colleges' websites. Elite, private colleges and universities usually have higher tuition costs than public universities. There are a few private institu-

Liberal Arts

U.S. undergraduate students often attend a university for a year or longer before selecting their degree major. Some students later change their major, even though they might have to spend more time studying as a result.

If you are still unsure about the academic focus you would like to pursue, you are not alone. Each year, many thousands of U.S. students enter their college or university as "undecided." To discover what appeals to them, they typically opt for the liberal arts: an academic area that offers a broad range of choices in various fields. It is designed to give graduates a well-rounded educational foundation.

Liberal arts education is an academic area that offers a broad range of choices in various fields. At a school with a strong liberal arts program, you will be required to take courses in subjects from the sciences to the humanities: philosophy, history, music, arts, and literature. By taking classes about different disciplines you are given the chance to explore other fields and learn new topics. You may discover that you have talents in areas you had never before considered. This may even lead you to pursue a field that you had no interest in prior to attending college or university.

You will most likely complete some liberal arts courses as they are weaved into the curriculum of most programs. You may enroll in a primarily liberal arts program simply because it is a valuable experience. A liberal arts education exposes you to new academic subjects and ideas and cultivates lifelong skills. Effective communication and critical thinking skills are essential to any career. In fact, many students desire a broad and balanced education from a liberal arts college before going on to graduate school or a specific profession.

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tions with very competitive costs compared to public universities.

Generally speaking, the areas away from the East and West Coasts have a lower cost of living, in some cases, considerably lower. Please be aware that costs increase every year.

6 LARGE UNIVERSITY OR SMALL COLLEGE?

Most international students enroll at large, research universities. Typically these are public universities that are supported by their state government. Abroad, schools like Yale University and the University of California, Berkeley are well known to families and future employers. But before you decide on these large schools, remember that there are hundreds of smaller universities and colleges that might also be good options for you. Well-known universities' admissions can also be highly competitive.

Small colleges generally provide a more sheltered environment and smaller class sizes. Usually they have a better ratio of students to faculty, therefore you may receive more personal attention. This often eases the educational and cultural transition. Integration into student life can be easier at a smaller college.

Large, research-focused universities have more technical majors like architecture and engineering. And, if they are public, the tuition costs tend to be lower. These schools will have more international students and it is likely that other students from your country will be there.

7 TOEFL REQUIREMENTS (OR TOEFL WAIVERS)

For most international students, the TOEFL examination is a source of anxiety. But, unless you have been educated in the English language it is almost unavoidable. Each program sets its own requirements and usually the more prestigious the university or program, the higher the TOEFL score requirement. Always research requirements of each individual school and program before you apply.

Some universities have what is called a TOEFL waiver option and this is very attractive to international students. It generally involves studying at the university's intensive English language program (or another affiliated English program) through the completion of the final level. Some pri-

Community Colleges

Many countries do not have a direct equivalent of the American community college (also called "junior college"). A community college is a public institution where students can pursue an associate's degree or the first two years of university study.

They have grown increasingly popular among international students because they do not have high entrance requirements and are very economical. For example, some students choose to earn an associate's degree in a technical area and then return to their countries with this credential. Many others, however, use this as an economical path to their degree. You can complete the first two years of your bachelor's degree or simply earn academic credits. Both are most likely transferable to a four-year university and without a doubt, earning some of your university credits at a community college will save you money.

vate language schools, such as ELS Language Centers, have agreements with many universities that allow students who successfully complete the English program to apply for and/or be granted admission without the TOEFL score.

8 ACCREDITATION

Accreditation is the certification that a school or program meets a prescribed academic standard. It is very important to know that a college or university is accredited. If you attend a college or university that is not accredited, you will not be able to transfer your credits to an accredited college or university. Your home country may not recognize your degrees, and you may not be able to get the job you want.

There is no national government authority or Ministry of Education that sets higher education standards in the USA. Some

states authorize or approve schools, but this refers to financial and licensing requirements, not the quality of education.

Instead, colleges and universities have formed associations that set the standards themselves. These associations, called "accrediting bodies," evaluate each U.S. college and university. If the institution meets the accrediting associations minimum standards it receives an acceptable rating; it is now designated as "accredited." This means it earns the right to be listed on the accrediting association's list of acceptable schools. A school must maintain these high standards in order to remain accredited.

Contacting Schools

When you compile a list of colleges and universities that interest you, analyze your choices and narrow your list to six to eight schools. You can find school's contact information within this magazine and on StudyUSA.com.

Before you contact the program, please be aware of the distinction between English language, undergraduate and graduate programs. Each program has its own designated admission office. If you will be an undergraduate student, write only to the undergraduate admissions office. If you will be a graduate student, be sure to write only to universities with graduate schools. In the case of graduate programs, you would contact the admissions office of the graduate school in which you would like to study. For example, if you are interested in a graduate level engineering program at a university, you would contact the school of engineering admissions office.

You can send an online request for information directly to colleges and universities via StudyUSA.com. Go to **StudyUSA.com** to read more about your list of schools and contact their offices.

If you contact schools through email, please understand that it is important for them to know how you learned about their school, so please mention *Study in the USA*[®]. The schools will send you an email and/or brochures with descriptions of the academic programs and activities. ★

David P. Anderson, Vice President - Recruitment & Partner Support; ELS Language Centers, the world's largest campus-based intensive English program provider, offering pathways to 650+ universities worldwide, www.ELS.edu or www.UniversityGuideOnline.org.



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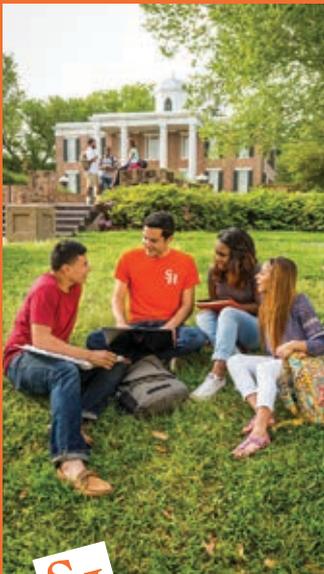
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A photograph of three students—a young woman with long blonde hair, a young woman with long dark hair, and a young man with short dark hair—looking at a tablet together. They are all smiling and appear to be in a collaborative learning environment. The lighting is warm and soft, creating a positive and focused atmosphere.

APPLYING FOR ADMISSION


student tip

"An awesome life experience is waiting for you in the future. You will learn so much more than you think. Nothing is impossible, so go ahead and give it a try." —Paolo Kwan, from Hong Kong, Business Administration & English at Sierra College

Each U.S. university and college sets its own admission standards and decides which applicants meet those standards. Therefore, you must apply separately to each university or college.

Even if you have selected one school where you are sure you want to study abroad, you should still apply to other schools—it is possible that your “first choice” school may not accept you. At least one or two of your choices should be schools where you and your advisor are fairly certain you will be admitted. Remember that you are competing with prospective international students from all over the world for a limited number of spaces.

Most schools in the USA encourage prospective international students to contact their admissions office at least one year before planning to enter that school.

Follow these helpful steps as you apply for admission to U.S. universities and colleges.

Write to Several Schools

After you have selected the schools you want to attend, contact each school for an application form and more international student admission information. You can use the school advertisements throughout this magazine and StudyUSA.com as information resources to help you make your choice. On StudyUSA.com, you can contact schools directly to request information.

If you wish to apply for a graduate (post-graduate) program you should verify the admission requirements with the specific graduate school within the university. Many graduate programs have higher admission standards and some programs require applications to be sent directly to their department. You should be in good academic standing if you expect to be admitted to a graduate program. Contact either the admissions office of the graduate school or the chairperson of the department.

Please mention that you learned about the school from Study in the USA®.

Send Application Forms

Universities and colleges in the USA usually base their admission decisions on a student's academic record and applicable test scores, such as TOEFL, the SAT or ACT. If you are applying to graduate schools, additional exam scores such as the GRE or GMAT will be required.

The admissions office or graduate school

department will send you information about their academic programs and an application form. (You might be able to obtain a specific school's application form online or at your local educational advising center.)

The fee for each application is US\$35 to US\$100. This money pays for processing your application and is non-refundable, even if you aren't admitted to the school. If you mail your application, make sure to contact the admissions office to confirm your application was received.

The admissions office will review your marks earned during the last four years of secondary school. Your results from your country's national secondary school examinations will also be reviewed. If you are applying to a graduate program your marks from university or college will be taken into consideration.

Ask the school you are now attending, or the school you have attended most recently, to mail a certified copy of your academic record or “transcript” to the schools to which you are applying. Prior to taking your admissions tests, you should arrange for official score reports to be sent to the universities or colleges that interest you.

Be sure to send your application to each university or college well before the applica-

tion deadline. This gives you some extra time to resolve any possible delays.

Register for Admissions Tests

Students applying to universities and colleges in the United States must take certain examinations (SAT, ACT, GMAT, etc.) that measure aptitude and achievement. International students must also take a test that measures English language proficiency. They are “standardized” so that students take the same test at every test center. Your scores give the admissions office a uniform international standard for measuring your ability in comparison with other students. These tests are given at test centers around the world.

Take the Admissions Tests

Your test scores are sent directly to the schools to which you are applying. You will be asked to indicate the names of these schools when you register to take certain tests, such as the SAT or ACT. In the case of computer-based tests, you will designate the schools at the exam site and the testing agencies will mail your scores directly to them. There will be a fee for scores that you request at a later date.

Receive Acceptance Letters

After the application deadline, you will begin receiving letters from your chosen schools. Some universities inform candidates of their acceptance soon after their documents have arrived in the admissions office; this is called “rolling admissions.” Other schools, however, wait several months and inform all candidates at one time.

Pay Your Deposit

Most universities require students to pay a deposit by a certain deadline in order to reserve a space in the entering class. For international students this deposit can be as high as a semester's or a full year's tuition.

You should send your deposit immediately if you are applying for financial aid or if you plan to live in university housing. Because many schools do not have enough campus housing for all the students, you will have a better chance of getting a room on campus if you send your housing application and room deposit fee as quickly as possible.

You may also be required to provide a statement indicating how much money you will have available during the years you will be attending the school. If you have a scholarship or a sponsorship from your government and/or company, you will need to send details of your award.

MOST APPLICATIONS WILL REQUEST THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

Personal information—Include your name, age, address, family background, birthplace, citizenship, and so on.

Activities—Make a list of club memberships, awards earned, team sports experience, or leadership roles you have held.

Education plan—Write a short essay explaining why you want to attend this school, what course of study you want to pursue, your career goals, and research plans.

Essay—Some schools require a personal essay on a topic of your choosing. See sidebar.

Letters of recommendation—The application form will include several blank pages for your letters of recommendation.

Ask several of your teachers to compose and mail these letters directly to the admissions office of each school you choose.

When preparing for any of the tests discussed in this article students should keep in mind that good English language instruction is an essential foundation. Consider going through an intensive English language program prior to your university studies. This will make your classes easier. Just like any field of study, English language proficiency can be achieved with continued study and practice.

Take plenty of time to prepare for each test. Use available preparation materials to familiarize yourself with the test's structure and guidelines. Instructions on taking computer- and paper-based tests are generally available for each exam.

Use available sample questions and exercises. Examples of authentic questions and previously used topics are often available, as well as sample tests. Get as much practice as you can before taking the actual exam.

Simulate the test situation. Find out as much as you can about the test environment, and practice in a similar setting. Allow yourself only the time allocated for the actual test. Practice working through sections as quickly and effectively as possible, identifying and focusing on areas where you need improvement.

Take advantage of all the resources available to you. The more you know about a test and how it is scored, the more efficiently you can approach it. The Internet is an excellent resource, and most online information is free.

Follow directions. Read all the instructions thoroughly and completely before beginning any test. Make sure you understand your objectives and how to achieve them. Don't worry if you don't know an answer—concentrate on the current question, and do the best you can, but don't spend too much time on any one item. Pace yourself so you have enough time to answer every question.

Be relaxed and confident. Get plenty of sleep before any exam. Remember, the more rested and better prepared you are, the more comfortable and positive you'll be during the test.

ADMISSIONS TESTS

IELTS for the USA

What is IELTS?

IELTS is the International English Language Testing System, a test designed to assess the language ability of non-native speakers of English for admissions into higher education and other purposes. IELTS tests all four language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking.

Who Should Take It?

There are two versions of IELTS. The Academic Module is intended for students who want to study in higher education where English is the language used for communication. The General Training Module is designed for those planning to study in secondary education, non-degree bearing programs, or vocational training.

Register and Book Your IELTS
<https://takeielts.britishcouncil.org/book>

TOEFL

What is TOEFL?

The TOEFL test is the most widely respected English-language test in the world, recognized by more than 9,000 colleges, universities and agencies. The TOEFL iBT test measures your ability to use and understand English at the university level and how well you combine your listening, reading, speaking and writing skills to perform academic tasks.

Who Should Take It?

Students planning to study at a higher education institution, English-language learning program admissions and exit, scholarship and certification candidates, English-language learners who want to track their progress and students and workers applying for visas.

Register and Book Your TOEFL
<https://www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/register/>

SAT

What is the SAT?

The SAT consists of multiple-choice questions and an essay that measure the skills you've developed in school and your ability to apply those skills. SAT scores help universities make informed admission decisions by providing one indicator of your academic readiness to perform university-level work. The test includes two sections comprised of three tests: Reading, Math,

Writing & Language, plus an optional Essay. Some schools may require the Essay, so be sure to ask before you take the SAT.

Who Should Take It?

Students applying to a four-year undergraduate program at a college or university in the United States are required to take an admission test such as the SAT.

Register and Book Your SAT
<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/register>

GRE® General Test

What is the GRE® General Test?

The GRE® General Test measures your verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking and analytical writing skills—skills that have been developed over a long period of time and are not related to a specific field of study, but are important overall.

Who Should Take It?

Prospective graduate and business school applicants from all around the world who are interested in pursuing a master's, MBA, specialized master's in business or doctoral degree take the GRE General Test.

Register and Book Your GRE® General Test
https://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/register/

GMAT

What is the GMAT?

The GMAT (Graduate Management Admission Test) exam is a standardized test used around the world to gauge academic potential for graduate study in business and management. There are four sections of the GMAT exam: Analytical Writing Assessment, Integrated Reasoning, Quantitative, and Verbal.

Who Should Take It?

Students applying to graduate management or business programs can take the GMAT exam. The GMAT exam is used in admissions decisions by more than 5,300 graduate management programs worldwide.

Register and Book Your GMAT Exam
<http://www.mba.com/us/the-gmat-exam/register.aspx>

Jennifer Privette is the Editor and Assistant Publisher of Study in the USA magazines and StudyUSA.com.

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INVEST IN YOURSELF

BY Jennifer Privette

FINANCING YOUR U.S. EDUCATION



Like many students, both international and American, you are probably concerned about how you will pay for your studies in the USA. Don't let this ruin the exciting plans you have made. With a little planning, you will come out ahead. If you are feeling overwhelmed by the cost, consider what an American education and degree will mean to your future. Education is one of the best investments you can make—an investment in yourself. Plus, the money isn't all going toward lab fees and library late book charges. You are also going to be having fun, spending money on things like ski trips and nights out on the town eating sushi with your new friends!

Make an accurate estimate for the overall cost of your study in America, and then create an accurate budget. There will be many components to your budget that you need to take into consideration. Be aware

FACTOID

75% of all full-time students studying at U.S. universities and colleges hold at least part-time jobs

“I have been working and saving for this for a long time. My government provides some help. Living in homestay is also helpful because dinners are provided, so I don't have to spend money on food.”

—Maria Kanerva from Finland is a Business Administration student at California State University, San Marcos, where she also attended the American Language and Culture Institute

that many U.S. universities and colleges require that international students pay for their first year's tuition in one installment. In order to pay this sizable amount you and your family will likely need to start saving well in advance.

Despite this, don't let the cost of a university education in the USA scare you off! A U.S. education and proficiency in English paves the way to more secure and higher paying jobs. In the end, your education here will pay for itself many times over.

To finance your U.S. education, you may have to rely on financial aid packages, which include grants, scholarships, loans and work/study options. Make time to thoroughly research the funding opportunities available to you.

Scholarships

Very few U.S. universities and colleges are able to offer robust financial aid to international students. Therefore it is critical for you and your family to be responsible for all of your education, personal housing, and food costs. Scholarships are for varying amounts and one will only cover a small portion of the total amount necessary for an academic year in the States.

You can write to the school of your choice to ask for a scholarship consideration form. But, you should first check with your family, government, home institution, and any other organizations to which you belong as a source for funding your studies. You will have greater opportunities and you won't be competing with students from all over the world. Plus, if the scholarship program originates from your country, the process may be easier for you.

Loans

Loans can make it possible for you to study as an international student in the United States. There are also international student loans that are available. While the majority of American students have to obtain loans to study, taking out a loan should not be taken lightly. Rigorously research your other options first. It is best to gain as much funding as possible—money you don't owe back—and then, if need be supplement the remaining costs with loans. Compare interest rates and terms at various financial institutions to find the best deal for the long term.

Just like any other investment, remember the return. You will be investing in your future career and earning power.

“My parents give me a certain amount of money, which I can spend for my expenses each quarter. And my duty is knowing how to balance it in a good way so I would not be out of money while I am in the middle of the quarter.”

—Thao Tran from Vietnam is majoring in Biochemistry at North Seattle College in Seattle, Washington.

Work/Study

An estimated 75 percent of all full-time students studying at U.S. universities and colleges hold at least part-time jobs. If you are coming to the USA for more than a short-term program or exchange it is likely that you will have an F-1 Student Visa. With this type of visa you may qualify for work/study programs at your school. You might want to work extra hours while still in your home country, as visa restrictions in the USA reduce the number of hours you are able to work.

If are able to get a work/study job, be sure not to stress yourself by overloading your schedule with too much work and a full load of classes. You have come to the USA to study and you want to be able to enjoy and excel in your classes. However, an advantage to holding a part-time job is the extra money, as well as the practical work experience. Find a balance that works for you.

Entrance Exams: \$500

College or university admission exams, such as the SAT, TOEFL, and GMAT, can cost from \$50 to \$500. There may be additional fees for processing, sending your scores to schools, etc. You may have to take the exams more than once, so set aside the funds to do so. It's important to give yourself enough time to take the tests so that the school will receive your scores before the admission deadline. There are additional fees to have your score results rush-delivered.

Application Fees: \$250–\$600

Application fees to cover administration and processing range from \$50 to \$75 per application. Most applicants apply to four to ten schools.

ANNUAL COSTS

Tuition

Undergraduate: \$2,200 - \$33,480

Graduate: \$8,340 - \$28,890

Doctoral: \$10,510 - \$40,980

Tuition costs vary greatly from school to school and location. Depending on where you choose to study, your annual tuition can average from \$2,200 to \$33,480 (undergraduate). Typically, English as a Second Language (ESL) schools and community colleges cost less than colleges or universities. State schools, which are financed by the local state and U.S. government, cost

COSTS

Entrance Exams:

\$500

Application Fees:

\$250 - \$600

Tuition:

\$2,200–\$40,980*

Room & Board:

\$8,060–\$11,890

Travel Costs:

\$500–\$3,000

Books & Materials:

\$900–\$1,300

Health Insurance:

\$350–\$1,500

Personal Expenses:

\$2,500

*Tuition costs ranging from ESL programs to doctoral programs

less than private colleges or universities. However, most state schools charge a higher “out-of-state” rate for international students and you should budget for annual inflation of tuition costs, around five percent. A helpful website for comparing tuition is collegeboard.com.

Room and Board: \$8,060–\$11,890

Most students choose a dormitory or residence hall to live in for at least the first academic year. Some schools require that freshman live in the dorms during their first year. Two or more people usually share dorm rooms, which is a great way to make friends and you and your roommate can explore your American university or college together. Housing is also available on many campuses for married students and families.

Rural areas are often much less expensive than larger cities. In larger cities, and at English language institutes, students can live more economically off campus. Rental agreements in the USA often include first and last month’s rent, plus a security deposit.

No matter where you choose to live, take a thorough inventory of the apartment with your landlord and note any pre-existing damage. Make sure to have a signed contract with rental terms and conditions for returning your deposit. If you don’t understand something in your rental contract, have a friend help you. It is important that you understand what you are signing; don’t feel pressured by your landlord to hurry.

Another option many students enjoy is living with an American family. This is commonly referred to as a “homestay.” If your school is equipped, they can help you coordinate a homestay. Otherwise, the school can provide you with a list of companies that help arrange stays in family homes. Don’t be afraid to ask for guidance.

The family provides you with your own room or a shared room, as well as breakfast and dinner in a family setting. Living

Annual Average Tuition Costs

by Type of Institution, 2016–2017

Public Two-Year
Institution: \$3,520

Public Four-Year
Institution: \$24,930

Private Four-Year
Institution: \$33,480

Average Room and Board Costs

by Type of Institution, 2016–2017

Public Two-Year
Institution: \$8,060

Public Four-Year
Institution: \$10,440

Private Four-Year
Institution: \$11,890

SOURCE: THE COLLEGE BOARD, TRENDS IN COLLEGE PRICING 2016

with a host family is an especially good option for younger students who aren’t used to living on their own. It is also one of the best ways to become fluent in English and gain a firsthand understanding of American family life.

Travel Costs: \$500–\$3,000

To calculate your travel costs, investigate ticket prices from your country to the USA. Travel costs vary within the United States because of its size, so expect air travel within the United States to range from around \$160 to \$700 per round-trip ticket.

Books and Materials: \$900–\$1,300

You are responsible for paying for books, notebooks, computer accessories and other study supplies. Expect to spend around \$1,000 on books and materials each year. When possible, buy or rent used textbooks. Websites like efollet.com and amazon.com are good choices for buying used books. This will save you an enormous amount of money. You can also sell your books once the class is completed. Many school bookstores have a buy-back day. These are convenient, but depending on the textbook and time of year, you may consider selling your textbooks online.

Health Insurance: \$350–\$1,500

As an international student at a U.S. institution, you will be required to have health

insurance. To begin your search for insurance, check with the college or university you would like to attend to see what policies they have available for international students. You can then compare the services and prices offered through your school to those of other organizations and companies. Make sure that your insurance company and coverage meets the requirements of the school.

Additionally, most U.S. universities and colleges have a medical center that provides examinations or treatment for minor injuries and illnesses for a small fee. Campuses usually have counseling centers as well. These services cannot substitute for a health insurance requirement.

Personal Expenses: \$2,500

Of course, you will require all of the things that you usually need at home: personal care items, medicine, money for laundry, dry cleaning, transportation, recreation, entertainment, and so on. Carrying large amounts of cash is not advised anywhere in the USA. Very rarely is cash even needed; most purchases can be made by a debit or credit card.

Don’t let all of this serious talk about money stress you! Remember, you are going to the USA to study—and to have fun! Some of your money will be spent on fun things like ordering pizza or going out dancing! Maybe you’ll want to splurge on an “I ♥ New York” T-shirt, or a pair of authentic, vintage Levi’s. Balance thrift and fun, and your study abroad experience is sure to be a financial success! ✨

Jennifer Privette is the Editor and Assistant Publisher of Study in the USA and StudyUSA.com.

*Cost information from The College Board and eduPass

“I have always had campus jobs and paid internships. This is helpful for money you like to use to travel and do things other than school stuff.”

—Hendrik van der Zandt from Germany is studying Finance and International Business at Marquette University.



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GETTING YOUR STUDENT VISA

BY *William Fish*

Here are some guidelines to help make your student visa application process smooth and successful.

Getting your visa to study in the United States takes time but can be a surprisingly easy procedure. It is well worth the effort. In many countries, the number of student visas issued by the United States has grown significantly in the last year.

While the application process for an international student or exchange visitor visa can be confusing, hundreds of thousands of students are able to meet the requirements for a visa each year.

Last year 471,712 F-1 student visas were issued and there are currently 1,208,074 million students in the United States on F and M visas!

After a college, university, or English language school has accepted you for admission to full-time study, the school will send you a document called an I-20 form, which is the application for an F-1 visa.

If you will be an Exchange Visitor, the organization or U.S. Government agency that is sponsoring you will send you a DS-2019 form, which is for a J-1 visa.

You can visit the website of the United States Embassy or Consulate in your country at usembassy.gov to read about Nonimmigrant Visas. Go to the section on visas and read about the correct procedure currently in place for Nonimmigrant Visas.

1 FIRST, your school or university will send you a form confirming that you have been accepted at an institution authorized by the U.S. Citizenship and Naturalization Service (USCIS) to enroll non-immigrant students (the I-20 for an F-1 visa or the DS-2019 for a J-1 visa). You will read and sign this form.

Be careful to make sure that the name and spelling on your passport is consistent with the name and spelling on your application for acceptance to the school. You must also make sure that the school has entered your name as it appears on your passport on the I-20 or DS-2019 Form.

All applicants' names have to be submitted for a security clearance. Citizens of some countries and students who will study certain subjects at a university have to undergo additional screenings that take several additional weeks of processing. It is crucial that you allocate plenty of time for the visa application process.

2 SECOND, you will need to make an appointment for a visa interview and to pay

some required fees. Student visas can be issued up to 120 days before the starting date of your program stated on your form I-20. Exchange Visitor Visas can be issued any time before the date on the DS-2019. You should apply as early as possible for your visa.

Each U.S. Embassy has a website providing instructions on how to make an appointment for a visa interview and other information on the visa application process. The website for the Embassy in your country can be located at usembassy.gov.

Another website (<https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/general/wait-times.html>) can also tell you the expected wait time for a visa in your country. International student visa applicants should receive priority by the embassy or consulate. So, if your academic program begins soon, be sure to explain this when applying for your visa.

You may wish to visit or contact the nearest U.S. Department of State-affiliated EducationUSA advising center office in your country. They are located throughout the world and listed at educationusa.info/centers.php. The staff at these centers will be able to offer guidance and explain where to pay the visa fees and how to schedule your interview.

There is a US\$200 fee for F and M visa applicants, \$180 for most J Visa applicants, which supports the cost of the computer system used to record your stay in the United States (SEVIS). You can pay this fee with an internationally valid credit card. Go to <https://fmjfee.com/index.html> to pay, and make sure you print a copy of your receipt. You must pay the SEVIS fee at least three days before the date of your visa interview. Bring a copy of your receipt to your visa interview.

You will also need to pay an additional US\$160 for the visa application fee. Payment can be made in your country at the U.S. Embassy, Consulate, or at a bank that the embassy designates. Specific information on where to pay the visa application fee can be found at the website of the U.S. Embassy in your country.

3 **THIRD**, the United States is using a new non-immigrant visa application form,

DS-160, that should be completed online. This form replaces all of the other forms. Instructions for completing the form and links to the form can be found at <https://ceac.state.gov/genniv/>

Complete the DS-160 form online completely. Again, remember to use the exact same order and spelling of your names as listed in your passport. Then you will print out the completed form and bring it with you to the Embassy when you go for your visa interview.

You will upload your photo while completing the online Form DS-160. Your photo must be in the format explained in the Photograph Requirements section: <https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/general/photos/digital-image-requirements.html>

If the upload of your photo fails, you must bring the photo with you when you go for your interview.

4 **FOURTH**, prepare for your visa interview. It is extremely crucial that you apply for your visa well in advance of the date your studies begin. If possible, apply three or four months before the starting date of your program. This will give you extra time if there are delays at the embassy, or if you wish to appeal a decision in the event of a denial.

What you wear is important. Consider the interview a formal event. Business attire is appropriate. First impressions can be crucial, since there will be little time to speak with the officer, who will often have only a few minutes to conduct the interview and make a decision.

Be prepared to give your information quickly and completely. If you are unable to answer the questions in English, and the visa officer does not speak your language, you can ask for an interpreter. Speaking English is not a requirement for a student visa. In fact, thousands of students come to the United States each year to learn how to speak English.

The visa officer needs to know your specific objectives, both academic and professional, for studying in the United States. Be prepared to explain why it is better to study your specific field in the United States than to study at home. Be ready to

6 TIPS FOR YOUR VISA INTERVIEW

- + Wear a business suit or dress
- + Be specific when you answer questions
- + Bring bank statements or proof of employment
- + Provide details of your study plans
- + Stay calm and be professional
- + Tell the truth

Once a visa is approved, you should receive your visa within a few days.

say exactly what you will study and for what career your U.S. studies will prepare you. Calmly state your education plans concisely and clearly.

If you are going to the USA to learn English and then earn a degree, you must be able to explain your complete program of study. Remember, it is not enough to just say, "It is better to study in the United States." Give valid reasons why it is better for you. Visa officers like to hear honest, direct responses to questions. They generally react poorly to applicants who give vague answers, memorize a speech, or make overly solicitous comments about how great and wonderful the United States is.

You should also be able to explain in detail why you chose to study at a specific school and be able to give information about that school and where you will live (dormitory, host family or apartment).

If you will return home to complete university studies after studying English in the United States, bring proof of your student status in your country. A letter from a university professor supporting your study plan can be helpful. Young people around the world are often unsure of their plans. However, in the visa interview it is best to give definite answers. If you seem to be unsure about what you will be doing, the visa officer may believe that you are really

Last Year 471,712 F-1 Student visas were issued and there are currently 1,208,074 million students in the United States on F and M visas!

going to the United States for reasons other than education.

Grades do make a difference. If your marks are below average, be ready to provide an explanation on how you are going to succeed in the United States. A letter from a school director, teacher, or from your U.S. admitting school stating that the proposed program of study in the United States makes sense and explaining your good prospects for success can be helpful. If there were special circumstances (such as a death or illness in the immediate family) that contributed to the poor grades, have the school explain those special circumstances.

The U.S. Department of State (DOS) has implemented an online tool that non-immigrant and immigrant visa applicants can use to check the status of their application: <https://ceac.state.gov/CEACStat-Tracker/Status.aspx>

Financing

You must have adequate, demonstrable financial support to live and study in the United States. Visa applications are generally stronger if the financial support comes from family, employers, or other institutional sponsors located in your home country.

If your parents will pay for your education, bring documents that show how your family earns its income. Bring a letter from your parents' employers stating what they do, how long they have worked at those organizations, and how much they earn.

When visa officers see information that is contradictory or does not make sense, they do not grant visas. If your family can only show enough income to support you in the United States, not leaving funds for expenses they will incur at home, the officer will become suspicious.

Large sums of money in bank accounts may not be sufficient proof of financial support. When providing information about your bank accounts, ask someone at your bank for a letter that states how long the account has existed and what the average balance in the account has been. That should

convince the visa officer that you and your family have a long and stable history of business at the bank.

"Intent to Return"

Most student and exchange visitor visa applications are approved. The most common reason for an application to be denied is that the person applying for the visa has not proven to the visa officer that they will return to their country upon completing their studies in the USA. This rule is called Section 214.b.

To determine your "intent to return" home, the visa officer will ask you a series of questions about your connections to your home country and about your study plans. Again, you will have to demonstrate to the officer that your family has the ability to pay for the first year of your proposed stay in the United States and that you have realistic plans to finance the remainder of your education.

You must have all of the required forms with you including your I-20 or DS-2019, the DS-160 form and the SEVIS payment receipt. You should bring any documents to demonstrate how you will pay for your education and why you will return to your country. Some examples of such documents are previous passports showing travel abroad, bank or salary statements, family documents or student records.

If all else fails...

If you are denied a visa there may be something you can do to reverse the denial. You may appeal the decision. In most cases, you will need to provide additional documentation that was not presented with the initial application. In some cases, a visa officer may request additional documents like proof of employment, or ownership of a home or business. You should respond with the information requested.

A fax or email from your U.S. school to the embassy or consulate in your city containing details about your qualifications, and requesting reconsideration, can

WHAT HAS CHANGED?

It is easier to say what hasn't changed. Visas to study in the United States are still being issued. Universities, boarding schools and English language programs are still welcoming international students from any country.

Visa officers are giving increased scrutiny to all visa applicants. This simply means that you need to make sure you are well prepared for your visa interview. Be sure to follow the suggestions in the accompanying article. You should be able to explain in the very brief visa interview why you want to study in the United States, what you will study and how this will prepare you for work in your country when you finish your studies. You need to be able to explain why you applied to the school that has accepted you and how you will pay for your studies and living expenses.

Wait times for interviews and visa issuance may be longer so it is especially important to apply for your visa as far in advance as possible. Student visas can be issued as early as 120 days before you start your program.

be helpful in pursuing a successful appeal. Faxes should be addressed to the Chief of Nonimmigrant Visas at the Consular post in question. Fax and telephone numbers are available on the page of the Embassy or Consulate where you will apply for the visa on the Department of State web site at usembassy.state.gov. Look under "Contact Us." ✨

William Fish meets regularly with U.S. Consular Affairs Officers in Washington, D.C. and in overseas embassies and consulates. He is President of the Washington International Education Council, which promotes international educational exchange. He can be contacted at wfish@washcouncil.org, www.washcouncil.org.

The USA issues different types of visas to students:

A full-time student would receive an **F-1** or **M-1** visa.

Your spouse and children would receive **F-2** or **M-2** visas.

An Exchange Visitor would receive a **J-1** visa. Exchange Visitors come to the USA for consultation, training, research or teaching, or for an approved Au Pair or temporary work position.

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2 years at a
community college
+ 2 years at a
university
= 4 years
(bachelor's degree)

2+2
AGREEMENTS

BEGIN YOUR BACHELOR'S
DEGREE AT A
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

AGREEMENTS

Many American students—and over 91,000 international students—attend a community college for the first two years of university studies in the USA. With nearly 1,200 community colleges in the country, there are many benefits of this model in comparison to studying all four years at a university. Community colleges offer significantly lower tuition, smaller classes and strong student support. And oftentimes, they serve as pathways to prestigious four-year universities.

One of the great strengths of American higher education is the ease with which students can transfer from one college or university to another. For students who plan to earn a bachelor's degree the transition from community college to a university for the final two years can be quite easy. Students will attend a community college to complete lower division general education requirements and then transfer to a university. There, they can take upper division courses and thereby complete a bachelor's degree. Such an approach is commonly known as "2 + 2," though it may take more than four years to complete all of the courses required for a bachelor's degree.

In fact, many university advisors recommend that students attend community college "college transfer" programs first, and then transfer to universities for the final two years. For example, students studying at Santa Monica College, a community college, have transferred to UCLA upon receiving their two-year transfer degree.

Making Transfers Easy

Many colleges and universities have special arrangements known as "articulation agreements" or Transfer Admission Guarantee (TAG) partnerships with other institutions. Articulation agreements help ensure that the classes taken at a community college transfer easily to partner institutions with little or no loss of credit and time. For example, the 10 Maricopa Community Colleges in the metropolitan area of Phoenix, Arizona, work very closely with the University of Arizona, Arizona State University and Northern Arizona University to make sure that Maricopa's courses will transfer.

University Transfer Admission Guarantee partnerships guarantee a community college student's admission upon completing specific requirements set by the university. These requirements may include

a specific grade point average, coursework, and TOEFL score. Some majors are excluded from TAG agreements. For example, Business Administration is excluded from TAG agreements to the University of California, Irvine.

Most commonly articulation and TAG agreements will be between community colleges and four-year colleges and universities within the same state, but not always. For example, all the 115 California community colleges have articulation agreements with the California State University (CSU) system and the University of California (UC) system. For example, if a student successfully completes the general education requirements for California State University or the University of California at Santa Monica College, he or she can transfer to one of the universities and complete the last two years for the bachelor's degree.

These partnerships provide students an opportunity to save money on community college tuition and still transfer and graduate from a top-ranked university.

Whether students choose to study the arts or sciences depends on what they plan for their "major" field of study. During the first two years, students are studying a wide variety of humanities, social sciences, and natural science courses along with some foundation courses to prepare for their major.

Don't allow some of the challenges of transferring to deter you. If you plan ahead, a transfer can be an excellent way to accomplish your educational goals and enrich your experience with American higher education. Just as shifting gears in a car is a way to get more speed and power, transferring from one college or university to another can propel you to greater accomplishments. ★

Elizabeth Lyon, Associate Director and Transfer Advisor at Edmonds Community College. Edmonds Community College located 20 minutes north of Seattle is a state college offering two-year university transfer degrees, English as a Second Language (ESL), professional degrees and certificates; as well as High School to University. The campus combines excellent coursework, award-winning faculty, and superior services to help students with all their needs while living in the United States.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Community colleges are different than four-year universities. Here's how:

+ **ADMISSION IS EASIER.** TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) scores and academic requirements are usually lower for admission to U.S. community colleges than to four-year institutions. Many community colleges also offer ESL (English as a Second Language) programs or developmental math for students whose scores are too low to begin academic studies immediately.

+ **COSTS ARE LOWER.** Tuition at community colleges can be as much as 20 percent to 80 percent less than at four-year American universities and colleges. This is a tremendous cost savings for the first two years of the bachelor's degree.

+ **STUDENT ENROLLMENT** in classes, or at the institution in general, **IS OFTEN SMALLER** than at four-year schools. Teachers and advisors are able to provide more one-on-one attention to students. Many U.S. and international students say that attending smaller schools for the first two years helped them make a good transition into larger four-year schools for the final two years.

+ **CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENTS ARE MORE SUPPORTIVE.** In the U.S. educational system, students often compete for good grades. International students who do not speak English fluently are at a disadvantage. Often, they do better and feel more comfortable in smaller classes where there is less competition. In addition, community colleges typically offer free tutoring to support students' success.

+ **ADJUSTING IS EASIER.** Two years at a community college can help an international student improve English language skills and grow accustomed to the U.S. educational system and culture.

Five Tips for a Successful Transfer!

- 1 START WHERE YOU WANT TO FINISH**—First, find out exactly what the requirements are for admission to the school and to the academic program you want to transfer to. Then, choose classes now at your current school based on what you know you'll need in the future.
- 2 BE ORGANIZED AND READY TO WORK HARD**—Exploring colleges and universities to transfer to in the future is exciting and fun, yet it does take effort. In addition to general admission standards, like the number of credits you have taken and your overall GPA, there might also be additional requirements for admission into your major, such as specific classes, a portfolio, a personal essay or even an interview.
- 3 TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF YOUR RESOURCES**—Work closely with advisors at both your current school and, if possible, at your future school. Clearly communicate to everyone what your transfer goals are so that you and your advisors are all working in concert with each other.
- 4 ATTEND NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION**—Don't assume that because you have already attended college you don't need to attend an orientation program for new students. Nothing could be further from the truth. Even though you are bringing college credit with you when you arrive, you are a new student, and you need to learn how to navigate the systems and resources at your new school.
- 5 HAVE A DREAM SCHOOL, AND A PLAN "B"**—If your dream has always been to attend a nationally ranked and highly selective university, then develop a transfer plan for this school and pursue it with enthusiasm. At the same time, keep yourself grounded and keep your options open. There are thousands of truly excellent colleges and universities for you to consider. Just because you haven't heard of a school doesn't mean that in the end it might actually be the very best school for you and become your dream school!

Elizabeth Lyon is Associate Director and Transfer Advisor at Edmonds Community College.

DUSAN DJOKIC from Serbia is studying at Edmonds Community College in Washington State and plans to transfer his community college credentials to a university so he can study Business Administration.

tip

I chose **Edmonds Community College** because I could get my high school diploma and also, at the same time, start earning my Associate of Arts degree. It was great opportunity for me to finish two programs in two school years. I am now one year ahead of my friends in Serbia. I am planning to work for one year on OPT (Optional Practical Training); then I will transfer to a university. My top two universities are California State University in Northridge or City University of New York.

Coming to America and Edmonds Community College was the best choice I could have possibly made. I realized that it is very important to stick to your goals and do not give up. There are so many opportunities on campus such as activities, clubs and jobs. Doing well in class and participating on campus will help you to be successful toward your dreams.

INTERNATIONAL TRANSFER FAIRS

Many community colleges host "transfer fairs" so their students can learn about opportunities to earn a terminal degree at a four-year university. At these fairs, usually held in a school auditorium on campus, students have a great opportunity to talk to admissions representatives from prestigious universities around the country.

For example, an international community college student studying in Seattle may transfer

out of Washington State to places like California or New York. Representatives from other U.S. universities come to international transfer fairs to recruit outstanding international students into years three and four at their universities.

Sometimes several other community colleges in a region join as well so the fairs can draw even more universities to a multi-day event. ★

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BY *ROBBIN BEAUCHAMP*

COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

PROFESSIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE + DEGREE



The first step

toward your career could be cooperative education (co-op). If you participate in a “co-op” program you enter the work force one step ahead of your classmates. You graduate with a university degree as well as professional work experience in your field of study.

Academic and Professional

As part of a long tradition in this country, over 900 U.S. universities and colleges offer co-op education programs. Cooperative education is a partnership between a university’s academic programs and professional employers, who provide off-campus work experience.

Your school should assist you in finding

Students are not limited to work near the university. International students who plan careers in their home countries often complete their co-op semesters overseas.

Like a Real Job

At Wentworth, each student is assigned a co-op advisor and is encouraged to meet with their coordinator as often as desired. All students are encouraged to attend a five-week seminar, nicknamed the “Co-op Institute,” to prepare them for their co-op. Meetings with advisors can include résumé-writing, mock interviews and co-op search assistance.

Although your university may assist you in finding co-op opportunities, you are the one responsible for securing a co-op position. You will conduct a formal job search, interview for positions and earn a paycheck

“Try your best to get a high GPA. Chinese students do not have work experience when they are in high school, while American students start working when they are in school. Therefore, when you apply for co-op or jobs in the future, a high GPA really helps you to make up the disadvantage.”

Xujie Zhao, from China, Computer Networking at Wentworth Institute of Technology

work with an organization. Your employer should monitor and evaluate your performance, pay you and supervise you.

Required for Graduation

At some universities, each student must complete a co-op in order to graduate. These programs are as diverse as the universities themselves. For example, everyone who earns a bachelor’s degree at **Wentworth Institute of Technology** participates in at least two semesters of co-op, which are built into the curriculum of each of Wentworth’s majors. A co-op is scheduled after the first three semesters of the bachelor’s program when a student has acquired enough knowledge and experience to deal with meaningful professional work.

Since Wentworth is an institute of technology, typical employers are architectural and design firms, engineering firms, and computer software companies. Wentworth students have completed co-ops at the Smithsonian Institution, Hong Kong Airport Authority, the Gillette Company, GE and Fidelity Investments.

just as in the “real world.”

With this practice, students are much more astute than their counterparts who may have never searched for a job, negotiated terms, or landed a coveted position.

Co-op graduates are in high demand in the job market. Employers know that a co-op education integrates classroom theory, hands-on lab and studio work and real professional experience. Most graduates use their employers as professional references, and many also receive full-time job offers from them.

A co-op education supplements tuition and develops marketable skills. Those of us who administer the programs see this system as much more than that—it’s a great way to start your professional life. ★

Robbin Beauchamp is the Director of Cooperative Education and Career Services at Wentworth Institute of Technology located in Boston, Massachusetts.

COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

gives students the unique opportunity to practice classroom theory in a professional setting.

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IMPROVES job opportunities after graduation

TEACHES students valuable job-search skills, such as resume writing and interviewing techniques

PROMOTES lifelong learning by integrating work and academic study

ENHANCES workplace skills like teamwork and critical analysis

OFFERS students financial earnings and work experience, encouraging those who may not have entered university or completed a degree program to reconsider

IMPROVES students’ self-confidence and respect for work

ENHANCES professional development

MBA PROGRAMS



IF you are an international student or professional seeking an MBA you should consider the United States. American MBA programs are world renowned for giving students a competitive edge in the business world through excellent education, diverse specialized programs and unparalleled networking opportunities and resources.

There are over a thousand MBA programs in the U.S. You will find an array of options to fit just about any need—from specialized degrees to unique programs geared toward international students.

Diversity of MBA programs

One of the reasons thousands of international students enroll in MBA programs in the United States is because of the diversity of choices and concentrations. Graduate business students can focus their master's degree in finance, accounting, entrepreneurship, marketing, business management, supply chain management, global business and so many more. We live in a global market and it is growing. Gaining fresh knowledge and expertise in one area of business will meet an economic need and make you more professionally competitive. Furthermore, an American MBA will show that you have international knowledge and experience.

Regardless of degree specialty, most American business schools will train you in the principles of general business management. These principles include a combination of accounting, economics, finance, marketing, ethics and statistics.

Theory in Practice

At every level, the American higher education system is different. Foundational principles and theories must be taught, but they are only mastered through practice. MBA



programs in the United States strongly reflect this teaching philosophy. You will examine real-world case studies and business scenarios in order to devise strategies, business plans, budgets, etc. These types of projects will prepare you for real-life business situations and to approach them with practical knowledge.

“In logistics management class, we had case studies to discuss: Ford company, HP, Ralph Lauren, and so on. We assumed that we were managers and analyzed the problems and solutions. We applied strategies that we learned from the textbook to solve problems. This is a very good part,” explains Boonpa Ing-Anuraksakul, from Thailand, studying Logistics Management at Truckee Meadows Community College in Reno, Nevada.

The majority of MBA programs will have an internship requirement. Internships

are an excellent way to really explore your future career and apply your studies. The companies for which you intern are thriving businesses and you will be working in a fast-paced environment. They will have professional expectations of you.

While internships provide you with a practical learning environment, they are also a prime setting for networking. Networking is one of the most powerful tools for your career. While you are an intern, take advantage of the opportunity to meet and network with current professionals. They may help you get a job or be your future colleagues.

“An internship is a requirement in my curriculum. I believe this is helpful because the college encourages students to apply the skills outside the classroom and develop experience in the real world before graduating,” says Heejoong Kim, from Korea, studying Management and Marketing at Loyola University New Orleans.

An internship will not only give you valuable experience, you will find that having a reputable American company listed on your resume will be invaluable.

“When I graduate with my MBA, I will be competing in a very global job market. Having experience interacting with people from different cultures I believe will give me an edge in the professional world,” stated Juri Adrianto, from Indonesia, an MBA student in Information Systems at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Teaneck, New Jersey. ★

tip

“I would like to become an accountant that focuses on internal control. Due to globalization, you have to speak at least one major language fluently. I chose to study in the USA to help me learn English fluently.”

—Juri Adrianto, from Indonesia, an MBA student in Information Systems at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Teaneck, New Jersey

HOW TO CHOOSE AN MBA PROGRAM THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

1) Think about the kind of academic focus that is important to you

By identifying your personal and career goals you'll help refine the list of schools. You will have a better idea of the educational features and offerings that best suit your needs. Do you want a general MBA degree, or a program tailored toward a specific career goal?

If you aspire to a career in a specific industry you may consider the school's location. Most MBA programs have relationships with local businesses and community business leaders. Therefore, attending certain schools may provide you with extensive networking opportunities and job prospects within your chosen field. New York City, for example, is one of the major banking and financial centers of the world, while the San Francisco Bay Area is home to many leading technology companies.

2) Identify schools that offer programs and services specifically geared toward international students

Before beginning your application process determine which schools offer special enrollment programs for international students. Most American MBA programs are open to students with a bachelor's degree from a four-year university in the United States, or an equivalent degree from another country. If you attended a three-year university, you may need to complete preparatory courses in order to enroll in certain MBA programs. Golden Gate University, for example, offers a preparatory program called Bridge that allows international students to enroll in graduate

study without completing a second bachelor's degree. Many U.S. schools also offer special services to help international students ease into their new academic environments. Along with academics, admissions and advising services for international students (and their dependents) can support integration into the local community. Some schools offer flexible admissions policies.

Please be aware of services and programs that help international students connect with each other, find roommates, and assist with immigration and visa issues. Be sure you know how much guidance you will receive regarding academic and career topics, as well as adjusting to the new academic environment.

3) Look for programs that fit into your lifestyle

Many international students want to capitalize on their time earning an MBA in the United States by experiencing American culture. When you research an MBA program look at the school's location, as well. Find out about the area, its recreational activities, arts and entertainment programs, historical and sightseeing opportunities.

4) Follow your dream!

International students are an important resource for American students; you provide a global perspective that is becoming increasingly important in our shrinking world. With such a wide range of programs available, you are sure to find a program that will give you the training and contacts to reach your goals.

University of California, Berkeley, Extension

In less time than it takes to complete an MBA program you can earn a certificate that combines intensive management education with opportunities to apply your knowledge at a U.S. business. The University of California Berkeley Extension's *International Diploma Programs (IDP)* gives you three options: a four-month program of study; an eight-month program, which is comprised of four months of study and a four-month internship; or the year-long

Management and Business Track which incorporates study in two areas of business over an eight month period, plus a four-month internship.

The International Diploma Programs coordinate student internships at a variety of San Francisco Bay Area companies, non-profit organizations, and government agencies. Most students are placed at small to medium-sized companies so interns have a better chance of building close working relationships giving them a more meaningful internship experience. Student interns have recently

worked for a broad range of companies: advertising, computing, entertainment, e-commerce, finance and banking, information systems, healthcare, hospitality, international trade, marketing, public relations, and telecommunications.

An internship-related project is integrated into the program. Students have helped build a company's client base by establishing contacts internationally, while another devised a software technology plan for a high-tech music database company.

PRE-MBA PROGRAMS

A pre-MBA program is an excellent way to promote success in an MBA program. First, you can improve your English and your performance on the TOEFL and GMAT. More importantly, you can develop business, academic and cultural skills that are valuable in an MBA program.

Susquehanna University

Susquehanna University, a premier liberal arts and sciences university in central Pennsylvania, is one of the few undergraduate business programs in the world to earn AACSB accreditation. Susquehanna University's *Sigmund Weis School of Business* maintains a highly qualified faculty, a rigorous curriculum, and continuous assessment and improvement processes.

Students benefit from the faculty's real-world experience in the classroom with business plan competitions, an investment laboratory with Bloomberg terminals, and visits to businesses and nonprofits in New York City, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C.

The Bloomberg computer terminals give students experience with real-world tools that most business undergraduates at other institutions don't encounter. That experience provides Susquehanna graduates an advantage when competing for their first job out of college.

In addition, 90 percent of Susquehanna students complete a professional experience, such as internships or research, while enrolled. Susquehanna's 18,000-member, global alumni network provides many of these professional opportunities to students. In fact, alumni from renowned international companies visit campus regularly to judge student presentations, speak as guest lecturers, and seek out prospective interns and employees.

Through the structure of Susquehanna's curriculum and the incorporation of real-world projects and internships, students can begin their career upon graduation or pursue an MBA. *Sigmund Weis School of Business* students gain leadership experience, effective communication skills and opportunities to work in teams— all vital qualities for MBA schools. ★



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A photograph of three young adults in a study setting. A woman with long blonde hair is on the left, smiling and looking towards the center. A man with dark hair and headphones around his neck is in the background, also looking towards the center. A man with dark hair is in the foreground, smiling and pointing at a document on a laptop. The background shows a library or study area with metal railings and windows.

CHOOSING A
BUSINESS
PROGRAM
IN THE UNITED STATES

BY **LINDY KRAVEC**

Nearly 975,000 students from other countries enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities during the 2014-15 academic year—an increase of 10 percent over the previous year, according to the Institute of International Education (IIE). Of these students, approximately 20 percent came to the U.S. to pursue a business degree.

“The frontier of business research and training takes place at the top universities in the U.S.,” says Dr. Shan Yan, assistant professor of finance in the Sigmund Weis School of Business at Susquehanna University.

The American business community has a strong influence in the global economy. It makes sense to get a business education in the United States, where you will also have opportunities that don't exist at schools in your home country.

For example, many U.S. undergraduate business programs offer a valuable combination of classroom business theory and real-world business case studies, a focus on specific areas of business, and the chance to obtain internships at some of the most com-

petitive companies in the world.

“Innovative business models are also being created in U.S. markets. When you combine the academic training with exposure to the real market, you can see how valuable U.S. business training is for international students,” explains Yan.

There are more than 4,700 degree-granting institutions in the United States. Some offer two-year associate degree programs, while others are four-year colleges and universities that award bachelor's degrees.

The question is, how can you narrow down all of those choices to find the school that is right for you? Here are several things to consider:

Location—think about more than East Coast or West Coast.

The U.S. is a huge country, with much geographic, demographic and climate diversity. You may want to select a school that allows you to experience all four seasons of weather, or one that provides endless summer. You may prefer a school in a vibrant

student tip

The network you build throughout your college career will continue to be there even decades after you graduate.

—Hendrik van der Zandt from Germany: Studying Finance and International Business at Marquette University

metropolitan area, or one in a charming small town. But you should also think about whether you want to study at a large public university, a tiny private college, or somewhere in between. Is it important to have small class sizes where you can easily interact with other students and your professor, or are you comfortable in larger class settings?

Remember, while you are a student in the U.S. you will have the opportunity to



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travel and explore many areas of the country. But in selecting an American school, consider how the location might impact your program.

As a business major, you may want to choose a college or university that is relatively close to financial centers such as Chicago or New York City, and one that has a proven track record of helping students network with professionals in their field. The opportunity to shadow a business professional for a day, or actually work in a corporate setting as an intern is priceless.

After graduation, your international student visa allows you to work in the U.S. for one year to gain practical experience. With your American business degree, you can gain experience in almost any industry, working for one of the leading companies in the world!

Look for specialized coursework delivered by faculty mentors.

Although many U.S. business schools offer degrees in general business management, most give you the opportunity to specialize in specific areas of business, such as finance, accounting, marketing, or even global management, entrepreneurship or luxury-brand management. These programs also allow you to gain a well-rounded education through elective courses that include world languages, math and sciences, social studies, literature and the arts. You will not only graduate with a business degree, but also a wealth of knowledge that will boost your ability to think critically across many disciplines, a skill that employers value.

You should not underestimate the importance of faculty in American business schools. Professors are trained from top universities and can deliver the most up-to-date information to students explains Dr. Yan. They are not only professors, but also researchers and mentors.

Professors schedule regular office hours when students can consult with them one-on-one to review coursework or discuss career plans. They will advise you of internship opportunities, and help you complete applications for employment or graduate school. As they get to know you, they will



serve as your advocate, writing you letters of recommendation and connecting you with others who can help you succeed.

Susquehanna University accounting student, John Martone, owes his current internship to such advocacy. His advisor, Associate Professor of Accounting Jerry Habegger, connected him with an alumnus who directed him towards PricewaterhouseCooper's recruiting department. Now Martone interns with their office in Manhattan, assisting with corporate tax returns and research into potential clients.

As you search websites of colleges and universities that interest you, it's a good idea to read the curriculum vitae of faculty members who teach in your area of specialization. You'll find out more about their educational background and research interests, and gain insight into what you might learn from them.

Accreditation sets schools apart.

How do you know if a business school meets the highest standard of excellence? Look for accreditation from AACSB International. The longest-serving association

dedicated to advancing management education worldwide, AACSB accredits 775 of the world's best business schools in 52 countries and territories.

AACSB accreditation ensures that the school follows a rigorous curriculum taught by highly qualified faculty, and that it undergoes continuous assessment and improvement.

Susquehanna University

Susquehanna University is one of few undergraduate colleges to have earned AACSB accreditation.

Demanding coursework built on a solid liberal arts foundation gives

Susquehanna business students what they need to succeed.

In addition, a required Global Opportunities program lets students embrace other cultures through study abroad experiences, and learn how to adapt to a rapidly changing global economy. Within six months of graduation, 98 percent of Susquehanna's business school graduates are either employed or accepted into graduate school.

"My family always believed that getting an education in the U.S. would set me apart from my peers ..." says international student, Busisiwe L. Chapula.

Chapula came to Susquehanna University from her native Zambia. Preparing to graduate with her degree in accounting in spring 2017, Chapula says she chose Susquehanna because of its size and close proximity to the business centers of Philadelphia, New York City and Washington, D.C. Although location wasn't the only factor.

"What I like most about attending college here is how much I've learned outside of the classroom," says Chapula. "For example, I learned how to expand my network, create and perfect my résumé, and how to speak effectively in front of people."

Now that she is ready to graduate with her American business degree, Chapula, like many other graduates, is confident that she will have outstanding opportunities in her home country—or anywhere else in the world she may choose to live and work. ★

Lindy Kravec is a freelance writer based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Marquette University

Accounting Program

At Marquette University in Wisconsin, students benefit from small class sizes and a high level of attention from faculty and staff. Students are prepared to be responsible, competent and ethical leaders in accounting, business, government and not-for-profit careers. With an emphasis on real-world success, Marquette provides access to services like resume writing assistance and job interview preparation. Marquette's accounting program holds the prestigious AACSB accreditation, held by only one to two percent of all U.S. accounting programs.

Marquette provides an

internship-matching program for both undergraduate and graduate students.

"They complete job duties similar to a first-year employee and become engaged in business activities here in the U.S. Some students even receive a job offer at the end of their internship," says Professor Michael Akers, chair of the Marquette Accounting Program.

Yuli Pang, a master's degree student who interned with PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) through the matching program, was offered a full-time position with the firm. "I got a feel for the teams I would be working with once I started with the firm and the firm also got to see if I was a good fit," says Pang.

Pang also took advantage of the shortened one-year master's degree offered to students.

The university's location provides plenty of opportunities. Milwaukee, Wisconsin is home to companies like Harley-Davidson Inc., Johnson Controls, and Northwestern Mutual.

Master's students can join Beta Alpha Psi which organizes service projects and meetings with the local business community.

Another unique feature is an independent course that allows students to help solve real financial crimes by partnering with the Milwaukee Police Department.

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BY Sonya Goergen

GRADUATE EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

International students travel from all over the world to come to the U.S. to participate in graduate study. Universities in the U.S. offer capacity for study that many countries are not able to offer their citizens, which is why many students pursue graduate education abroad. Graduate education allows students to garner advanced knowledge of prior studies, with specific interest in a discipline. Students seeking careers in many fields are required to obtain specialized training through earning an advanced degree. A graduate school experience offers an environment rich in academic and social experiences that foster intellectual and personal development.

“Graduate education teaches students how to research and apply knowledge,” says Brandy Randall, Associate Dean of the **North Dakota State University** College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies. “In advanced degree programs, students are learning how to tackle problems that don’t yet exist.”

Institutions across the U.S. offer a variety of graduate programs such as Master of Sci-

ence (M.S.), Master of Arts (M.A.), Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in the arts and sciences, Education Doctorate (Ed.D.) and doctorate degree programs in professional practice. Programs are available in science, technology, engineering, math, health, human development, arts, education and professional degree programs.

American graduate education is high quality, with research laboratories, facilities and libraries that are equipped to meet the needs of graduate students to ensure success in their fields. U.S. institutions focus on the global economy, building relationships and networking with international graduate students benefitting both international and domestic students, which increases opportunities for careers and international collaboration.

“The professors in my department are experts in their fields and they invest heavily in our growth and development. I have learned so much from them and also from my wonderful colleagues and the many friends I have made over the years. They have all enriched my life in many ways and

inspire me to be a better person,” says Courage Mudzongo, a Ph.D. student in Developmental Science, who is from Harare, Zimbabwe.

Faculty and students build strong working relationships by collaborating in the lab and conducting research together. Students often feel fortunate to work closely with innovative faculty mentors who are recognized and respected internationally for their contributions to their fields of study.

Application and Admission Standards

Admission to a graduate program is a selective process intended to identify applicants who are outstanding among recipients of baccalaureate degrees. Most institutions require applicants to have earned a baccalaureate degree from an educational institution of recognized standing. In addition, applicants must have adequate preparation in the chosen field of study and must show potential to undertake advanced study and research as evidenced by academic performance and experience. To attain full standing in a graduate degree program, aim

for a high cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0, or equivalent. (Each graduate program will have different admissions standards, including GPA.) Many universities require additional evidence of academic performance.

Students must be admitted to a graduate program prior to registering for courses. Prospective students should be prepared to submit the following:

- An application (paper or online)
- Transcripts from all institutions attended (take note that many institutions require a WES evaluation)
- Test Scores (TOEFL, IELTS, GRE, GMAT)
- Statement of Purpose (Document describing intent to pursue graduate degree.)
- Letters of recommendation

Opportunities Within a Program and After Graduation

Many programs offer opportunities to collaborate on research and scholarly activity in the form of research and teaching assistantships to qualified students. These awards recognize superior teaching and research contributions of graduate students. Graduate assistantships contribute to professional development with the primary purpose of helping students successfully complete their academic program. Assistantships augment other educational experiences and provide financial support to help students focus on their educational goals.

After graduation, many international graduate students choose to live and work in communities near the university they attended. Advanced degree holders often choose careers in academia, research, manufacturing, industry and business with employers who seek well-educated and trained graduates.

Graduate Education at North Dakota State University

At North Dakota State University (NDSU), graduate students chart their own courses for traditional scholarly inquiry and push the boundaries of modern theory and research. As a student-focused, land-grant, research university located in the heart of the Upper Midwest, North Dakota State University is a leader in academic excellence and competitive research.

NDSU offers 51 doctoral degrees, 84 master's degrees, an education specialist degree and 12 certificate programs. The University offers graduate programs in eight colleges:

- Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources
- Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
- Business
- Engineering
- Interdisciplinary Studies
- Human Development and Education
- Health Professions
- Science and Mathematics

Students in North Dakota State University's Graduate School learn from internationally renowned faculty mentors, have access to world-class research facilities and participate in numerous public-private business partnerships. A growing, vibrant university, North Dakota State University is recognized as a leader among its peers. ★

Sonya Goergen is the Marketing Coordinator at North Dakota State University in Fargo, North Dakota.



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ENGINEERING

THE FUTURE

BY *Jennifer Privette*



There are many unique answers when posing the question of “How?” How does this chair hold me up? How is that I can talk on my cell phone or chat on the Internet with someone across the world? How did this water in my glass become clean? Although the answer to each of these questions is unique, there is one simple explanation for all of these questions: engineering.

No matter where you are in the world, the evidence of engineering is universal. Today, engineers are developing solutions and building the latest technologies for everything from smart phones to solving the world’s most dire problems. The rapid pace of technology and the scarcity of natural resources have made the demand for engineers greater than ever.

The motivation to pursue an engineering degree may differ from student to student. For some, it is the desire to have a successful and profitable career. Others want to bring advancement and a better future to their communities. Then, there are students who are drawn to the field because they are naturally curious about how things work.

Your motivation may be unique, but your ambition to study engineering in the USA is not. Every year, more and more international students come to the United States to pursue undergraduate, graduate and doctorate engineering degrees. According to the 2015/16 Open Doors Report **216,932** international students were enrolled in U.S. engineering programs. It is one of the most popular fields of study among international students.

You may choose to study engineering for humanitarian reasons or because you desire a financially successful career, but no matter your reasoning, know that your talents are in high-demand and you have the ability to change the world. ★

Jennifer Privette is the editor and assistant publisher of Study in the USA magazines and StudyUSA.com.

tip

At **Edmonds Community College**, the courses I took were very interesting and not just theoretical. The classes are small enough that you can get to know your teachers and they are always available for their students. One of them helped me realize that graphic engineering is what I want to study, so now I’m not going back to France.”

—**Mathilde Idoine from France is completing her Associate in Science Degree with an Aeronautical Engineering track at Edmonds Community College in Edmonds, Washington**

“Our modern society is firmly based on the use of technology. Engineers in all disciplines are vital to the design, development, and improvement of the technology that drives our modern global society. Basically, without engineers, everything technological comes to a standstill. Increasingly, agriculture, transportation, manufacturing, communication, medicine, and all other fundamental aspects of our complex global society are dependent on the knowledge and skills of trained engineers.”

—**Kenneth Schroeder, Engineering Department Coordinator and Professor at Pierce College**

“After finishing my associate degree at Pierce College, I transferred to University of Washington Seattle and, in two more years, graduated with a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering. My classes at Pierce prepared me well for my studies at University of Washington—I felt especially ready in physics and engineering. Studying at Pierce College was a great first step in my professional preparation.”

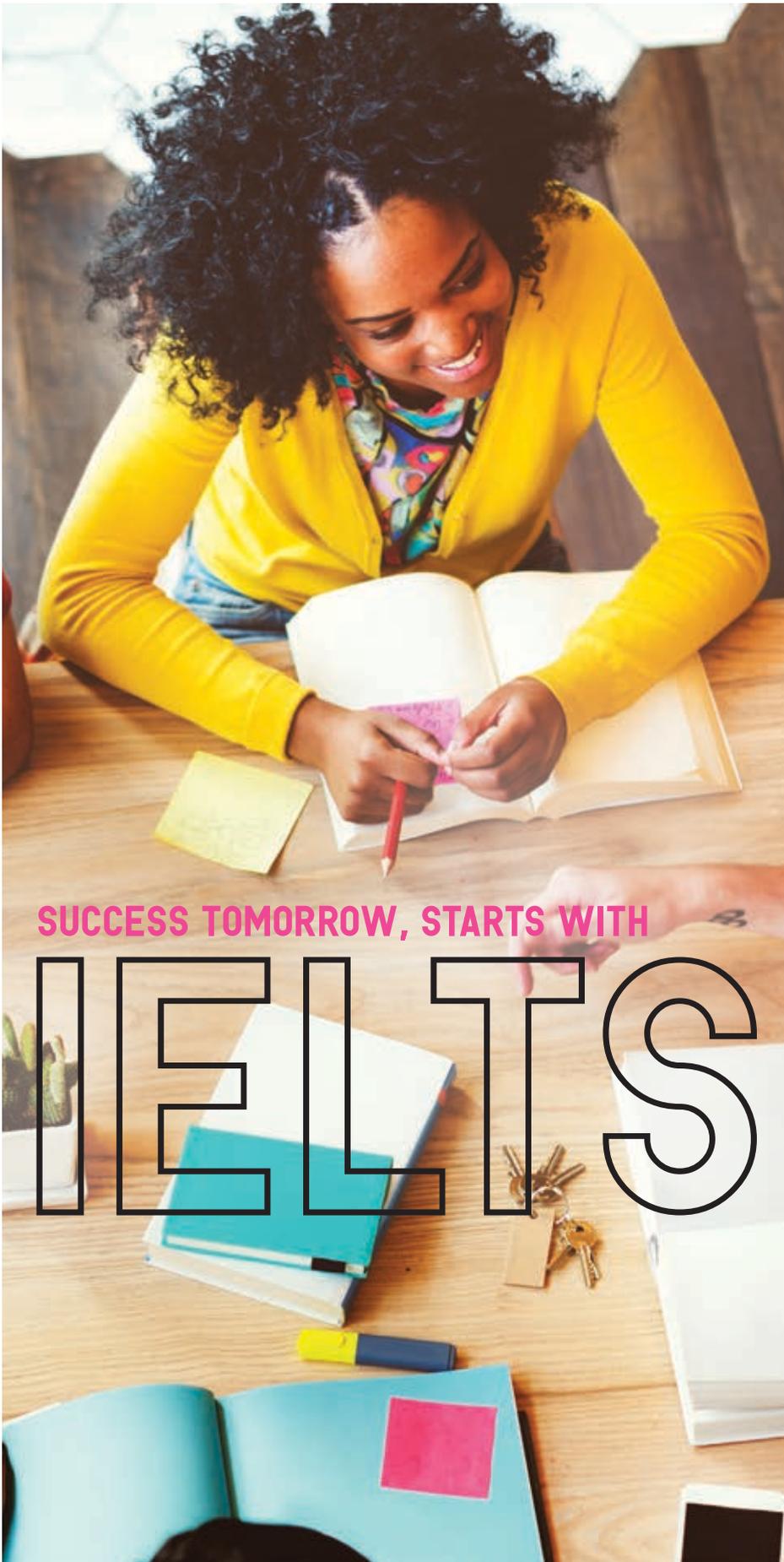
—**Piseth Horth, an international student from Cambodia**

“Speaking English fluently is essential in the chemical engineering field in Brazil. Learning how to deal with different people from different cultures is also good.”

—**Roberta Alves Medina, from the Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia da Bahia, studied Chemical Engineering at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey**

“It was a unique opportunity to study in one of the world’s best universities. I would be able to maintain close contact with competitive educational systems closely related to technology and innovation.”

—**Raphael Lucas Vidotti, from Centro Universitario da FEI, studied Civil Engineering at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey**



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What is IELTS?

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) measures the language proficiency of people who want to study or work where English is used as a language of communication. It uses a nine-band scale to clearly identify levels of proficiency, from non-user (band score 1) through to expert (band score 9).

Ensuring quality and fairness

IELTS is recognized and trusted by individuals and organisations worldwide for its fairness, reliability and high quality standards

Fair to test takers

The IELTS approach is recognised as being fair to all test takers, whatever their nationality, cultural background, gender or special needs. Test takers can feel confident that the IELTS test:

- provides a valid and accurate assessment of the four language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking
- assesses language skills, not specialist knowledge; the topics covered are general enough for all test takers will be able to answer questions on them
- is focused on assessing practical communication ability
- serves both academic and non-academic purposes through a choice of two versions
- features a one-on-one, face-to-face speaking component
- recognises all standard varieties of native-

A photograph of the Grand Central Terminal building in New York City. The building features classical architecture with columns and a large clock tower. A woman in a grey coat and blue scarf is standing next to a yellow taxi cab, which has its door open. The scene is set in an urban environment.

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- ensures test questions are extensively trialled with people from different cultures to confirm they are appropriate and fair.

Test format

The IELTS test assesses your abilities in listening, reading, writing and speaking – in less than three hours.

There are two types of the IELTS test: IELTS Academic and IELTS General Training. Listening and Speaking are the same for both tests, but the subject matter of the Reading and Writing components differs depending on which test you take.

The Listening, Reading and Writing components of all IELTS tests are completed on the same day, with no breaks in between them.

The Speaking component, however, can be completed up to a week before or after the other tests. Your test centre will advise.

The total test time is 2 hours and 45 minutes.

How to Prepare for IELTS Exam

Once you have decided to take IELTS exam, the first thing you need to focus on is how to prepare. There are many ways to prepare for the exam, some of the more common being:

IELTS Courses: The British Council has over 75 years' experience in English language teaching. We run IELTS preparatory courses, workshops, seminars and mock tests covering all four skill areas: Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking. Contact your nearest British Council teaching centre to find out about the courses in your area.

Online Courses: There are many IELTS MOOCs online where you learn useful test-taking strategies and skills, practice and develop skills and strategies by completing IELTS-style practice tests in reading, listening, speaking and writing and develop all the skills to achieve the score you require.

Self-Study using Study Material: A plethora of study material (books and CDs) is available in the market and on the internet. You can find previous examination papers as well. There are free e-books, test papers and materials available online.

Here are a few tips to ace IELTS Exam

Be acquainted with the format: The

foremost thing is to be aware of the test format. Read the information for candidate booklet and familiarize with the test format. Be aware of the duration of each test, number of questions to answer, what the examiners looking for in writing and speaking tests etc.

Practice Sample tests: Practicing sample test papers help you build up your speed. By taking sample tests, you will become more confident and can able to identify your weak areas.

Try to use English every day. Speak English with your friends and family. Read English newspaper, magazines. Listen to English shows, films. Reading subtitles help you to improve your language.

Key success factors to studying in the USA

ONE: Decide where you want to study

- What kind of qualification do you want to achieve?
- What subject would you like to study?

TWO: Decide how you will finance your studies.

- Accommodation costs
- Living costs including food and travel
- The cost of admission and other school fees

THREE: Prepare your application

Prepare far in advance of each college's published deadlines to make sure all test scores, transcripts and other application materials are received in time.

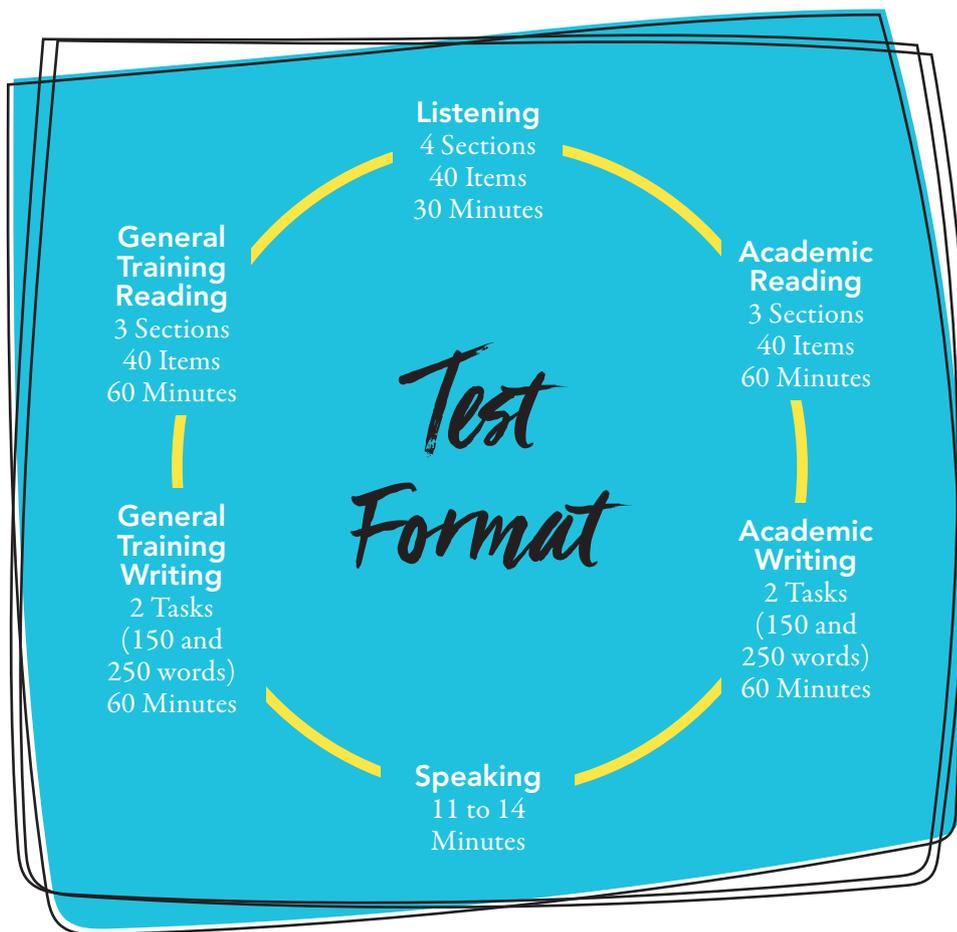
FOUR: Make sure you have a valid visa to study in the U.S.

Make sure you're familiar with the type of visa you will need, and the information you need to make your visa application.

FIVE: Get your IELTS score to help you apply to a college or university

An IELTS test score can improve your chances of being accepted to study in the U.S.

You can read our full guide to studying in the USA here: www.takeielts.org. ★



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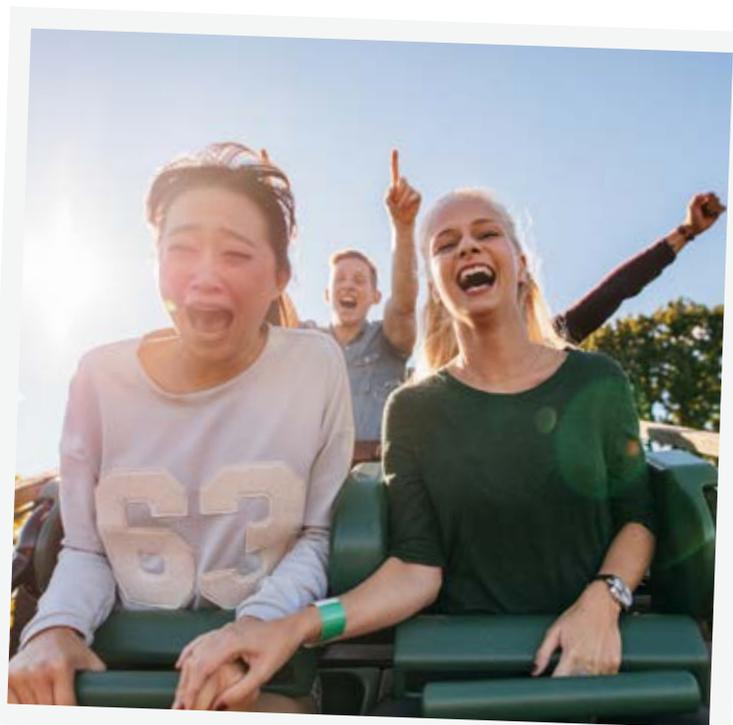


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HOMESTAY

LIVING WITH AN AMERICAN HOST

BY *Stacey Leonard*

EACH YEAR, thousands of U.S. families open their homes and hearts to visitors from all over the world. In a homestay, students can observe, learn and experience a new lifestyle and culture, while practicing English skills in a home environment.

Successful homestay experiences can help to ease homesickness for international students. Often students feel that they have found a second family who loves and cares for them. Many praise their homestay experiences because of the opportunity it gives them to improve their English skills, be immersed in American culture and increase their social skills. This experience can help students make a smooth transition into an American University or enable them to reach a future career goal.

“Come to America early and try to get in touch with the outside world instead of reading books all day. Make more friends and attend all kinds of activities.”

—Alan Li from China studied in the Intensive English Program at Texas Christian University

Daily Living Experience

What makes homestays special is the daily experience of living with hosts who are eager to share their way of life. Hosts involve their guests in day-to-day activities and often introduce the students to their

relatives, friends and neighbors. Homestay hosts also include their international student guests in social gatherings such as summertime barbecues, holiday celebrations, or trips to local tourist attractions.

Homestay hosts will reflect the diversity of the region in which they live. They may be single parents, retired couples, widows, widowers, or young families. They will come from different socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds. What they will have in common is a desire to share their homes and their time with international students.

Usually, international visitors enjoy staying with hosts who have family members of similar ages or with similar interests. The homestay coordinator will consider a student’s needs, interests and



requests before matching the student with a homestay host.

Schools and homestay organizations can arrange short-term, semester or year-long stays. There are also programs in which students will live in the dormitory or residence halls during the week and then spend weekends and holidays with their assigned families.

Adjusting to the Household

Living in a homestay will always require an adjustment period. Most homestay hosts will give the student a list of simple house rules to help everyone live happily together. They may give guidelines about Internet usage, laundry, television viewing, meal times, keeping the bedroom and bathroom clean, and money matters.

For universities offering homestays, it's important to set standards for approving hosts who will participate in the program. For example, at the **University of Delaware**, all homestay hosts living more than one mile from campus must provide transportation to and from campus every day of the week. Hosts must also provide each student with a private, furnished room which has a desk, a bed, clean linens, a bureau, a closet or wardrobe, and sufficient lighting. Students will have access to a shared or private bathroom as well. Homestay hosts are expected to make the students feel welcome in the home and provide an English-only speaking environment to help students improve their Eng-

lish skills.

The homestay coordinators carefully screen homestay host applicants to make sure they have a desire and passion for hospitality and an interest in other cultures. The coordinators will interview the applicants and visit them in their homes to determine the suitability of the living space and meet the family members. Annual meetings, phone calls, and emails keep the hosts up to date in order to maintain high standards of operation within the homestays.

Unfortunately, not all homestay matches are perfect. Occasionally, problems arise that cannot be solved. In these cases, the student can ask for another homestay or

University of Delaware English Language Institute

At the **University of Delaware English Language Institute (ELI)**, there are over 200 homestays in the program. Many of these homestay hosts have been housing students for numerous years. We often hear that hosts have developed such close relationships with their students that they later decide to travel to the students' home countries to meet their families, attend their weddings, and visit their "international grandchildren."

explore other housing options. The homestay coordinator will work closely with the student to ensure that the next homestay will be a good match.

Benefitting from Your Homestay

If you choose to live in a homestay, your hosts will be interested in your country and family. They may also enjoy celebrating your country's traditions as well, such as the Chinese New Year. Be sure to bring photographs of your town, school, friends and family. You might even enjoy cooking a meal from your country together with your hosts. If you wish, you may also bring small gifts that are typical of your country.

There is no better way to gain special insight into U.S. culture, while simultaneously improving English language skills, than by participating in a homestay. It's not only important to get high scores in English testing, but to also learn how to get along with people from all over the world.

Homestays provide students with a well-rounded education and great social skills. These attributes will put you on the top of the list for employment when you return to your home country! If you are willing to learn and have an attitude of openness and flexibility, you will have one of the most exciting and rewarding experiences living in the USA. ★

Stacey Leonard (homestaydelaware@gmail.com) is Homestay Director for the English Language Institute at the University of Delaware (www.udel.edu/eli).

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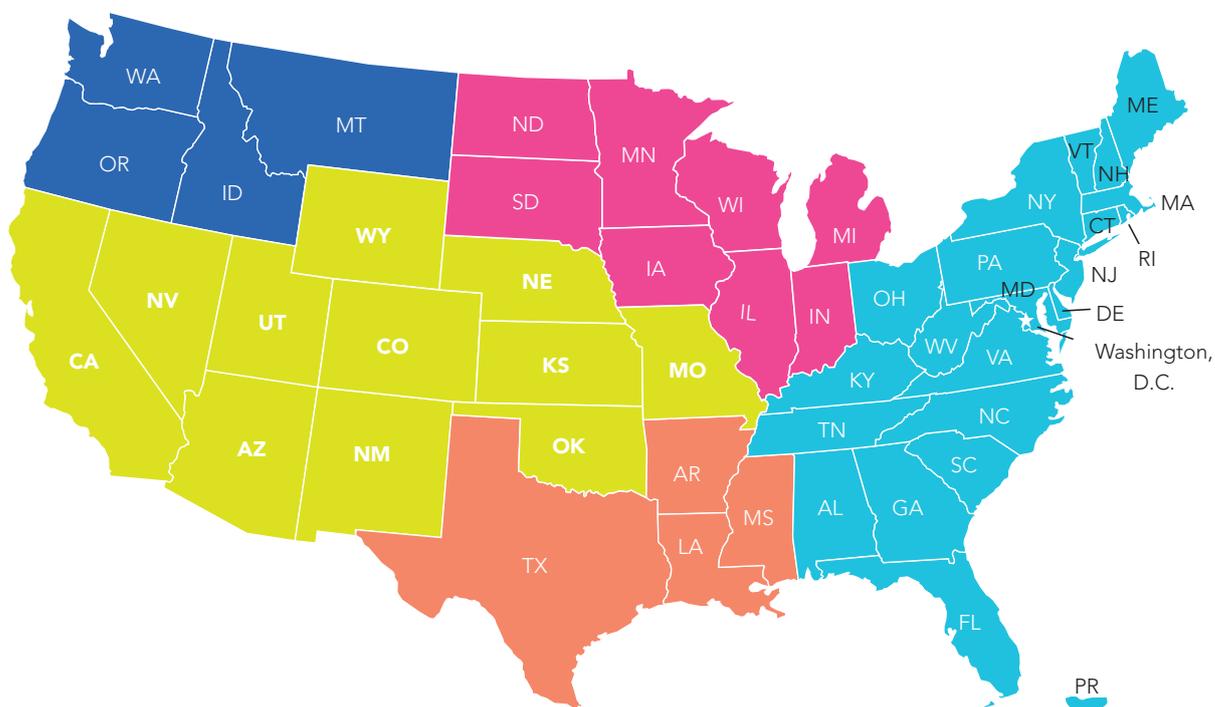
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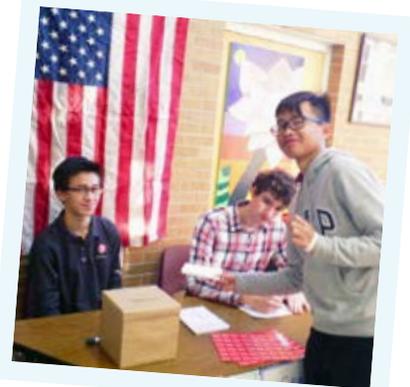


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“If you have the opportunity to study in the United States, do it! It is a decision that you will never regret and that will fill your life with unforgettable experiences, people, and at the same time your world perspective will open and definitely, the opportunities will come to you!”

—Priscilla Araya from Costa Rica



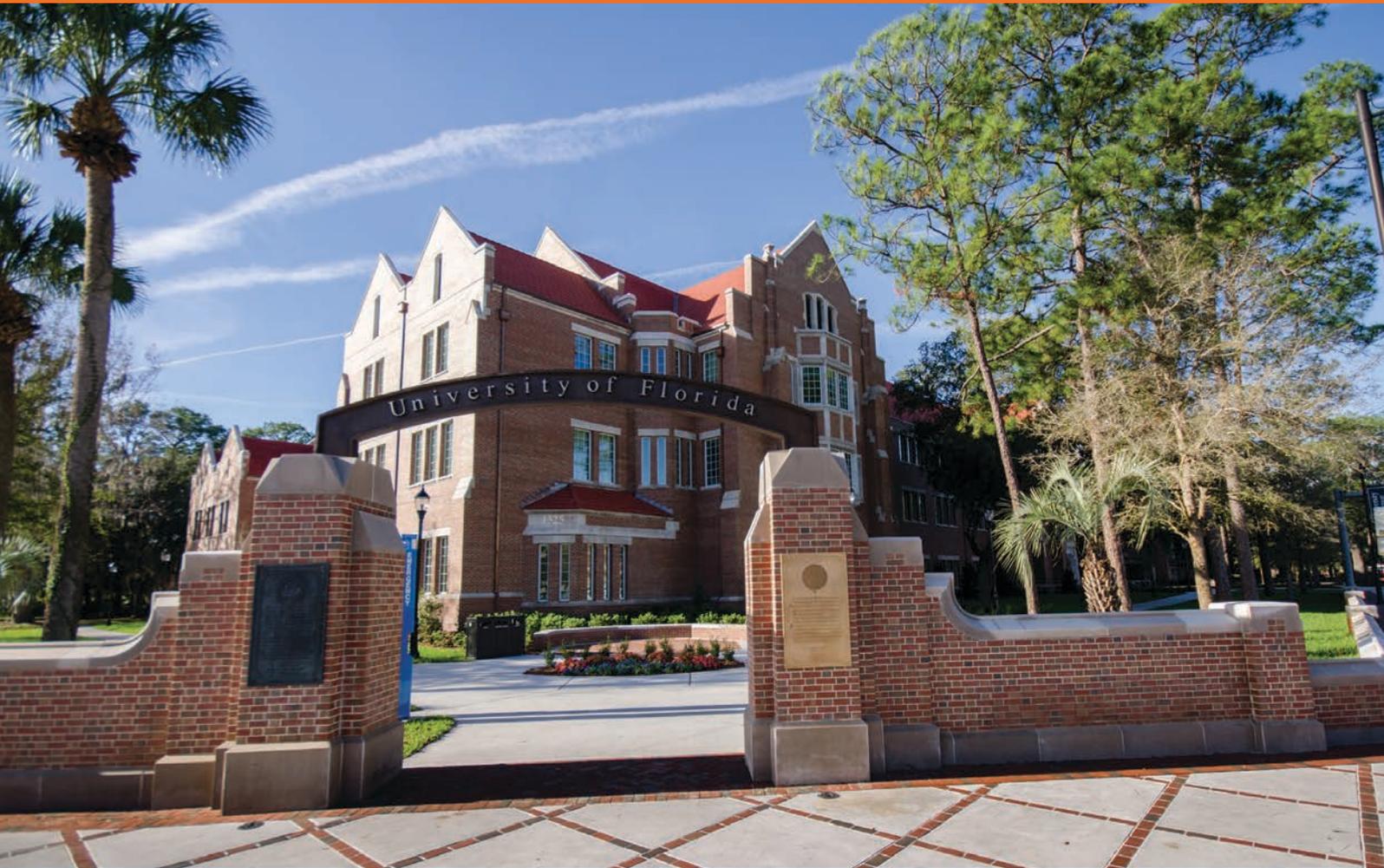
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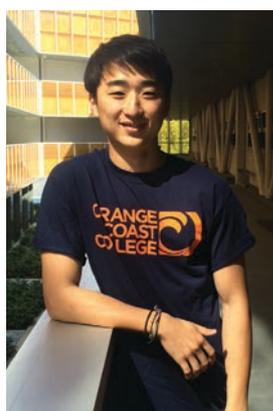


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Accepted to: Bentley University, George Washington University, Loyola Chicago, Pace University, UC Berkeley, UCLA

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