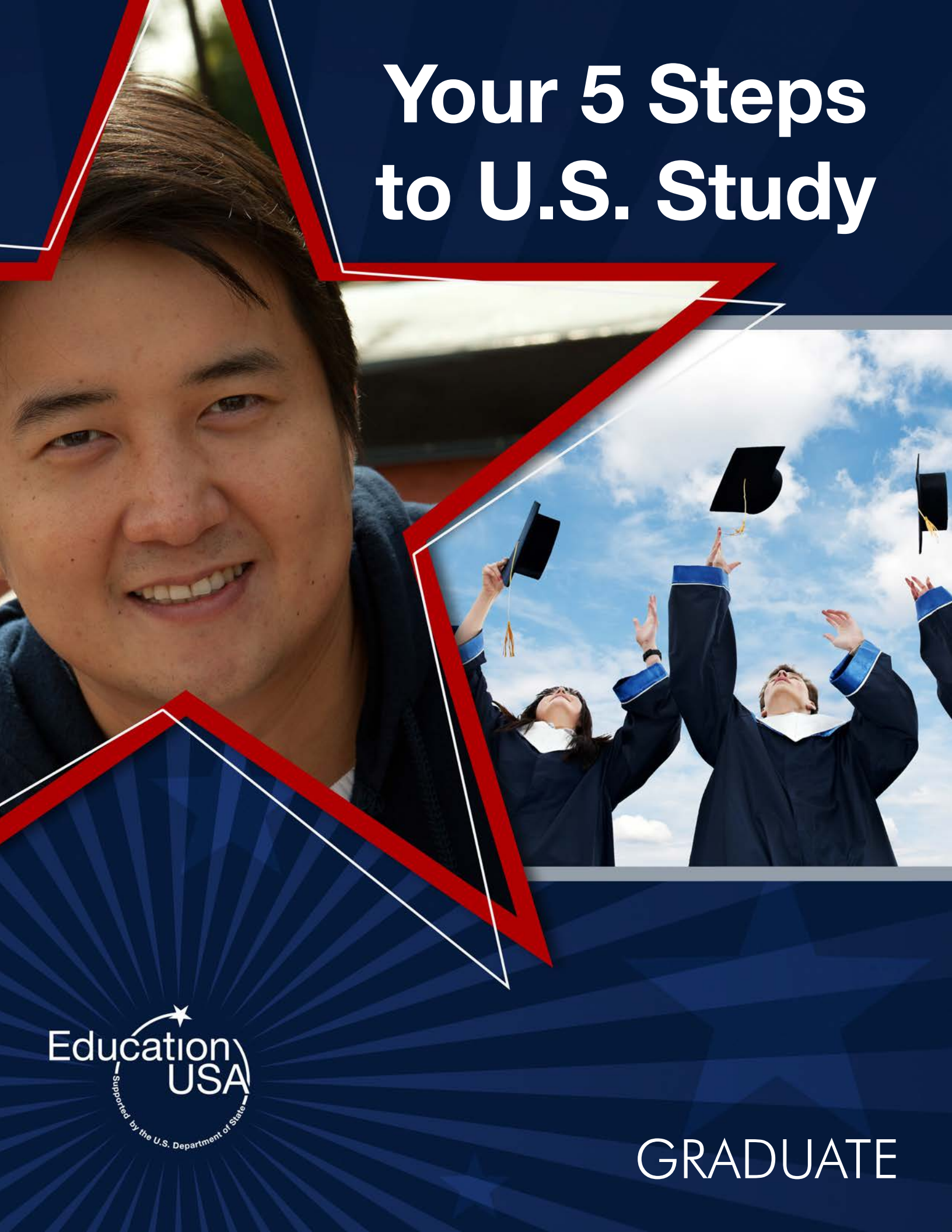


Your 5 Steps to U.S. Study



GRADUATE



Table of Contents

Step 1: Research Your Options	1
Who is a Graduate Student?	2
Graduate Degrees	2
Define Your Priorities	3
What Graduate Programs are Available in the United States?	12
Choose the Best Graduate Program For You	23
Identify Types and Sources of Financial Aid	28
Sources of University Funding for Graduate Programs	28
Other Sources of Funding for Graduate Programs	29
Where Can You Find More Information about Financial Aid Opportunities?	30
Prepare for Standardized Tests	31
English Language Ability Tests	32
Admissions Tests	34
Step 2: Complete Your Application	37
Know the Application Requirements	37
Prepare a Successful Application	39
Plan Your Application Timeline	40
Mark Your Calendar for Admissions Options	40
Step 3: Finance Your Studies	41
Finance Your Studies	41
Make Your Budget	42
Where Can You Find More Information about Financial Aid Opportunities?	43
Step 4: Apply for Your Student Visa	45
Identify Student Visa Types	45
What are the different types of visas for non-U.S. citizens who study in the United States?	46
Follow the Step-by-Step Visa Application Process	47
Learn about Visa Considerations for Students with Disabilities	48





Table of Contents

Step 5: Prepare for Your Departure	49
Attend Pre-departure Orientation	49
Gather Pre-departure Materials and Important Documents	50
Make Travel Arrangements and Depart for the United States	51
 Appendix	
Glossary	53



Your 5 Steps to U.S Study

WANT TO LEARN MORE

ABOUT STUDYING

IN THE UNITED STATES?

"In the United States, you have the opportunity to customize your educational program. This flexibility is not available in other places."

- Student from Libya

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Can't attend a live webinar? Access recorded sessions anytime, along with the questions and answers provided during the events.



"The U.S. campus is like a global village where you meet people from so many places. You'll be amazed at how much you have in common and excited to learn about the differences."

- Student from Trinidad



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WHAT
DO YOU
WANT TO
STUDY?



GRADUATE

24 months prior to U.S. study:



Get Started Today!

Deciding to attend graduate school is not a decision to take lightly. Graduate education in the United States is a major personal, intellectual, social, emotional, and financial investment.

"I would like to go to the United States for global exposure in my chosen field. In my opinion, the quality of education provided by the best universities in the United States is not found anywhere else in the world."

- Student from India



EdUSA Connects Session –
Researching Graduate Choices

Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/3fez1xsz> >>

Have you thought about what is most important to you?

To help you decide, ask yourself the questions listed within **Define Your Priorities (Pg. 3)**.



Congratulations on taking the first step towards pursuing a graduate degree in the United States! Be sure to allow yourself enough time to conduct thorough research about potential graduate schools and programs. If you plan to begin your program in the fall semester (August/September), start your research two years ahead of time.

GOOD TO KNOW

Why two years? Most graduate schools start accepting applications about a year before the program's start date. You should plan on spending a year gathering and reviewing information and evaluating schools and programs.



Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

24 months prior to U.S. study:



Who is a Graduate Student?

A graduate student in the United States is someone who has earned a bachelor's degree and is pursuing additional education in a specific field.



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Choosing a Graduate Program
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Graduate Degrees

More than 1,000 U.S. colleges and universities offer programs leading to a graduate degree a wide range of fields. The two main graduate degrees in the United States are the **master's degree** and the **doctoral degree**. Both degrees involve a combination of research and coursework. Graduate education is characterized by in-depth training and specialized instruction. Compared with undergraduate programs, study and learning are more self-directed at the graduate level.

The Master's Degree:

- Provides education and training in a specialized branch or field.
- May be **academic** {e.g., master of arts (MA) or master of science (MS)} or **professional** {e.g., master of business administration (MBA), master of fine arts (MFA), master of social work (MSW) or master of education (MEd)}.
- Programs offer a thesis and non-thesis option.
- Generally requires one to three years of additional study beyond a bachelor's degree.

Professional degree programs that lead to licensure in specialized fields such as law or medicine are also available in the United States. For most of these programs, a bachelor's degree in a specific field is not required; however, some programs do require certain **prerequisite** coursework. For example, a student entering medical school may have a bachelor's degree in religion, but the student will also have taken a significant number of prerequisite courses in the biological sciences, chemistry, mathematics, and behavioral and social sciences.

The Doctoral Degree:

- Is designed to prepare students for college faculty and research scholar positions, or for other careers that require advanced knowledge and research skills.
- May be **academic** {e.g., doctor of philosophy (PhD)} or **professional** {e.g., doctor of education (EdD) or doctor of business administration (DBA)}.
- Requires that candidates pass a comprehensive examination and complete a piece of original research leading to a **dissertation**.
- Generally requires five to eight years of additional study beyond a bachelor's degree. Previous completion of a master's degree may be required for admission to some programs.

GOOD TO KNOW

For specific program requirements, check the website of the institution where you plan to apply. Advisers at your nearest EducationUSA Advising Center are also available to provide information and resources to support your research.

Master's Degree: The degree awarded upon completion of academic requirements that usually include a minimum of one year's study beyond the bachelor's degree.

Doctoral Degree: The highest academic degree conferred by a university to students who have completed graduate study beyond the bachelor's and/or master's degree. It is also known as a doctorate degree. Students should demonstrate their academic ability through oral and written examinations and original research presented in the form of a dissertation.

Dissertation: Thesis written on an original topic of research, usually presented as one of the final requirements for a doctoral degree.

Prerequisite: Programs or courses that a student is required to complete before being permitted to enroll in a more advanced program or course.





Define Your Priorities

When searching for a graduate program in the United States, it is important to first decide what is most important to you. This will help guide you through each of **Your 5 Steps to U.S. Study**. Please answer the following questions with as much information as possible.

Why do you want to study in the United States?

Every student is different, and it is important to think about your own primary reasons to pursue a graduate degree in the United States. These reasons may change over time, but they will help guide your graduate program search.

As you begin to search for a graduate program in the United States, you should think about:

Your Short-term Goals

- In what field of study will you pursue a graduate degree?
 - Agricultural Sciences
 - Architecture
 - Arts and Humanities
 - Business
 - Computer Science/Technology
 - Dentistry
 - Education (including Teaching)
 - Engineering
 - Journalism & Mass Communications
 - Law (including Criminal Justice)
 - Medicine
 - Natural Sciences (including Biological & Life Sciences and Physical & Earth Sciences)
 - Nursing
 - Political Science and International Relations
 - Public Health
 - Public Policy and Administration
 - Social Sciences (including Behavioral Sciences, Humanities and Cultures)
 - Veterinary Medicine
 - Other:

- Is there a subcategory in this field or a special topic of interest to you?
 - Yes:
 - No



Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

- What will be your next degree level in the United States?
 - Specialized training/certification**
 - Master's degree** - The degree awarded upon completion of academic requirements that usually include a minimum of one year's study beyond the bachelor's degree.
 - Doctoral degree** - The highest academic degree conferred by a university to students who have completed graduate study beyond the bachelor's and/or master's degree. It is also known as a doctorate degree. Students should demonstrate their academic ability through oral and written examinations and original research presented in the form of a dissertation.
 - Undecided**
- List any research or professional experience that you would like your graduate program faculty to have:

Your Long-term Goals

- After you finish this degree in the United States and return to your home country, what type of job or employment do you plan to seek? For example, doctor, engineer, social worker, teacher, etc.
- What skills do you want to improve while in the United States?
- How will studying in the United States help you improve these skills?

Your Past Experience

- Have you previously earned any degrees at a college or university? Select all that apply.
 - Yes**
 - Specialized training/certification**
 - Bachelor's degree**
 - Master's degree**
 - Doctoral degree**
 - No** (Graduate study in the United States will require the completion of at least a bachelor's degree or its equivalent.)
- Do you currently hold a bachelor's degree in the same field you wish to study while in the United States?
 - Yes:**
 - No** (You may need to ask the U.S. institution what prerequisites, if any, will be required prior to beginning your graduate program.)





Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

- Do you have any professional work experience?
 - Yes:**
 - No** (You may need to ask the U.S. institution what work experience, if any, will be required prior to beginning your graduate program.)

How will you pay for your studies in the United States?

Tuition, fees, and living costs vary greatly between institutions, making U.S. higher education affordable to hundreds of thousands of international students each year. [Click here](http://www.iie.org/Research-and-Publications/Open-Doors/Data/International-Students/Primary-Source-of-Funding) (www.iie.org/Research-and-Publications/Open-Doors/Data/International-Students/Primary-Source-of-Funding) to learn more about the different ways other international students have funded their U.S. studies.

As you begin to find your own funding sources, you should think about:

Your Financial Contribution

Your financial contribution can come from family, personal, and/or other sources.

- How much money, in U.S. Dollars, can your own source(s) contribute each year?
 - Less than \$5,000**
 - \$5,000–\$10,000**
 - \$10,000–15,000**
 - \$15,000–\$25,000**
 - More than \$25,000**

Financial Aid

When seeking financial aid, you may qualify for many options at the graduate level.

- From this list, which financial aid options interest you?
 - U.S. College or University Scholarship**
 - Assistantship**
 - Student will work for the institution in research, teaching, and/or office administration. In turn, the student will be provided a tuition waiver and stipend for living expenses.
 - Assistantships can be very competitive and more funding will be available in the fields of science, technology, engineering, math (STEM) and other research-based fields.
 - Fellowship**
 - Student will be offered a grant to cover costs while earning a doctoral degree. This grant may cover tuition, fees, and/or living costs in part or in full.
 - Fellowships can be very competitive and more funding will be available in the fields of science, technology, engineering, math (STEM) and other research-based fields.
 - On-campus Employment**
 - Current U.S. immigration regulations allow international students to work up to 20 hours per week on campus while school is in session, and up to 40 hours per week during school vacations or breaks.
 - You will need to learn more about job opportunities and specific requirements for international students on your college or university campus. On average, students can earn between US\$2,000-\$3,000 per year for personal expenses.



Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

- Student Loan**
 - You might be able to find a loan to pay for part of your educational costs from a bank or lender in your home country. Some U.S. loans may be available, but they may have added requirements.
- U.S. Government or Private Sponsor**
 - Limited funding opportunities are available from the U.S. government for graduate students, and some funding may be available from private sponsors, such as U.S. organizations and corporations with scholarship programs for international students
- Sources in Your Country**
 - Funding may be available in your home country, either from the government, a university, or a private sponsor such as your employer or a private organization.

Which type of U.S. institution is best for you?

More than 1,000 accredited colleges and universities in the United States offer academic program options for graduate and professional students.

As you begin to narrow down your choices, you should think about:

Program Type

Which type of program would best fit your needs as a graduate student in the United States?

- Graduate program** (master's and doctoral degree programs in a wide variety of academic fields)
- Professional program** (specializations and licensure in specific academic fields such as law, dentistry, and medicine)

Selectivity

The selectivity of a graduate program will largely depend on the percentage of applicants who are accepted into the department. This percentage may vary each year and can depend on (1) departmental needs; (2) availability of funding; and (3) quality of the applications received.

How competitive you are will often depend on your past academic performance, standardized test scores, and your overall background. Think about your performance as an undergraduate student and answer each question in this list.

Undergraduate Performance

How does your local university measure academic performance? This could be a grade point average (GPA*), percentile average, test score, or other type of measure. **The combined average of a student's grades for all academic coursework completed. In the United States, high school grades are usually assigned in letters and are based on a 4.0 GPA scale.*

Grade	GPA
A	4.0 (excellent)
B	3.0 (good)
C	2.0 (satisfactory)
D	1.0 (needs improvement)
F	0.0 (fail)





Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

- How did you perform as an undergraduate student based on this GPA measure?

- Your performance was excellent.**
- Your performance was good.**
- Your performance was satisfactory.**
- Your performance needed improvement.**
- You did not perform well in school.**

- Which of the following standardized U.S. college or university admission tests have you taken?

- GRE** (www.ets.org/gre) (or practice test) A standardized test of verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning and analytical writing that measures readiness for graduate-level study.

Score:

- GMAT** (www.gmac.com/) (or practice test) A standardized test for MBA applicants that measures basic verbal, mathematical, and analytical writing skills that have been developed over a long period of time through education and work.

Score:

- LSAT** (www.lsac.org/JD/LSAT/about-the-LSAT.asp) (or practice test) A half-day standardized test that provides a standard measure of acquired reading and verbal reasoning skills that law schools can use as one of several factors in assessing applicants.

Score:

- MCAT** (www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/) (or practice test) A standardized, multiple-choice examination designed to assess problem solving, critical thinking, writing skills, and knowledge of science concepts and principles prerequisite to the study of medicine.

Score:

- TOEFL** (www.ets.org/toefl) (or practice test) Multiple-choice test of English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning (plus an optional writing component) used for admission into undergraduate and graduate programs.

Score:

- IELTS** (www.ielts.org/) International English Language Testing System—An English language proficiency examination of applicants whose native language is not English.

Score:

- Other:**

Score:



Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

Size

The size of a college or university campus can impact many things, such as the number of students in a classroom, which courses or subjects are offered, the ease of meeting new friends, and the overall environment. Imagine yourself going to a small, medium, or large campus.

- Which of the following would be best for you?

- Small (less than 2,000 students)**
- Medium (2,000–15,000 students)**
- Large (more than 15,000 students)**
- No Preference**

The number of international students enrolled at the institution may be important to you as well. This number can vary between a low, medium, or high international-student population.

- Which of the following would be best for you?

- Low international-student population**
- Medium international-student population**
- High international-student population**

Public and Private Institutions

The U.S. government does not own or operate academic institutions. Instead, you have the option to choose between state- or privately-operated institutions. Some of the best colleges and universities in the U.S. are state-operated, and some are private.

- Do you prefer to study at a public institution, a private institution, or do you not have a preference?

- Public**
 - In the United States, each of the 50 states operates public institutions that are funded in part by people who live in that state and pay taxes. More than 650 public four-year and more than 1,100 public two-year institutions are in the United States.
 - Public state-run institutions usually have lower tuition and fees, but financial assistance may be more limited.
- Private**
 - Private institutions operate as not-for-profit or for-profit. More than 2,000 four-year and more than 1,000 two-year institutions are privately owned and operated in the United States.
 - Private institutions have, on average, higher tuition and fees, but more financial assistance may be available.
- No preference**
 - If you are looking for specific academic programs or financial assistance, you may have to choose between public or private institutions.
 - If you are not looking for specific academic programs or financial assistance, you may want to think about both public and private institutions.





Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

Other Types of Institutions

U.S. colleges and universities may also be known for other reasons, such as having a special subject focus like science or art, a religious affiliation, or an all-male or all-female campus.

- Are you looking for a U.S. college or university with a specific characteristic that is important to you?

Yes

Explain:

No

How easily will you adjust to your new community and environment?

The United States is a very diverse country, offering a variety of climates, cultural heritage, and landscapes from coast to coast. Imagine yourself studying in the United States and think about the environment you want.

As you imagine the environment you want, you should think about:

Region

The United States is often divided into four distinct regions. Refer to the map below to see the different regions.

- Which region would be best for you?

West

- The largest region of the United States covering more than half its land area, making it the most geographically diverse area. It is known for mild and damp climates to very dry and hot ones, with greater access to mountain ranges, desert areas, forests, and the Pacific coastline.

Midwest

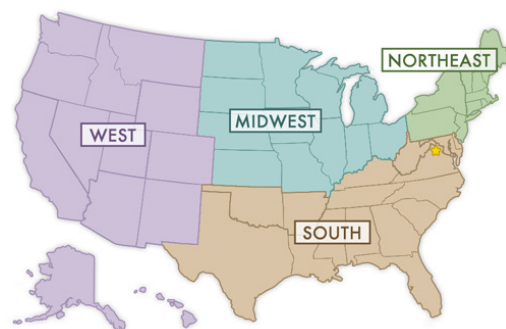
- Also called “Middle America,” it is known for low-lying plains, small hills, and access to large freshwater lakes bordering Canada. Seasonal climate change, ranging from mild summers to cold winters with heavy snowfall, is also common in the Midwestern states.

South

- A region known for its sub-tropical climate with humid summers and mild winters. Southern states have diverse landscapes, including mountains, wetlands, arid deserts, and the Gulf of Mexico coastline.

Northeast

- Comprised of the New England and Middle Atlantic states, this region is known for its forested interior and rocky Atlantic coastline. Seasonal climate change, ranging from mild summers to cold winters with heavy snowfall, is also common in the Northeastern states.





Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

Setting

Virtually every U.S. state includes a setting that can range from an urban city, suburban residential area, or a rural countryside. U.S. colleges and universities may be located in any one of these settings.

- Which setting would be best for you?

Urban

- Cities with larger populations providing convenient access to banking, stores, the arts, entertainment, public transportation, and international airports. Urban areas may have higher average living costs.

Suburban

- Residential areas close or farther from cities, with moderate populations and more spread-out restaurants and shopping areas. Suburban areas may have more moderate average living costs.

Rural

- Countryside areas with smaller towns of fewer people and areas of land used for mining and agriculture. Rural areas may have lower average living costs.

Housing

The type of housing you choose will depend on your personal needs and the options available.

- Which housing option is best for you?

On-campus Housing

Residence Halls and Dormitories

- Furnished with basic needs such as a bed, closet, desk, and chair. Rooms are usually shared with other students and can be a great place to meet new friends quickly.
- Some dormitories may be for men only or women only, and some may allow both men and women in the same dormitory residence.

Married Student Housing

- Demand for housing for married couples is usually high, so you should ask about this as early as possible.

Off-campus Housing

Apartments

- The student finds his/her own apartment and typically pays a deposit, monthly rent, and utility fees.

'Co-op' Housing

- Co-ops are usually large houses where a group of students live together, sharing the costs and taking turns to do the cooking and cleaning.

American Host Family

- Living with an American family can be an enriching experience and can be less expensive than other off-campus housing options.
- Host family options may not be available at all colleges or universities, so it is important to check with the campus adviser if you are interested.



Campus Life

Activities available in the local area may also be an important part of your U.S. experience. Will you be in a location that offers activities that interest you?

- Which activities will you want to be able to access?

Sports

Which ones?

Arts

Which ones?

Clubs and organizations

Which ones?

Hobbies

Which ones?

Other



Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

24 months prior to U.S. study:



What Graduate Programs are Available in the United States?



"I wanted to broaden my horizons in terms of skills and in terms of discovering the world. An MBA in the United States was the perfect match."

- Graduate student from Belgium

GOOD TO KNOW

The programs listed here are the most popular choices among graduate students in the United States. With such a broad range of choices; including other programs not listed here that may be available - you're sure to find the best program for you!

Agricultural Sciences

Fields within agricultural-sciences include academic disciplines such as agricultural engineering, agrophysics, animal science, environmental science, food science, irrigation and water management, and soil science.

Graduate programs in the agricultural sciences lead to a master of arts (MA), master of science (MS), or doctor of philosophy (PhD). Master's degree programs, with thesis or non-thesis options, usually require one or two academic years of full-time study beyond a bachelor's degree and may lead directly into doctoral programs. Doctoral degree programs in the agricultural sciences may require five to eight years of study beyond the bachelor's degree, depending on the field.

Architecture

Architecture is the study of the theory and practice of designing buildings and structures.

Graduate programs in architecture lead to the master of architecture (MArch) and require one to two academic years of full-time study beyond a bachelor's degree. Master's-level coursework in architecture, or industrial engineering, typically focuses on the creation of buildings for residential and urban areas using basic computer-aided design software and freehand drawing, as well as courses on history, law, urban planning, and design.

When selecting a graduate program in architecture, students should focus on the type of architecture they want to practice. Students should also make sure the **National Architectural Accrediting Board** (www.naab.org/) has accredited the school and program.



Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

Arts and Humanities

Arts and humanities are academic disciplines that include fields of study such as languages, literature, history, philosophy, religions, arts, and social sciences.

Graduate programs in arts and humanities lead to a master of arts (MA), master of science (MS), or doctor of philosophy (PhD). Master's degree programs, with thesis or non-thesis options, usually require one or two academic years of full-time study beyond a bachelor's degree and may lead directly into doctoral programs. Doctoral degree programs in the arts and humanities may require five to eight years of study beyond the bachelor's degree, depending on the field.

How can you learn more?

- [Arts and Arts Education references](#)

Business

Business is the science of managing people to organize and maintain a shared goal.



EdUSA Connects Session – MBA Admissions

Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/90ry33ty> >>



EdUSA Connects Session – Early Career MBA

Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/eent811z> >>

A master's in business administration (MBA) is one of the most popular graduate degrees related to business education in the United States. The curriculum of MBA programs generally includes coursework in topics such as management, finance, accounting, marketing, economics, organizational behavior, entrepreneurship, globalization, and social responsibility. To show your personal skills and interest, focus on a specific concentration as part of your studies. On average, students earn an MBA degree in two years, although accelerated programs do exist.

Doctoral programs in business include the doctor of philosophy (PhD) in business and the doctor of business administration (DBA). The PhD program is designed to lead graduates to state-of-the-art business practice that improves the impact of the business sector on the larger community. The DBA program is designed to improve business practice, processes, and programs, ranging from the management of people to the management of operations and projects.

Graduate programs in business may include programs in subjects such as finance, accounting, banking, or others; various short certificate courses may also be explored.

How can you learn more?

- [Graduate Management Admissions Council \(www.gmac.com\)](http://www.gmac.com)
- www.MBA.com
- [Business Administration references](#)



Computer Science/Technology

The field of computer science focuses on the study software programs, and using that knowledge to create new programs or improve existing ones. Graduate programs in computer science include the study of computation and algorithms with a focus on different theories, databases, computer graphics, and programming.

Graduate programs in computer science lead to a master of science (MS) or doctor of philosophy (PhD). Master's degree programs, with thesis or non-thesis options, usually require one or two academic years of full-time study beyond a bachelor's degree and may lead directly into doctoral programs. Doctoral degree programs in computer science may require five to eight years of study beyond the bachelor's degree, depending on the program.

How can you learn more?

- [Scholarly Societies in Computer Science](http://www.scholarly-societies.org/compsci_soc.html) (http://www.scholarly-societies.org/compsci_soc.html)

Dentistry

Dental study only begins at the graduate level in the United States. There are no undergraduate programs in dentistry that lead directly to a license to practice as a dentist. Instead students may take a set of pre-dental courses as part of an undergraduate degree that dental schools typically require for admission to DDS (doctor of dental surgery) or other graduate dental programs. Students interested in dentistry should have a minimum number of prerequisite undergraduate courses in the biological sciences, chemistry, physics, and mathematics, as well as in the humanities and behavioral and social sciences.

Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) or Doctor of Dental Medicine (DMD)

The first professional degree in dentistry is either the doctor of dental surgery (DDS) or the doctor of dental medicine (DMD) degree, and requires four years of study—two years emphasizing the basic medical sciences and two years providing a clinical orientation. Graduates of dentistry program must also meet state requirements where they plan to practice, and obtain satisfactory scores on the National Board Dental Examination and a state clinical examination.

Admission to a U.S. dental school is highly competitive. Although anyone is eligible to apply, international students rarely gain admission to a U.S. school of dentistry without having completed at least two years of college or university study at a U.S. institution.

GOOD TO KNOW

Public institutions in the United States generally give admissions preference to the in-state residents whose taxes support their programs.

Application requirements for dental school include a strong undergraduate academic record, proficiency in the English language and a score on the **Dental Admission Test (DAT)** (www.ada.org/dat.aspx) judged satisfactory by the individual dental school. The DAT examines proficiency in mathematics, biology, chemistry, organic chemistry, reading and perceptual motor abilities.



Postgraduate Training & Residency Programs

Dentists may apply for postgraduate training at hospitals or dental schools in the United States after receiving the DDS or equivalent degree. These programs typically prepare graduates for teaching or research careers.

U.S. dental schools and hospitals frequently offer postgraduate continuing education courses that provide updates on specific topics and are open to international dentists.

Residencies for dentists fall into three categories—non-degree, general practice or specialty.

1. Non-degree residency programs in U.S. universities or hospitals offer a clinical focus.
2. General practice residencies are highly competitive, and typically only about 4% of the students enrolled are internationally educated dentists.
3. Specialty residencies tend to admit a considerably larger proportion of internationally educated dentists.

GOOD TO KNOW

Specialty residencies for dentists in the United States offer training in dental public health, endodontics, oral and maxillofacial pathology, oral and maxillofacial surgery, orthodontics and dentofacial orthopedics, pediatric dentistry, periodontics, or prosthodontics.

Dentists trained internationally who wish to study in the United States must pass one or both parts of the National Board Dental Examination. Some specialty areas require that dentists complete at least the last two years of professional study at a U.S. university and earn a DDS or DMD at a dental school accredited by the **Commission on Dental Accreditation** (www.ada.org/education.aspx).

About half of U.S. dental schools offer admission at an advanced level for internationally-educated dentists wishing to complete a DDS or DMD. State licensure and national board certification may also be required in some cases. Dental schools are more likely than hospitals to consider international applicants who do not have a U.S. license.

How can you learn more?

- [American Dental Association: Education & Careers](http://www.ada.org/education.aspx) (www.ada.org/education.aspx)
- [American Dental Education Association](http://www.adea.org/Pages/default.aspx) (www.adea.org/Pages/default.aspx)

Education

A degree in the field of education offers skill development to teachers, counselors, and administrators of educational programs.

Graduate programs in education lead to a master of arts (MA), master of education (EdM), doctor of education (EdD), or doctor of philosophy (PhD). Degree titles vary by institution and academic program. Graduate students in education will choose among a variety of specialized subjects such as adult education and organizational learning; applied linguistics; comparative and international education; curriculum and teaching; early childhood education; education policy; elementary education; gifted education; motor learning; music education; psychology in education; special education; and teaching English as a second language. In addition to coursework specific to the concentration, most degree programs also include a professional training period in the chosen topic.

How can you learn more?

[Education references](#)



Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

Engineering

Engineering is the application of scientific knowledge to design better products and systems to improve efficiency and convenience for human life while incorporating ways to minimize damage to the natural environment.



EdUSA Connects Session – Graduate Engineering Programs

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EdUSA Connects Session – Graduate Engineering Programs

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Graduate programs in engineering may lead to a master's in engineering (MEng), a one-year professional degree; a master of science in engineering (MS) with either a thesis or non-thesis option; or a doctor of philosophy in engineering (PhD), typically a five-year program with thesis or dissertation. The field of engineering includes popular specializations such as aeronautical, agricultural, biomedical, chemical, civil, computer, electrical, environmental, industrial, mechanical, petroleum, and software engineering.

How can you learn more?

[Engineering references](#)

Journalism and Mass Communications

Journalism is the practice of gathering facts and informing the public about local, state, national, and international affairs. Journalists are responsible for reporting, writing, and editing articles for publication or broadcast.

Students pursuing a graduate program in journalism and communications may earn a master of arts (MA), master of science (MS), or doctor of philosophy (PhD) in journalism, communication, or a combination thereof. Degree titles vary by institution and academic program. Graduate students usually will choose among a variety of degree concentrations in the field of journalism such as public relations, publishing, editing, global communications, communications and technology, writing, and communication technology and policy.

How can you learn more?

- [Journalism and Mass Communications references](#)
- [Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications](http://www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/) (<http://www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/>)

Law

The study of law is specific to a country's legal system and American law schools primarily train students to practice law in the United States.



EdUSA Connects Session – Graduate Law Programs

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Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

Juris Doctor (JD)

The juris doctor (JD) is the first professional law degree in the United States. The program is strongly focused on the U.S. legal system and preparation for law practice in the United States. JD programs require three years of full-time study beyond a bachelor's degree obtained in any major. Although JD programs concentrate on the U.S. legal system, law schools may offer courses that focus on a particular subject area and these are usually taken during the second and third year of the program.

Because legal education in the United States is strongly focused on the U.S. legal system, the JD is usually not the best fit for international students. However, this does not mean that international students are ineligible for a JD program.

Admission to law school is extremely competitive and requirements include fluency in English, an excellent undergraduate academic record and a satisfactory record on the **Law School Admission test (LSAT)** (www.lsac.org/JD/LSAT/about-the-LSAT.asp). Law school graduates must pass the bar examination and meet state-level requirements in order to practice in the United States.

Graduate Legal Education

International students may be especially interested in the master of comparative law (MCL), also known as the master of comparative jurisprudence (MCJ), degree or the master of laws (LLM). Such programs introduce students to U.S. legal institutions and relevant specialties of U.S. law.

The master of laws (LLM) degree is offered in a variety of specialties or as a self-designed program. Programs in international law or international business law are especially popular with students from other countries. The LLM is particularly appropriate for international practitioners because students can use this degree as a complement to an existing law degree from their home countries with an internationally-recognized advanced certification.

Most master's level law programs admit students only at the fall semester. Admission requirements include a first degree in law, a strong academic record, letters of reference, a statement of purpose and/or writing samples and a high level of English proficiency. For students whose law degree was not in the English language, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) will be required. Most graduate law programs do not require standardized admissions tests.

GOOD TO KNOW

Many U.S. law schools offer programs, particularly in the summer, appropriate for international lawyers. Contact your nearest EducationUSA Advising Center for information on such programs.

How can you learn more?

[Law School Admission Council \(LSAC\)](http://www.lsac.org/) (www.lsac.org/)



Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

Medicine

Medical study usually follows completion of a bachelor's degree in the United States.



EdUSA Connects Session – Medical Programs

Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/ie8l966d> >>

Doctor of Medicine (MD)

The Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree is earned after three to four years of medical school that combines classroom work with observation and clinical experience. Admission to medical school in the United States is extremely competitive.

GOOD TO KNOW

Medical school acceptance rates show that fewer than 50% of U.S. citizens and 3% of international students who apply to medical school are accepted. Many medical schools in the United States are public—that is, funded largely by taxes raised in the states where they are located—and admissions preference is usually given to residents of that state.

To determine if medical study in the United States is the best option, international students interested in an MD degree should think about:

- The level of difficulty of entrance requirements.
- The length of time involved.
- Recognition of a U.S. medical degree and licensing qualifications in their home country.

An undergraduate degree, preferably from an institution accredited in the United States, with prerequisite courses in the biological sciences, chemistry, mathematics, the humanities, and behavioral and social sciences is required for admission to medical school. Additional requirements include an excellent academic record, fluency in English, extracurricular activities and a satisfactory score on the **Medical College Admission Test (MCAT)** (www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/).

Postgraduate Training

Internationally educated physicians who receive a first degree in medicine in their home countries commonly choose to continue their graduate medical education in the United States. To be eligible to practice medicine in the United States, all physicians, regardless of the country where they received their medical education must:

- Have received the first professional medical degree from a medical school accredited by the **Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME)** (www.lcme.org/).
- Have completed a period of residency or graduate medical education.
- Pass state licensure examinations in the United States. For more information about licensing, visit the **U.S. Medical Licensing Examination** (www.usmle.org/) website.

ECFMG Certification

Medical training in the United States includes a residency. A residency is a defined period of clinical training in a chosen medical specialty, which is accredited by the **Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)** (www.acgme.org/acWebsite/home/home.asp). Residency placement is competitive, but international





physicians are accepted to residency programs in the United States at a higher rate than medical school admissions. Information on residency programs can be found in the American Medical Association's (AMA) Fellowship and Residency Electronic Interactive Database (FREIDA).

Graduates of medical schools outside the United States must pass a certification program administered by the **Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG)** (www.ecfm.org/) to obtain residency positions or other training in the United States involving patient contact. This certification program is designed to ensure that applicants from foreign medical schools have qualifications comparable to U.S. medical school graduates. ECFMG certification does not guarantee placement in a residency program.

GOOD TO KNOW

International medical graduates can apply directly to graduate academic programs in medically related fields that do not involve patient care. Such programs do not require ECFMG certification—for example, programs in radiology, immunology, molecular biology, genetics, neuroscience, pathology, or physiology. They may also apply for research grants in the health sciences.

How can you learn more?

- [Association of American Medical Colleges \(www.aamc.org/\)](http://www.aamc.org/)
- [IMED references](#)
- [Pharmacy references](#)

Natural Sciences

Fields within the natural sciences take a scientific approach to the study of the universe and laws of natural origin. Fields include mathematics, logic, astronomy, biology, chemistry, earth science, physics, atmospheric science, oceanography, and materials sciences.

Graduate programs in the natural sciences lead to a master of arts (MA), master of science (MS) or doctor of philosophy (PhD). Master's degree programs, with thesis or non-thesis options, usually require one or two academic years of full-time study beyond a bachelor's degree and may lead directly into doctoral programs. Doctoral degree programs in the natural sciences may require five to eight years of study beyond the bachelor's degree, depending on the field.

How can you learn more?

- [Natural Sciences References](#)

Nursing

Nursing is the art and science of caring, healing, treating, curing, and educating patients of all ages in diverse health care environments.

Admission requirements and procedures for study and entry into the nursing profession in the United States vary from those in other parts of the world. Basic study for the nursing profession in the United States takes place at the undergraduate level. Options to becoming a registered nurse (RN) include a 2-3 year diploma program, a two-year associate degree in nursing (ADN) program, or a four-year bachelor of science in nursing (BSN) program.



Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

Graduate programs in nursing lead to a master of science in nursing (MSN), a doctor of philosophy in nursing (PhD), or a doctor of nursing practice (DNP). Dual degrees are also available for students wishing to add a second area of focus to their career. The nursing field includes specializations such as nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist, nurse administrator, adult health nursing, primary nursing, nurse anesthesia and certified nurse midwives.

How can you learn more?

- [National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses \(NXCLEX-RN\)](http://www.ncsbn.org/nclex.htm) (www.ncsbn.org/nclex.htm)
- [Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools](http://www.cgfns.org/) (www.cgfns.org/)
- [American Association of Colleges of Nursing](http://www.aacn.nche.edu/) (www.aacn.nche.edu/)
- [Nursing references](#)

Political Science and International Relations

Political science is the study of the origin, development, and operation of political systems and public policy. International relations programs incorporate these concepts and apply them on a global scale, focusing more exclusively on foreign policy and cross-cultural issues. Both degrees are interdisciplinary and incorporate a variety of subjects into their curriculum including history, economics, theory, and government.

Students pursuing a graduate program in political science or international relations may earn master of arts (MA) or doctor of philosophy (PhD) degrees. Graduate students usually will choose among a variety of degree concentrations in the field of political science/international relations such as American government, international development, international relations/affairs, comparative politics, political philosophy and theory, and political science.

How can you learn more?

[Political Science and International Relations](#)

Public Health

Public health is the science and art of protecting and improving the health of communities through education, promotion of healthy lifestyles, and research for disease and injury prevention. Public health helps improve the health and well-being of people in local communities and around the globe.

Graduate programs in public health lead to many degrees including a master of public health (MPH), master of science in public health (MSPH), doctor of philosophy (PhD), or doctor of public health (DrPH). Coursework generally focuses on disciplines such as administration, epidemiology, environmental health, biostatistics, health policy, and behavioral health.

How can you learn more?

- [Public Health references](#)
- [What is Public Health?](http://www.whatispublichealth.org) (www.whatispublichealth.org)





Public Policy and Administration

Public policy refers to the process of making organizational decisions and political, management, financial, and administrative policies to meet established goals. Public administration is the study and use of government policy including both government and non-governmental management. These two different fields of study are closely linked and have come together over time.

Graduate programs in public policy lead to many degrees including a master of public administration (MPA), master of public policy (MPA), doctor of philosophy (PhD), or doctor of public administration (DPA). Graduate students usually will choose among a variety of degree concentrations in the field of public policy and administration such as criminal justice, community development, economic development, education, environmental policy, finance, information technology, non-profit management, public health and health care, transportation, or urban management.

How can you learn more?

- [National Association of Schools of Public Affairs & Administration \(gopublicservice.org/degree.aspx\)](http://gopublicservice.org/degree.aspx)
- [Public Policy references](#)

Social Sciences

The social science field is the study of society and includes academic disciplines such as anthropology, archaeology, criminology, linguistics, political science, sociology, and international relations.

Graduate programs in the social sciences lead to a master of arts (MA), master of science (MS) or doctor of philosophy (PhD). Master's degree programs, with thesis or non-thesis options, usually require one or two academic years of full-time study beyond a bachelor's degree and may lead directly into doctoral programs. Doctoral degree programs in the social sciences may require five to eight years of study beyond the bachelor's degree, depending on the field.

Veterinary Medicine

Veterinary school usually follows completion of a bachelor's degree in the United States. Competition for veterinary study is even more rigorous than for study in medicine. Admission to U.S. veterinary schools is extremely difficult for international students because of intense competition for a limited number of spaces.

A less-competitive alternative to veterinary school is a graduate program in animal sciences. Graduates of animal science programs are not certified for veterinary practice, but may be qualified for a range of positions in agricultural industries, government or university research, and teaching.

Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM or VMD)

Fewer than 30 schools of veterinary medicine exist in the United States. Of these, most are largely state-financed, with tax money from state residents supporting the school, and applicants from that state are generally given first preference.

Most veterinary colleges participate in the Veterinary Medical College Application Service (VMCAS) allowing applicants to submit a common application for multiple schools. The primary consideration for admission is the quality of the undergraduate record. Most schools will require that applicants take the Graduate Record



Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

Examination (GRE) test, but some schools may accept the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). International students will also most likely need to take an English language proficiency test. Most schools will also require that the applicant has past experience working with animals both in a clinic and on a farm.

Postgraduate Training & Practice in the United States

Internationally-trained veterinarians with the equivalent of the DVM are eligible for postgraduate academic programs in the United States. These programs are designed to lead to teaching positions in veterinary schools, employment by pharmaceutical companies, or research careers with no clinical practice.

Postgraduate residency training leading to board certification in a specialty such as veterinary ophthalmology or veterinary pathology typically takes three years and involves a combination of academic and clinical experience.

GOOD TO KNOW

Short-term training and exchanges with U.S. veterinary schools and related organizations may also be arranged in some cases.

To practice veterinary medicine in most of the United States, most internationally-trained veterinarians must hold certification from the American Veterinary Medical Association's Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates (ECFVG). Veterinarians must also be licensed in all states in the United States.

How can you learn more?

- [Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges \(www.aavmc.org/\)](http://www.aavmc.org/)
- [American Veterinary Medical Association \(www.avma.org/\)](http://www.avma.org/)
- [National Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners \(http://www.nbvme.org/\)](http://www.nbvme.org/)



24 months prior to U.S. study:



Choose the Best Graduate Program For You



"You can easily get information from everywhere, but knowing how to select the right program can be much harder."

- Germanic languages and literature student from Hungary

GOOD TO KNOW

In some cases, it is more important to study under a particular faculty member or professor than at a university with a prestigious name. Remember that assistantships and fellowships are often based on the right "match" between student and faculty research interests.

STEP 1: Define Your Education and Career Goals

To help select the best graduate program for you, first define your education and career goals. Knowing your goals will guide you through the application process and help you in writing application essays. Also, defining your career goals will make it easier to identify the exact qualifications for your chosen career and find out if U.S. credentials are recognized in your home country.

To help define your goals, ask yourself these questions:

- **What career do I want to pursue? What advanced degree is required to enter this profession? Is employment available in my country in this field?**
Speak to people already working in the field and to representatives of professional associations. EducationUSA Advisers can provide information about the skills, background, and demand for professionals in different fields in your country.
- **How will study in the United States enhance my career? Will a graduate degree help me earn a higher salary?**
Consult educators, government officials, working professionals, and local labor statistics in your country to learn more about the value of U.S. study, including any increased earning potential. Also consider revalidation or certification requirements for employment in your particular field when you return home. View U.S. statistics on median earnings and unemployment rates on the following page.

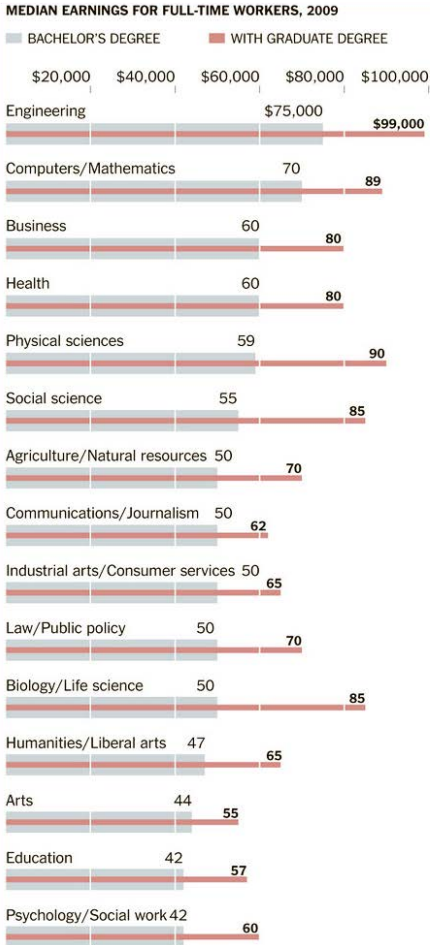
GOOD TO KNOW

Students with the right set of qualifications, expertise, and global exposure often have better opportunities upon return to their home countries.



Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

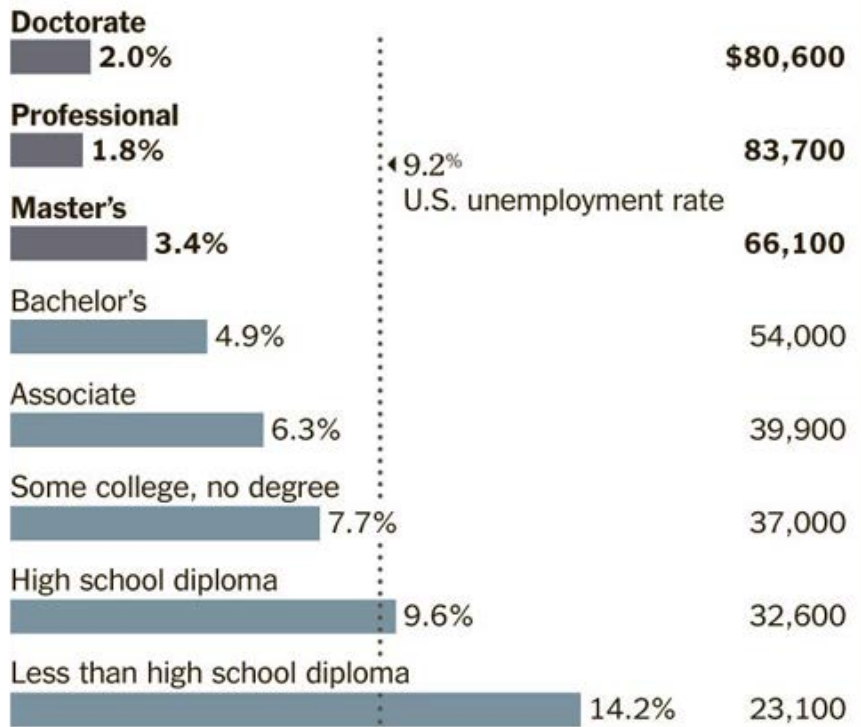
24 months prior to U.S. study:



With an advanced degree, unemployment is lower and earnings are higher.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES, April-June, 2011

ANNUAL EARNINGS, 2010*



*Calculated from median weekly earnings

Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics; Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce ("What's It Worth?")
The New York Times



Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

24 months prior to U.S. study:



• How are U.S. degrees recognized in my country?

A U.S. degree is highly valued in many countries. However, in some countries, particularly those with educational systems that are very different from the United States, U.S. graduate degrees may not be officially recognized or they may be recognized at a different level. Seek guidance from your nearest EducationUSA Advising Center or with the ministry of education or other appropriate authority before you begin your applications.

Also, be sure to check the program's **accreditation** with the **Council for Higher Education Accreditation** (www.chea.org/), especially if you are planning to undertake a professional program in the United States. Requirements for professional education are usually rigorously upheld and vary greatly from country to country.

For some professions, you must be a graduate of a program with programmatic accreditation in order to practice in a specific field. If you are considering working in a particular profession, check with the licensing body in your home country or where you intend to practice to determine whether programmatic accreditation is required for practice before enrolling in a the program. To verify if a program is properly accredited, visit the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (www.aspa-usa.org).



EdUSA Connects Session – *The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)*

Watch Now - <http://bit.ly/pONsQV> >>



EdUSA Connects Session – *Types of Accreditation: What's the Difference?*

Watch Now - <http://bit.ly/ral7xq> >>



EdUSA Connects Session – *Degree Mills and Accreditation Mills*

Watch Now - <http://bit.ly/q9BQzC> >>



EdUSA Connects Session – *Specialized & Professional Accreditation: What Should I Know?*

Watch Now - <http://bit.ly/Q5321d> >>

STEP 2: Consult an EducationUSA Advising Center

Locate the nearest EducationUSA Advising Center near you. When you contact an EducationUSA Adviser, it would be helpful for you to have answers to basic questions about why you want to pursue a graduate degree in the United States, listed within [Define Your Priorities](#).

Trained EducationUSA Advisers provide information and advice about study in the United States. Advisers are available to assist you in answering questions about:

- Equivalency of the educational system in your country and that of the United States.
- Entry requirements for study in your field.
- Using reference materials to find institutions that are appropriate for you.

Accreditation: Approval by nationally recognized professional associations or regional accrediting bodies.



Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

24 months prior to U.S. study:



- Sources of financial assistance available in your home country and in the United States.
- Testing and other application requirements.
- Preparation of your applications.
- Planning your education.
- Adjusting to academic and cultural life in the United States.
- Using your education after you return to your home country.

GOOD TO KNOW

Graduates of U.S. colleges and universities who have recently returned home are excellent resources for advice about study in the United States.

STEP 3: Make a Short List of Programs

Because of the differences between U.S. graduate programs, you should clearly define your goals to determine the institutions that offer the program you need.

1. **Identify universities that offer your field of study.** After you define your education and career goals, your next step is to identify institutions that offer your subject area and any specializations you wish to pursue within that subject area. Finding the right academic “match” can be the key to a successful U.S. graduate experience.

Take advantage of available resources to learn more. University catalogs, general directories about graduate study, professional associations, and college and university websites are great tools to help you learn more about various programs and narrow your choices.

Independent search engines allow you to search for institutions by the subject you are interested in studying, by geographic preference, or by a range of other criteria that you specify.

- National Center for Education Statistics—College Navigator
- Council of Graduate Schools—Resources for Students
- GradSchools.com
- Peterson’s College Search
- The Princeton Review

Attend U.S. higher education fairs in your country to meet admissions officers or faculty members face-to-face. Depending on your personal circumstances, you may also be able to visit colleges or universities in the United States to see for yourself what campus life is really like and meet and speak with faculty members in the areas of study or research of interest to you.



“A visit to the school you are considering helps a lot—whether during an exchange year, a vacation trip, or a sports contest.”

- Theater performance student from Finland

GOOD TO KNOW

Start your research early—many of these fairs take place in the spring or fall of the year before you intend to begin your studies.



Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

24 months prior to U.S. study:



3. **Make contacts.** Talk to faculty members in your country and individuals who have studied in the United States. They may know people or have suggestions of universities to consider in the United States. Also, contact universities and other international students in the United States to learn more about programs that interest you.



"Talk to other international students who have studied in the United States to learn about the things you won't find in any school brochure."

- Graduate student from Thailand

STEP 4: Decide Where to Apply

Narrow down your list to 10 to 20 accredited institutions that offer your field of study and make a comparison chart to list differences with respect to:

- Research programs and facilities, including libraries and computer facilities.
- Size of department (students and faculty) and size of institution.
- Faculty profiles.
- Accreditation of the institution and, if applicable, the department or program.
- Course and thesis requirements for graduation.
- Length of time required to complete the degree.
- Academic admission requirements, including required test scores, degrees, and undergraduate grade average required.
- Cost of tuition, fees, health insurance, etc.
- Availability of financial assistance.
- Location, housing options, campus setting, climate, and cost of living.
- International student services and other needed services available on campus.

Next, eliminate institutions that you cannot afford, that do not offer financial aid for which you qualify, that do not meet your individual needs, or that have admissions requirements that do not match your qualifications. Develop a final short list of three to seven institutions for which you are qualified for admission, that meet your personal and professional needs, and that you can afford to attend. Also include institutions in your final list that offer financial aid for which you qualify at the level you need.



24 months prior to U.S. study:



Identify Types and Sources of Financial Aid



EdUSA Connects Session – Graduate Financial Aid

Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/2khaoush> >>

The key to receiving admission to a U.S. graduate school with funding is to distinguish yourself from the competition by finding opportunities and putting together a strong application.

What questions should you ask the admissions staff at your chosen institution(s) about funding for graduate programs?

- How many first-year international graduate students received financial assistance?
- What are some common factors demonstrated by students who receive substantial funding?

GOOD TO KNOW

Work with an EducationUSA Adviser early in your financial planning process to ensure you have a strong application.

Sources of University Funding for Graduate Programs

Fellowships and Tuition Scholarships

Awarded by the university’s graduate school and based on the student’s overall merit or academic strength. Usually, the graduate school selects fellowship or tuition scholarship recipients, but candidates are sometimes asked to submit a separate application. Recipients do not have to work for the university in exchange for these funds.

Merit-based financial aid considers:

- Past academic achievements.
- Scores on standardized admissions tests.
- Employment history.
- The student’s leadership potential and other personal characteristics.

Research Assistantships

Professors apply to outside sources (foundations, agencies, etc.) for funds to conduct research and then select graduate students to assist them. Many students apply their assistantship work toward their thesis research. Funding consists of a partial or full tuition waiver plus a monthly stipend to assist with living expenses.

Teaching Assistantships (TA)

Individual departments determine the need for TAs in undergraduate classes, and professors who teach those classes select graduate students to assist them in teaching, leading discussion sections, running labs or grading assignments. TAs gain experience and build teaching skills to help them when they become professors. Funding consists of a partial- or full-tuition waiver plus a monthly stipend to assist with living expenses. English fluency is a prerequisite for a teaching assistantship.



Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

24 months prior to U.S. study:



It is occasionally possible to get a teaching assistantship in a department other than the one in which you are studying. For example, an engineering graduate student might be awarded an assistantship in the department of mathematics. Assistantships may also be available in foreign language departments for native speakers of languages other than English.

Administrative Assistantships

Departments sometimes employ administrative assistants in positions that provide partial funding.

Other Sources of Funding for Graduate Programs

What is an internship?

Internships are off-campus jobs that provide practical experience in your field of study. They are particularly common in professional fields. Payment varies, and you must obtain work authorization.

GOOD TO KNOW

You should always check with your international student adviser before considering any form of employment.

Can you get a job on campus to help cover educational expenses?

Current U.S. immigration regulations allow international students to work up to 20 hours per week on campus during their first year of study. Under current U.S. regulations, after your first year of study, you may apply for permission to work off campus for up to 20 hours a week. You should note, however, that there is no guarantee that this request will be granted.

GOOD TO KNOW

If you are married and in the United States on an F-1 student visa, your spouse does not have permission to work. However, if you are in the United States on a J-1 student visa, your spouse is allowed to request a temporary work permit.



Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

24 months prior to U.S. study:



Where Can You Find More Information about Financial Aid Opportunities?

Graduate Funding

- Yale University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences: Fellowship Database
- Harvard University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences: Graduate Guide to Grants
- Cornell University Graduate School
- UCLA Graduate & Postdoctoral Extramural Support (GRAPES) Database
- Michigan State University: Funding
- International Scholarships and Financial Aid Positions
- EducationUSA Financial Aid Database

Loans for international students

- Global Student Loan Corporation
- International Student Loan.com
- Access Group





Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

24 months prior to U.S. study:



Prepare for Standardized Tests

As part of the application process, most graduate programs require one or more U.S. standardized test scores. Remember, application requirements may vary, so confirm the test requirements of the institutions to which you plan to apply.



"Be sure you are well prepared for the standardized tests you need to take."

- Fine arts student from China

GOOD TO KNOW

Standardized test scores are only one part of the application—good test scores alone do not guarantee you admission.

English Language Ability Tests

- Being able to communicate in English is a basic requirement for successful study in the United States. If English is not your native language, U.S. colleges and universities will ask you to take an English language proficiency test before admission.
- The most common tests for English language ability are the Test of English as a Foreign Language (**TOEFL**), the International English Language Testing System (**IELTS**) and the Pearson Test of English (**PTE**) Academic.

Admissions Tests

- Testing requirements vary greatly between graduate programs, so interested applicants should confirm directly with the school to which they plan to apply.

TOEFL: Test of English as a Foreign Language—An English language proficiency examination of applicants whose native language is not English.

IELTS: International English Language Testing System—An English language proficiency examination of applicants whose native language is not English.

PTE: Pearson Test of English Academic—An English language proficiency examination that measures English ability through tasks that reflect real-life settings.



Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

24 months prior to U.S. study:



English Language Ability Tests

Being able to communicate in English is a basic requirement for successful study in the United States. If English is not your native language, U.S. colleges and universities will ask you to take an English language proficiency test before admission.

Individuals with disabilities can learn about requesting disability-related accommodations for English proficiency tests by visiting **Mobility International USA** (www.miusa.org/ncde/tipsheets/toefl).

If you are a non-U.S. citizen and non-native speaker of English who has been educated in English for most of your school life, English language testing requirements might be waived. This decision is made by the college or university admissions office, and is usually stated on the international admissions section of the website. Allow time in the application process to communicate with institutions in the United States about this issue.

GOOD TO KNOW

You may be granted conditional acceptance with the understanding that you will attend English language classes at the institution before beginning your degree program.

The most common tests for English language ability are the:

- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS)
- Pearson Test of English (PTE) Academic.



EdUSA Connects Session – TOEFL

Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/v55ghjns> >>



EdUSA Connects Session – IELTS

Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/opogbv3v> >>



EdUSA Connects Session – PTE Academic

Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/hqplj35v> >>





24 months prior to U.S. study:



English Language Ability Tests

TOEFL	PTE Academic	IELTS
<p>The TOEFL measures the ability of non- native English speakers to communicate in an academic setting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TOEFL internet-based test (iBT) has four sections: reading, listening, speaking, and writing. • The paper-based TOEFL (TOEFL PBT) provides testing in areas where the TOEFL iBT is not available. It does not include a speaking section. • For more information about the TOEFL, visit the TOEFL website or contact your nearest EducationUSA Advising Center. 	<p>The PTE Academic is a computer-based English proficiency test that measures the test takers’ language ability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The test is designed for non-native English speakers who wish to study in an institution where English is the primary language of instruction. • For more information about the PTE Academic, visit the PTE Academic website. 	<p>The IELTS is a paper-based test that measures English language ability in reading, writing, listening, and speaking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reading and writing portions are available in two versions: <i>Academic</i>, for students interested in entering higher education programs or pursuing a license in the healthcare professions. The “academic” version is the one that most international students who want to study at the undergraduate or graduate level will take. <i>General Training</i>, for test takers who need to use English daily for functional activities, secondary education, vocational training, work purposes, or immigration. • The listening and speaking modules are the same in both versions. • For more information about the IELTS, visit the IELTS website.



Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

24 months prior to U.S. study:



Admissions Tests

Testing requirements vary greatly between graduate programs, so interested applicants should confirm directly with the school to which they plan to apply.

GRE

The **GRE** (www.ets.org/gre) is a standardized test of verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning and analytical writing that measures readiness for graduate-level study.



EdUSA Connects Session – GRE

Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/xj9tp1r8> >>

- Many graduate and business schools accept GRE scores, so you might be able to take one test to pursue both options.
- 700 test centers exist in more than 160 countries, so you can find a location that is convenient for you. The computer-based GRE test is available throughout the year in most regions.
- Scores are valid for 5 years, so you can take the test now, even if you're undecided about what you want to do.
- Skills measured on the GRE general test include:
 - Verbal Reasoning:** measures reading comprehension skills and verbal and analytical reasoning skills, focusing on your ability to analyze and evaluate written material.
 - Quantitative Reasoning:** measures problem-solving ability, focusing on basic concepts of arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and data analysis.
 - Analytical Writing:** measures critical thinking and analytical writing skills, specifically the ability to articulate complex ideas clearly and effectively.
- Interested in distinguishing yourself from other applicants? GRE Subject Tests are offered as a way to emphasize your knowledge in a specific skill area. These tests may not be required, but they're a great way to help increase your chances of getting noticed in the admissions process. **GRE Subject Tests** (www.ets.org/gre/subject/about) are offered in:
 - Biochemistry, Cell, and Molecular Biology
 - Biology
 - Chemistry
 - Computer Science
 - Literature in English
 - Mathematics
 - Physics
 - Psychology





Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

24 months prior to U.S. study:



GMAT

The **GMAT** (www.gmac.com/) is a standardized test for MBA applicants that measures basic verbal, mathematical, and analytical writing skills that have been developed over a long period of time through education and work.



EdUSA Connects Session – GMAT

Watch Now - [>>](http://bcove.me/dumrimry)

- The GMAT **does not** measure knowledge of business, job skills, or specific content in undergraduate or first university course work or subjective qualities, such as motivation, creativity, and interpersonal skills.
- Preparation for the exam is absolutely essential because the test is intended to measure ability in verbal and quantitative reasoning and writing.

MCAT

The **MCAT** (www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/) is a standardized, multiple-choice examination designed to assess problem solving, critical thinking, writing skills, and knowledge of science concepts and principles prerequisite to the study of medicine.

- Scores are reported in Physical Sciences, Verbal Reasoning, Writing Sample, and Biological Sciences.
- Almost all U.S. medical schools require applicants to submit MCAT exam scores. Many schools do not accept MCAT exam scores that are more than three years old.

Who is eligible to take the MCAT?

- You may take the MCAT exam if you are preparing to apply to a health professions school.
Note: At the time of registration you will be required to agree to a statement verifying your intention to apply to a health profession school.
- You may take the exam up to three times in one calendar year, but you may register for only one test at a time.
- If you are in an MBBS degree program or hold the MBBS degree, you may register for the MCAT exam without seeking special permission.



Graduate | Step 1 - Research Your Options

24 months prior to U.S. study:



LSAT

The **LSAT** (www.lsac.org/JD/LSAT/about-the-LSAT.asp) is a standardized test that provides a standard measure of acquired reading and verbal reasoning skills that law schools can use as one of several factors in assessing applicants.



EdUSA Connects Session – GMAT

Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/dumrimry> >>

- The test consists of five 35-minute sections of three types of multiple-choice questions plus a 35-minute writing sample at the end. Four of the five sections contribute to the test taker's score.

What does the LSAT measure?

- Skills that are considered essential for success in law school: the reading and comprehension of complex texts with accuracy and insight; the organization and management of information and the ability to draw reasonable inferences from it; the ability to think critically; and the analysis and evaluation of the reasoning and arguments of others.

GOOD TO KNOW

Several EducationUSA Advising Centers offer the LSAT to international students. Check with your nearest center to see if this is an option for you.

DAT

The **DAT** (www.ada.org/dat.aspx), conducted by the American Dental Association (ADA), is a multiple-choice test designed to measure general academic ability, comprehension of scientific information, and perceptual ability.

- All dental schools in the United States require examinees to participate in the DAT Program. Test results are only one factor considered in evaluating the admission potential of an examinee.
- Successful participation in the DAT Program requires completion of at least one year of collegiate education, which should include courses in biology and general and organic chemistry.



2 Complete Your Application

Education Just Ahead

GRADUATE

6 - 12 months prior to U.S. study:

24 23 22 21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Plan Ahead!

Plan adequately for the time and effort involved in preparing your application package.

"Your dedication to your field should resonate in your application. Also explain any academic difficulties you experienced and how you corrected them."

- Medical student from Nigeria



Know the Application Requirements

Application packages require a great deal of preparation and planning. You will benefit by starting this process and applying early.



EdUSA Connects Session –
Apply & Be Admitted: Graduate Study
Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/nxobogee> >>

GOOD TO KNOW

How can you get positively noticed as an applicant?

- Respond to questions in a way that shows you did your research and are really interested in the institution or a specific area of research being conducted at the institution.
- Should the institution require one, take extra time to write your personal statement or statement of intention.
- Provide a brief resume that highlights your research or teaching experience, any publications related to your desired field in professional journals that you authored or co-authored, and any scholarly presentations made at conferences in your field of study.

In the United States, application requirements can vary greatly from one institution to another. It is very important to check the specific requirements for international admissions on the website of each institution.



Graduate | Step 2 - Complete Your Application

6 - 12 months prior to U.S. study:



What are some general application requirements?

- **Personal data form.** Be sure to keep your personal information consistent, and always spell your name the same way on all documents.
- **Personal statement or statement of purpose.** The personal statement gives you the opportunity to show the admissions committee who you are as an individual. Your statement should be clear, concise, and persuasive. Highlight your unique strengths, skills, or teaching experiences to show the institution that you are a good match with the program and department to which you are applying.

GOOD TO KNOW

Answer these questions when writing your personal statement:

- Why do you want to pursue a graduate degree, and why now?
- What are your academic and research interests?
- Why are you applying to this particular institution and degree program?
- What can you contribute to the department or program in terms of your background, abilities, or other special qualities and interests?

- **Transcripts.** Your transcript is a list of classes you completed in your undergraduate studies and the grades you received in each class.
- **Recommendation letters.** Ask past professors, administrators, or employers to write your letters of recommendation. Your recommenders must be able to write about your work and be able to assess your potential to do well as a graduate student. Be sure to choose someone who knows you well.



EdUSA Connects Session –
Writing Your Personal Statement
Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/88u3e7e0> >>

GOOD TO KNOW

An original transcript or certified copy is required for each program to which you plan to apply.



"Make sure you get recommendations from people who really know you and your work. Ask professors who know you well to write about you, about how you approach your work, and how you participate in class and in extracurricular activities."

- Law student from Sri Lanka



Graduate | Step 2 - Complete Your Application

6 - 12 months prior to U.S. study:



Prepare a Successful Application



EdUSA Connects Session – *Strengthening Your Graduate Application*
Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/a0c8ydph> >>



How can you prepare a successful graduate school application?

- 1. Relax.** Do your best to relax as you prepare your applications. Completing a graduate school application can actually be a great learning experience. As you complete each application, you will engage in personal reflection and self-discovery. Be calm. Be reflective. Be thoughtful. Relax.
- 2. Allow time.** Allow plenty of time to conduct research and complete your applications to help you stay calm and focus on doing your best.
- 3. Follow directions.** Be sure you pay close attention to all directions within your application.
- 4. Be professional at all times and in all interactions.** Always present yourself in a calm, confident, and sincere manner.
- 5. Know that content and presentation are both important.** The “look and feel” of your application is just as important as what you say. Take the time to present a polished application.
- 6. Be yourself—human and honest.** Remember, no one is perfect. When preparing your application, do not lie, embellish, or make excuses.
- 7. Make alternate plans in case you are not admitted.** Things happen for a reason. Be prepared to be denied admission or to be placed on a waiting list. Also be prepared for what you will do if you end up not attending graduate school in the year you thought, planned, prepared, and hoped to.

GOOD TO KNOW

Keep in mind that applying to graduate school is often based on the right “match” between student and faculty research interests.

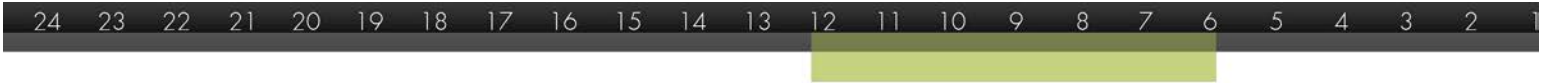
A few examples for situations when you should follow directions:

- *If there is a word limit for essay questions, follow it.*
 - *If you are asked for a certain number of letters of recommendation, do not send more.*
 - *If an interview is conducted by invitation only, do not request one.*
 - *If an interview is highly recommended, request one and make every possible effort to follow through.*
 - *If you are required to take a test to measure your English language skills, do so.*
 - *Actions speak louder than words. A strong application can receive a low rating due to the behavior of the person who prepared it.*
 - *Being prepared for all outcomes is not a sign of lack of belief in yourself or your abilities to do graduate work. It is a sign that you realize life does not always go the way we hope and making alternative plans is often required.**
- *Adapted from “Seven Pointers for Completing Your Graduate School Application(s)” by Dr. Donald C. Martin*



Graduate | Step 2 - Complete Your Application

6 - 12 months prior to U.S. study:



Plan Your Application Timeline

12 months prior to enrollment, complete the following (months indicated are estimates, based on enrollment in August/fall semester):

August

- Look online for application and financial aid forms and university catalogs.

September—December

- Request official transcripts of your academic performance.
- Request letters of recommendation.
- Submit completed application forms (for admission and financial aid, as necessary).
- Take the necessary standardized tests and send official score reports to each institution.
- Confirm that transcripts and references have been sent and received.

GOOD TO KNOW

Most applications are available online. If there is an online application, use it.

January—April

- Confirm that all applications are complete and all college and university application deadlines are met.

April—May

- Receive letters of acceptance or rejection and financial aid decisions. Decide which graduate program to attend, notify the institution of your decision, and complete and return any required forms.
- Send letters of regret to those universities you decline.
- Organize finances and show proof of funds to the graduate school so that the international student office can prepare your immigration form.
- Finalize arrangements for housing and medical insurance.
- Receive required immigration forms from your institution to apply for your student visa.

GOOD TO KNOW

*Make sure you have funds for travel and expenses on arrival.
Admissions decisions may or may not be made at the same time as financial aid decisions.*

May—August

- Apply for your student visa
- Make travel arrangements.
- Contact the international student office at your college or university with details of your arrival plans. Confirm details of new student orientation.

Mark Your Calendar for Admissions Options

Regular Decision	Typically December to February* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • *Competitive programs, such as the MBA, may accept applications earlier
Rolling Admissions	Applications accepted at any time before the start of classes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions made within a period of time after applications are received



3 Finance Your Studies



GRADUATE

3 - 9 months prior to U.S. study:



Invest in Yourself!

The cost of living and studying varies across the United States. With the right amount of planning and research, it can be made affordable with high returns on your investment.

"One year in the United States opened a new world of opportunities, which enabled me to grow personally and professionally. I chose to study in the United States because of the enormous opportunities that are available for people seeking personal and professional growth."

- Student from Kazakhstan



EXPLORE THE MANY OPTIONS



EdUSA Connects Session –
Finance Your Studies: Graduate
Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/wqa3bm95> >>

Finance Your Studies

It is important to start your financial planning as early as possible. Each year international students receive significant amounts of financial assistance toward their studies.



3 - 9 months prior to U.S. study:



Make Your Budget



As you work to develop a budget for your studies, keep in mind that your overall costs are comprised of **tuition**, **fees**, and **living expenses**.

How much should you budget?

Your actual costs will depend on your institution and program. Refer to the institution’s website for specific costs. When budgeting, you should estimate that tuition costs increase 6-10% each year.

How can an EducationUSA Adviser help you plan your expenses?

- Advisers can help you distinguish yourself in a highly competitive applicant pool so that you have a better chance of competing for admission with financial aid.
- Advisers have access to resources that help you learn about scholarships and new programs.
- Advisers share unbiased information about financial aid opportunities.

GOOD TO KNOW

Location matters! Depending on where you live and study, costs for housing and food vary greatly in the United States. Suburban or rural areas in the South and Midwest of the United States generally have the lowest cost of living.

Tuition: The money an institution charges for instruction and training (does not include the cost of books).

Fees: An amount charged by colleges and universities, in addition to tuition, to cover costs of institutional services.

Living Expenses: Expenses such as housing and meals, books and supplies, transportation, personal expenses, health insurance, etc.



3 - 9 months prior to U.S. study:



Where Can You Find More Information about Financial Aid Opportunities?

Graduate Funding

- Yale University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences: Fellowship Database
- Harvard University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences: Graduate Guide to Grants
- Cornell University Graduate School
- UCLA Graduate & Postdoctoral Extramural Support (GRAPES) Database
- Michigan State University: Funding
- International Scholarships and Financial Aid Positions
- EducationUSA Financial Aid Database

Loans for international students

- Global Student Loan Corporation
- International Student Loan.com
- Access Group





Notes



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4 Apply for Your Student Visa

GRADUATE

3 - 5 months prior to U.S. study:

24 23 22 21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Be Prepared for the Student Visa Process!

Become familiar with the student visa requirements in your country and allow plenty of time to prepare your application.

"Because interviews are short, do your best to explain why you want to study in the United States, how you plan to support yourself while in school, and what your plans are for when your studies are finished."

- Vice Consul, U.S. Consulate Monterrey, Mexico



EdUSA Connects Session –
International Students Demystify the Visa Process
Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/9qcywo3s> >>

Did you know that the U.S. Department of State issues student and exchange visitor visas at a worldwide acceptance rate of about 85%? You will first need to receive an admission letter and a certificate of eligibility for nonimmigrant student status from your U.S. institution before you can begin the visa application process.

GOOD TO KNOW

Information about the student visa process is accurate as of print date and is subject to change. Visit www.travel.state.gov for more information, or consult your nearest U.S. embassy/consulate or EducationUSA Advising Center.

Identify Student Visa Types

The **U.S. Department of State** (http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html) issues visas in U.S. embassies and consulates abroad.

- A visa **does not** guarantee entry into the United States.
- A visa **does** allow a foreign citizen to travel to a U.S. port-of-entry and request permission from a U.S. immigration officer to enter the United States.



Graduate | Step 4 - Apply for Your Student Visa

3 - 5 months prior to U.S. study:



What are the different types of visas for non-U.S. citizens who study in the United States?

- **F-1 Student Visa.** The most common visa for those who want to study in the United States. It is for individuals who want to study at an accredited U.S. college or university or study English at a university or intensive English language institute.
- **J-1 Exchange Visa.** This visa is for people who will be participating in an exchange program, including those programs that provide high school and university study.
- **M-1 Student Visa.** This visa is for those who will be engaged in non-academic or vocational study or training in the United States.

GOOD TO KNOW

Is your spouse, or child under the age of 21, joining you in the United States? Learn more about the F-2 visa, J-2 visa, and M-2 visa.





Graduate | Step 4 - Apply for Your Student Visa

3 - 5 months prior to U.S. study:

24 23 22 21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Follow the Step-by-Step Visa Application Process

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) is a program within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security that manages the **Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)** (www.ice.gov/sevis/). SEVIS is the internet-based system that maintains records of foreign students and exchange visitors before and during their stays in the United States.

STEP 1: Receive your certificate of eligibility for nonimmigrant student status: either Form I-20 (for F or M visa) or Form DS-2019 (for J visa).

- To apply for a visa, you must first have received a Form I-20 or Form DS-2019. The U.S. academic institution or program sponsor will provide you with the appropriate form only after you have:
 - Been admitted to a SEVP-approved institution or accepted in an exchange program.
 - Provided evidence that you can meet all the costs of the program.
- The academic institutions that admit you will send you a Form I-20 (for F or M visa) or Form DS-2019 (for J-visa) depending on the visa that matches your study status.

GOOD TO KNOW

Once you receive the required documentation, you can make an appointment with the U.S. embassy or consulate to apply for a visa. Even if you do not intend to begin your program for several months, it is best to apply as early as possible. Your visa can be issued up to 120 days before your arrival in the United States.

STEP 2: Pay SEVIS fee

- You must pay a SEVIS fee and fill out other visa applications forms prior to your visa interview. Go to the **SEVIS I-901 fee processing website** (www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.jsp) for complete information about paying your SEVIS fee. Follow the instructions carefully. For more information, you may also visit the Study in the States website for students.

STEP 3: Schedule Your Interview and Apply for Your Visa

- Refer to the **U.S. nonimmigrant visa website** (<https://ceac.state.gov/GENNIV/>) to complete the required application forms.
- It is best practice to ensure your passport is valid for at least six months beyond the end of your study in the United States and that your name is spelled correctly and appears the same on all documents.
- Be sure to have your Form I-20 or Form DS-2019 and your SEVIS receipt.
- Confirm you have the required documents and schedule your visa interview following the instructions on the website of your nearest U.S. embassy or consulate (www.usembassy.gov).
- During the interview, be prepared to answer questions regarding ties to your home country, your English language skills, your academic background, the program in the United States to which you have been admitted, and proof of your financial ability. **Consult an EducationUSA adviser who can help you to understand visa requirements, prepare for your interview, or answer other questions about the student visa process. Your answers to the questions asked in Step 1: Research Your Options will also help you prepare for your visa interview.**

GOOD TO KNOW

Any inconsistencies can delay the issuance of your visa.

Visa interview scheduling is done online or by phone at most U.S. embassies and consulates.



3 - 5 months prior to U.S. study:



Learn about Visa Considerations for Students with Disabilities



Students with disabilities who require personal assistance should refer to **International Participants with Disabilities and Community Resources** (www.miusa.org/ncde/tipsheets/communityresources) for more information. It is also important for students with disabilities to **learn more about finding a health insurance policy** (www.miusa.org/ncde/tipsheets/insurance) with enough coverage for their time in the United States. Individuals who may need to return to their home countries periodically for medical care should be aware of program and visa requirements regarding leaving and reentering the United States.

Remember, individuals who enter the United States on a student visa must maintain a full course load. U.S. disability laws sometimes provide accommodations to students with chronic illnesses or other disabilities that allow them to take a reduced course load due to random or recurring health episodes. However, international students are only allowed a total of 12 months of less than full-time status for illness or medical conditions.

GOOD TO KNOW

Individuals with disabilities can petition for an extension, but the process can take several months to complete and entails a fee.

5 Prepare for Your Departure



GRADUATE

2 - 4 months prior to U.S. study:



The Journey of a Lifetime!

Studying in the United States is a memorable and rewarding experience—congratulations on taking this exciting step towards your future!

"Find out about airline and immigration policies and procedures so you do not panic if something strange happens—luggage, passports, what you can and what you cannot bring. It's always better to know everything beforehand."

- Computer Science student from Brazil



**EdUSA Connects Session –
Pre-Departure Orientation**

Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/5xmcpef8> >>



In planning your move to the United States, you may want to ask for assistance from an EducationUSA Advising Center in your home country and from the international student adviser at your chosen U.S. college or university.

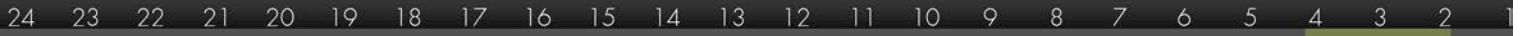
Attend Pre-departure Orientation

Pre-departure orientations are offered by EducationUSA Advising Centers to students making final preparations to depart for their studies in the United States.

EducationUSA Advisers and students who have returned from the United States provide information and resources that will help prepare you for new experiences and skills to adjust to new challenges. Topics discussed include cultural differences, motivation, changes from your home environment, academic systems and expectations, housing, and coping in a new cultural setting.



2 - 4 months prior to U.S. study:



Gather Pre-departure Materials and Important Documents

Before you leave your home country, take the time to double-check that you have gathered all the documents you will need for your travel and stay in the United States.



- **Passport and nonimmigrant visa.** Hand-carry your passport and certificate of eligibility (I-20 or DS-2019) with you at all times during your travel. On the plane before you land, you will complete the Arrival-Departure Record (I-94 form) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection will take your biometric fingerprints and photograph. Part of the I-94 will be stapled into your passport. **Do not lose it!** The stapled portion will be removed when you leave the United States.
- **Certificate of eligibility.** Confirm you have the I-20 or DS-2019 issued by the school or program you will be attending.
- **Contact information.** Have the name and phone number of your international student adviser on campus, in case you need to call him/her upon arrival in the United States.

- **Birth certificate and marriage certificate,** if applicable. Be sure to obtain notarized translations of these certificates if they are not in English.
- **Medical documents.** Bring certificates of immunizations and vaccinations, prescriptions and medical and dental records.
- **Academic transcripts.** Bring your official transcripts, outlines, or descriptions of courses you have taken, and contact information for your U.S. campus.
- **College or university acceptance letter.**

GOOD TO KNOW

Many U.S. colleges and universities have specific immunization requirements you must meet before you can enroll in class. Keep track of your immunizations using the standard International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis, or "yellow card," issued by the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](http://www.who.int/ith/en/) (<http://www.who.int/ith/en/>.)



Graduate | Step 5 - Prepare for Your Departure

2 - 4 months prior to U.S. study:

24 23 22 21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Make Travel Arrangements and Depart for the United States

Before you make travel arrangements, confirm with your international student adviser when you are expected to arrive on campus.

GOOD TO KNOW

You should not make your travel reservations until you have received your U.S. visa. You are not allowed to enter the United States earlier than 30 days prior to the beginning date on your I-20 or DS-2019.

Be sure you know how to get from the airport to your college or university.

Arrive On Campus

Once you arrive on campus, you should report to the office responsible for assisting international students. It is helpful to bring your passport and other immigration documents with you on your first visit.

GOOD TO KNOW

Your international student adviser is your friend! Keep in close touch with this person during your university experience to help you with visa issues, adjustment to life in the United States, and anything else you may need.

Ask your international student adviser for specific information regarding health insurance at the college or university you will be attending. Nearly all international students purchase health insurance through their universities.

Students with disabilities can refer to Mobility International USA for more information about community resources in the United States.



Additionally, you will need to make plans to:

- **Obtain health insurance.** This insurance provides coverage for medical care. The United States does not have a government medical plan of health care service that covers the whole population. Most people have private health insurance.
- **Attend on-campus orientation.** All colleges and universities in the United States offer new student orientation programs that ease your transition to a new place.

Orientation programs give you a chance to meet other students, receive information about immigration regulations, learn about your institution's expectations, get to know the campus and community, speak with professors and academic advisers, and register for courses.




Graduate | Step 5 - Prepare for Your Departure


2 - 4 months prior to U.S. study:




For a brief glimpse of U.S. campus life, refer to:

 **EdUSA Connects Session – Pre-Departure Orientation**
 Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/k9edhvj0> >>

 **EdUSA Connects Session – Campus Life: Community Colleges**
 Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/lyr17zoi> >>

 **EdUSA Connects Session – Campus Life: Liberal Arts Colleges**
 Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/dta6w7jc> >>

 **EdUSA Connects Session – Campus Life: Large University**
 Watch Now - <http://bcove.me/r9tnrax> >>



“Because the faculty and staff take the time to get to know students, you will feel at home in the community atmosphere of the United States.”

- Student from Norway

Move into your housing. Most graduate students live off campus and it is important to find available options as early as possible. The housing office on campus can help answer your questions and provide resources for local housing options.



“Your on-campus orientation gives you the chance to meet many new students and make new friends. You will realize you are not alone.”

- Student from India

GOOD TO KNOW

On-campus housing may be in great demand. Apply early.

If you decide to live in off-campus housing, talk to the housing office on your campus for guidance regarding your options.

A large, stylized red star with a dark blue outline is centered on the page. The star has a slightly irregular, hand-drawn appearance. The word "GLOSSARY" is written in white, bold, uppercase letters across the center of the star.

GLOSSARY



Glossary

academic adviser (AA): A member of a college faculty who helps and advises students solely on academic matters.

academic year: The period of formal instruction, usually September to May; may be divided into terms of varying lengths—semesters, trimesters, or quarters.

accreditation: Approval of colleges and universities by nationally recognized professional associations or regional accrediting bodies.

ACT: A multiple-choice test of English, math, reading, and science reasoning (plus an optional writing component) used for admission into undergraduate programs.

add/drop: A process at the beginning of a term whereby students can delete and add classes with an instructor's permission.

advance registration: A process of choosing classes in advance of other students.

affidavit of support: An official document proving a promise of funding from an individual or organization.

assistantship: A study grant of financial assistance to a graduate student that is offered in return for certain services in teaching or laboratory supervision as a teaching assistant, or for services in research as a research assistant.

associate degree: A degree awarded after a two-year period of study; it can be either terminal or transfer (the first two years of a bachelor's degree).

attestation: Official affirmation that a degree or transcript is genuine. Usually signed by a recognized expert or witness.

audit: To take a class without receiving credit toward a degree.

authentication: Process of determining whether something is, in fact, what it is declared to be. Incoming students are often required to provide a document of authentication for academic transcripts or previous degrees when applying to a program of study in the United States.

bachelor's degree: A degree awarded upon completion of approximately four years of full-time study.

campus: The land on which the buildings of a college or university are located.

CGFNS: Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools.

class rank: A number or ratio indicating a student's academic standing in his or her graduating class. A student who ranks first in a class of 100 students would report his or her class rank as 1/100, while a student ranking last would report 100/100. Class rank may also be expressed in percentiles (for example, the top 25 percent, the lower 50 percent).

coed: A college or university that admits both men and women; also refers to a dormitory that houses both men and women.



Glossary

college: A postsecondary institution that provides an undergraduate education and, in some cases, master's and doctorate degrees. College, in a separate sense, is a division of a university; for example, College of Business.

college catalog: An official publication giving information about a university's academic programs, facilities, entrance requirements, and student life.

community college: A postsecondary institution that offers associate degree programs, as well as technical and vocational programs.

core course: Courses that provide the foundation of the degree program and are required of all students seeking that degree.

course: Regularly scheduled class sessions of one to five hours (or more) per week during a term. A degree program is made up of a specified number of required and elective courses and varies from institution to institution.

credits: Units that most colleges and universities use to record the completion of courses (with passing grades) that are required for an academic degree.

day student: A student who lives in accommodations that are not administered by the college and are off the campus grounds. He or she travels to campus every day for classes.

degree: Diploma or title conferred by a college, university, or professional school upon completion of a prescribed program of studies.

department: Administrative subdivision of a school, college, or university through which instruction in a certain field of study is given (such as English department or history department).

designated school official (DSO): A Designated School Official (DSO) is the person on campus who gathers and reports information on international students to the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) and assists international students in the visa and employment authorization process. Your DSO's name will be listed on your I-20 or DS 2019.

dissertation: Thesis written on an original topic of research, usually presented as one of the final requirements for a doctoral degree (Ph.D.).

doctoral degree (Ph.D.): The highest academic degree conferred by a university to students who have completed graduate study beyond the bachelor's and/or master's degree. Students should demonstrate their academic ability through oral and written examinations and original research presented in the form of a dissertation.

dormitories: Housing facilities on the campus of a college or university reserved for students. A typical dormitory would include student rooms, bathrooms, common rooms, and possibly a cafeteria. Also known as "dorms" for short.

ECFMG: Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates.

ECFVG: Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates.



Glossary

electives: Courses that may be chosen from any field of study. Electives give students an opportunity to explore other topics or subjects of interest.

ERAS: Electronic Residency Application System for obtaining a residency position in the field of medicine in the United States.

extracurricular activities: Nonacademic activities undertaken outside university courses.

faculty: People who teach courses at U.S. colleges and universities. Faculty members may include professors, associate professors, assistant professors, and instructors.

fees: An amount charged by universities, in addition to tuition, to cover costs of institutional services.

fellowship: A form of financial assistance, usually awarded to a graduate student. Generally, no service is required of the student in return.

final exam: Often referred to as a “final,” a final exam is a cumulative exam on a particular course subject encompassing all material covered throughout the duration of the course.

financial aid: A general term that includes all types of money, loans, and work/study programs offered to a student to help pay tuition, fees, and living expenses.

fraternities: Male social, academic, and philanthropic organizations found on many U.S. campuses.

freshman: A first-year student at a secondary school, college, or university.

full-time student: One who is enrolled in an institution taking a full load of courses; the number of courses and hours is specified by the institution.

Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT): A standardized test for MBA applicants that measures basic verbal, mathematical, and analytical writing skills that have been developed over a long period of time through education and work.

grade/grading system: The evaluation of a student’s academic work.

grade point average (GPA): The combined average of a student’s grades for all academic coursework completed. In the United States, grades are usually assigned in letters and are based on a 4.0 GPA scale.

Grade	GPA
A	4.0 (excellent)
B	3.0 (good)
C	2.0 (satisfactory)
D	1.0 (needs improvement)
F	0.0 (fail)

graduate: A student who has completed a course of study, either at secondary school or college level. A graduate program at a university is a study course for students who already hold a bachelor’s degree.



Glossary

Graduate Record Examination (GRE): A standardized test of verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning, and analytical writing that measures readiness for graduate-level study.

high school: The U.S. term for secondary school.

higher education: Postsecondary education at colleges, universities, professional schools, technical institutes, etc.

honors program: A challenging program for students with high grades.

institute: A postsecondary institution that specializes in degree programs in a group of closely related subjects; for example, Institute of Technology.

International English Language Testing System (IELTS): An English language proficiency examination of applicants whose native language is not English.

international student adviser (ISA): The person at a university who is in charge of providing information and guidance to international students in areas of government regulation, visas, academic regulations, social customs, language, financial or housing problems, travel plans, insurance, and legal matters.

junior: A third-year student at a secondary school, college, or university.

language requirement: A requirement of some graduate programs that students must show basic reading and writing proficiency in a language other than their own to receive a degree.

Law School Admission Test (LSAT): A standardized test that provides a standard measure of acquired reading and verbal reasoning skills that law schools can use as one of several factors in assessing applicants.

lecture: Common method of instruction in college and university courses; a professor lectures in classes of 20 to several hundred students. Lectures may be supplemented with regular small group discussions led by teaching assistants.

liberal arts and sciences: Academic studies of subjects in the humanities, the social sciences, and the physical sciences with the goal of developing students' verbal, written, and reasoning skills.

living expenses: Expenses such as housing and meals, books and supplies, transportation, personal expenses, health insurance, etc.

maintenance: Refers to the expenses of attending a university, including room (living quarters) and board (meals), books, clothing, laundry, local transportation, and incidentals.

major: The student's field of concentration. Major courses represent 25-50% of the total number of courses required to complete a degree. Most students pursue one major, but some pursue double majors.

major professor/thesis adviser: For research degrees, the professor who works closely with a student in planning and choosing a research plan, in conducting the research, and in presenting the results. The major professor serves as the head of a committee of faculty members who review progress and results.



Glossary

master's degree: Degree awarded upon completion of academic requirements that usually include a minimum of one year's study beyond the bachelor's degree.

Medical College Admission Test (MCAT): A standardized, multiple-choice examination designed to assess problem solving, critical thinking, writing skills, and knowledge of science concepts and principles prerequisite to the study of medicine.

midterm exam: An exam administered after half the academic term has passed that covers all class material up until that point.

minor: The student's secondary field of concentration. Students who decide to pursue a minor will usually complete about five courses in this second field of study.

notarization: The certification of a document (or a statement or signature) as authentic and true by a public official (known in the United States as a "notary public") or a lawyer who is also a commissioner of oaths.

NRMP: National Resident Matching Program.

Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE): An English language proficiency examination that measures English ability through tasks that reflect real-life settings.

placement test: An examination used to test a student's academic ability in a certain field so that he or she may be placed in the appropriate courses in that field. In some cases, a student may be given academic credit based on the results of a placement test.

plan of study: A detailed description of the course of study for which a candidate applies. The plan should incorporate the objectives given in the student's "statement of purpose."

postdoctorate: Studies designed for those who have completed their doctoral degree.

postgraduate: Usually refers to studies for individuals who have completed a graduate degree. May also be used to refer to graduate education.

prerequisites: Programs or courses that a student is required to complete before being permitted to enroll in a more advanced program or course.

qualifying examination: In many graduate departments, an examination given to students who have completed required coursework for a doctoral degree, but who have not yet begun the dissertation or thesis. A qualifying examination may be oral or written, or both, and must be passed for the student to continue.

registration: Process through which students select courses to be taken during a quarter, semester, or trimester.

residency: Clinical training in a chosen specialty.



Glossary

resident assistant (RA): A person who assists the residence hall director in campus dormitories and is usually the first point of contact for students who need assistance or have questions about campus life. RAs are usually students at the college who receive free accommodation and other benefits in return for their services.

Responsible Officer (RO): A Responsible Officer is the exchange program staff person who gathers and reports information on exchange visitors to the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) and assists in the visa process. The RO's name is listed on the DS-2019.

rolling deadline: Institutions accept applications and admit students at any time during a specific time period until all available spots are filled.

sabbatical: Leave with pay granted to give a faculty member an extended period of time for concentrated study.

SAT: A primarily multiple-choice test of mathematics and English that is used for admission into an undergraduate program.

SAT subject test: A multiple-choice test that measures your knowledge in specific subject areas.

scholarship: A study grant of financial aid, usually given at the undergraduate level, that may take the form of a waiver of tuition and/or fees.

school: A term that usually refers to elementary, middle, or secondary school. Also used in place of the words "college," "university," or "institution," or as a general term for any place of education; for example, law school, or graduate school.

semester: Period of study lasting approximately 15 to 16 weeks or one-half the academic year.

seminar: A form of small group instruction, combining independent research and class discussions under the guidance of a professor.

senior: A fourth-year student at a secondary school, college, or university.

Social Security Number (SSN): A number issued to people by the U.S. government for payroll deductions. Anyone who works regularly must obtain a Social Security Number. Many institutions use this number as the student identification number.

sophomore: A second-year student at a secondary school, college, or university.

sororities: Female social, academic, and philanthropic organizations found on many U.S. campuses.

special student: A student who is taking classes but is not enrolled in a degree program.

Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS): An Internet-based system that maintains records of foreign students and exchange visitors before and during their stay in the United States. It is part of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) managed by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.



Glossary

subject: Course in an academic discipline offered as part of a curriculum of an institution of higher learning.

syllabus: An outline of topics covered in an academic course.

teaching assistant (TA): A graduate student who acts as an instructor for an undergraduate course in his or her field, in return for some form of financial aid from the university.

tenure: A guarantee that a faculty member will remain employed by a college or university until retirement except in the case of very unusual circumstances. Tenure is granted to senior faculty members who have demonstrated a worthy research and publication record. Its purpose is to preserve academic freedom.

terminal program: Associate degree program leading to a specific career upon graduation.

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL): An English language proficiency examination of applicants whose native language is not English.

thesis: A written work containing the results of research on a specific topic prepared by a candidate for a bachelor's or master's degree.

transcript: A certified copy of a student's educational record.

transfer: The process of moving from one university to another to complete a degree.

transfer program: Associate degree program allowing the student to transfer into the third year of a four-year bachelor's degree program.

tuition: The money an institution charges for instruction and training (does not include the cost of books).

university: A postsecondary institution that offers both undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

USMLE: U.S. Medical Licensing Examination.

withdrawal: The administrative procedure of dropping a course or leaving an institution.

zip code: A series of numbers in mailing addresses that designates postal delivery districts in the United States.



Notes



A series of horizontal lines for writing notes, consisting of 20 evenly spaced lines.



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