



Study in the United States: Navigating the Admissions Process

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Mission of EducationUSA

The mission of EducationUSA is to encourage international student mobility both by promoting U.S. higher education to audiences around the world.

EducationUSA is the official name for the educational advising centers around the world that are affiliated with the U.S. Department of State. EducationUSA is a network of more than **430 student advising centers in over 170 countries.**

These centers actively promote U.S. higher education around the world to **qualified individuals** on how best to access opportunities.



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What is EducationUSA?



Part of the U.S.
Department of State



Provides you with
accurate, current, and
comprehensive information



We offer resources,
guidance, and advice on
how to find the “best fit”
university

What is EducationUSA?

Whether you plan to pursue a short-term or full degree program in the United States, EducationUSA has the resources you need in 'Your Five Steps to U.S. Study'.



Research Your Options

Learn about the variety of options available and how to identify an institution that best fits your needs.



Finance Your Studies

Need funding? Explore options or check out our university financial aid opportunity list.



Complete Your Application

Plan ahead and know the documents and requirements to apply for your program.



Apply For Your Student Visa

Become familiar with U.S. student visa requirements and allow plenty of time to prepare your application.



Prepare For Your Departure

Pre-departure information including gathering documents for arrival and immigration compliance.

What is EducationUSA advising?

EducationUSA helps students find the best options to meet their educational and professional goals.

Additionally, the adviser will help the student:

1. Choose an institution that is a good fit
2. Learn about standardized testing requirements
3. Identify financial aid opportunities
4. Apply for a student visa
5. Prepare for the transition to life as a student in the U.S. by providing Pre-Departure Orientation sessions.



Types of EducationUSA Advising

There are several types of educational advising, including:

- Group Advising / Basic Orientation
- One-on-one Advising/ Individual Advising
- Cohort Advising
- Online / Virtual Advising
- Outreach
- Pre-Departure Orientation



The Advising Session

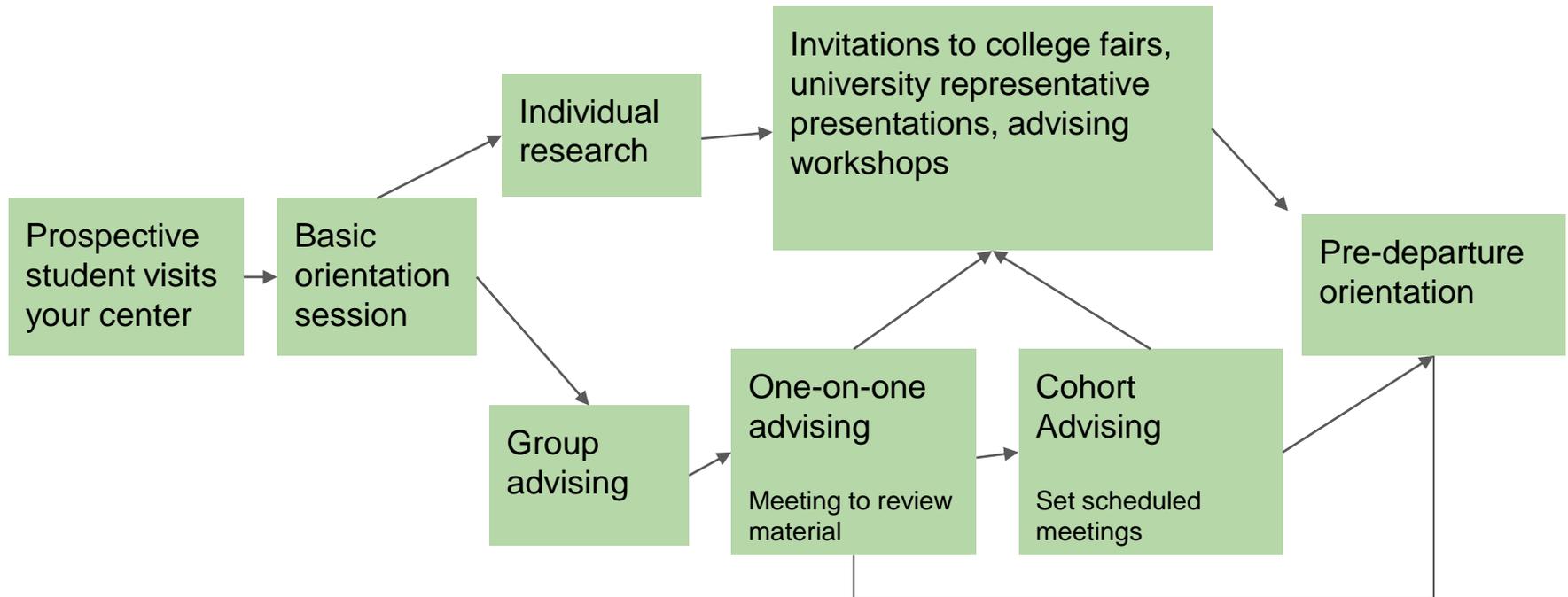
EducationUSA **provides information about:**

- The U.S. system of education.
- Process for selection of institutions and programs.
- Admissions process.
- Clarification/identification of field of study.
- Explanation of costs and financial aid.
- Details of the advising center's services.
- Determination of English proficiency.
- Identifying/understanding required testing.
- Safety and health issues.
- Information on the process of applying for a student visa.



The Advising Sequence

Although you may follow a unique path in applying to a U.S. university or college, please find below the general advising sequence:



Why Study in the U.S.?

The U.S. is a premier destination for higher education because of:

- Ease of access and mobility
- Diversity of student body, faculty and programs
- Quality of curriculum and professors
- High value on lifelong learning
- Self-directed learning and individual accountability

Think about how each of these factors are important to you.



Diversity of the American Higher Education System

American higher education is characterized by the diversity among its academic and research institutions.

- Existing within this diverse system are over 4,000 accredited institutions of higher education, ranging from large universities with over 60,000 students and small ones with fewer than 500.
- The institutions are classified as large or small, public or private, urban or rural, nonprofit or for-profit (proprietary), specialized or general education.
- There are also Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and women's colleges.
- Most importantly, students decide what kind of learning environment best suits their needs and goals.

Why Study in the U.S.?

1,075,496

International Students
Currently on American Campuses

That's 1.8% less students
than the year before!

Source: The Institute of International Education's (IIE)
Open Doors 2019-2020



You Can Do It!

There is a record number of Bangladeshi students attending U.S. colleges and universities.

**8,838 Bangladeshi citizens
are studying in the United States.**

This is a 7.1% increase from 2018-2019

Source: The Institute of International Education's (IIE)
Open Doors 2019-2020

Moving Away from Rankings

“Stanford study finds that U.S. News and other rankings are based on factors that don't actually reflect what students and parents say they want in a college.”



**What students and parents actually care about:
Student learning, well-being,
job satisfaction, future
income.**

The report states: *“...students should ask whether they will be engaged at the college in ways that will allow them to form strong relationships with professors and mentors, apply their learning via internships and long-term projects, and find a sense of community.”*

Source: <https://www.insidehighered.com/admissions/article/2018/10/15/stanford-study-says-rankings-do-not-point-students-best-college-fit>

Public vs. Private Institutions

U.S. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) may be public or private, but what's the difference?

Public institutions depend largely on state funds for their support.

On the other hand, **private** colleges are independent institutions that depend primarily on non-governmental funding sources and student fees for financial support.



What Do We Mean by “College?”

Another important distinction that is important for you to learn is what is actually meant by the term “college.”

Two definitions apply to the term college in the U.S.:

- It describes a four-year institution that grants undergraduate degrees.
- Or...It describes a division of a larger university that offers courses and awards degrees in a specialized course of study.

For example:

- A stand-alone college such as: The College of William & Mary or Boston College
- A college within a larger university such as: Ohio University College of Business

Accreditation

Another important term for you to become familiar with is **accreditation**.

Accreditation is a validation process by which institutions of higher education are evaluated against established standards to ensure a high level of educational quality.

- The U.S. Department of Education is not responsible for accreditation and quality control over postsecondary educational institutions as are ministries of education in many other countries.
- Moreover, unlike most countries, the U.S. has no Federal Ministry of Education or other centralized authority as a governmental unit.
- Accreditation is typically accomplished through a peer-review process, and faculty from accredited institutions help to conduct evaluations.
- A list of accredited U.S. institutions is located at:
 - U.S. Department of Education - <https://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/>
 - Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) - <http://www.chea.org/>

Considerations for Prospective Students

You should answer the following questions during the institution selection process:

- Is the university/college regionally accredited?
- How many international students are on campus?
(*Just a note, 5-10% of international students is recommended)
- Does the university offer financial aid?
- What is the student/faculty ratio?
- Are there research facilities?
- Where is the university located?
- What is the cost of living in the area?
- Do you have friends and relatives nearby?
- Do you have a preference for an urban/rural area and/or climate?

Considerations for Graduate Admissions



For graduate degree programs, you should conduct research keeping the following in mind:

- Length of program:
 - Master's: 1-2 years
 - PhD: 5 years (approx.)
- Immediate and consistent focus on academic coursework during the entirety of the program.
- Higher expectations for class participation, including critical thinking and questioning.
- The role of Academic Adviser which is critical as are relationships with other department faculty; students should consider this factor in program selection.
- Intense and frequent communication which will be required throughout the duration of the program.
- Differences between institutions regarding emphasis on research, quality of facilities, size of department and type of accreditation.
- Selecting institutions only after considering the faculty and quality of the program.

Undergraduate Transfer Policy

Because of the diversity of U.S. higher education institutions, students have many opportunities to transfer completed coursework from one institution to another. Transferring credit is the recognition by one institutions of learning acquired at another institution.

Common principles and practices of transfer that you should be aware of include the following:

- One year of full-time academic work at a given level of education is usually comparable to one year of full-time academic work in another country at the same level of education.
- Funding and scholarship policies may differ for transfer students; students considering transferring who need scholarships should look into these policies specifically.
- Studying the transfer policies of the chosen institution.
- Determining additional questions to ask in complex course transfer situations.
- Ensuring that the necessary and supporting documents for an appropriate course evaluation are sent.

Planning for the Admissions Process

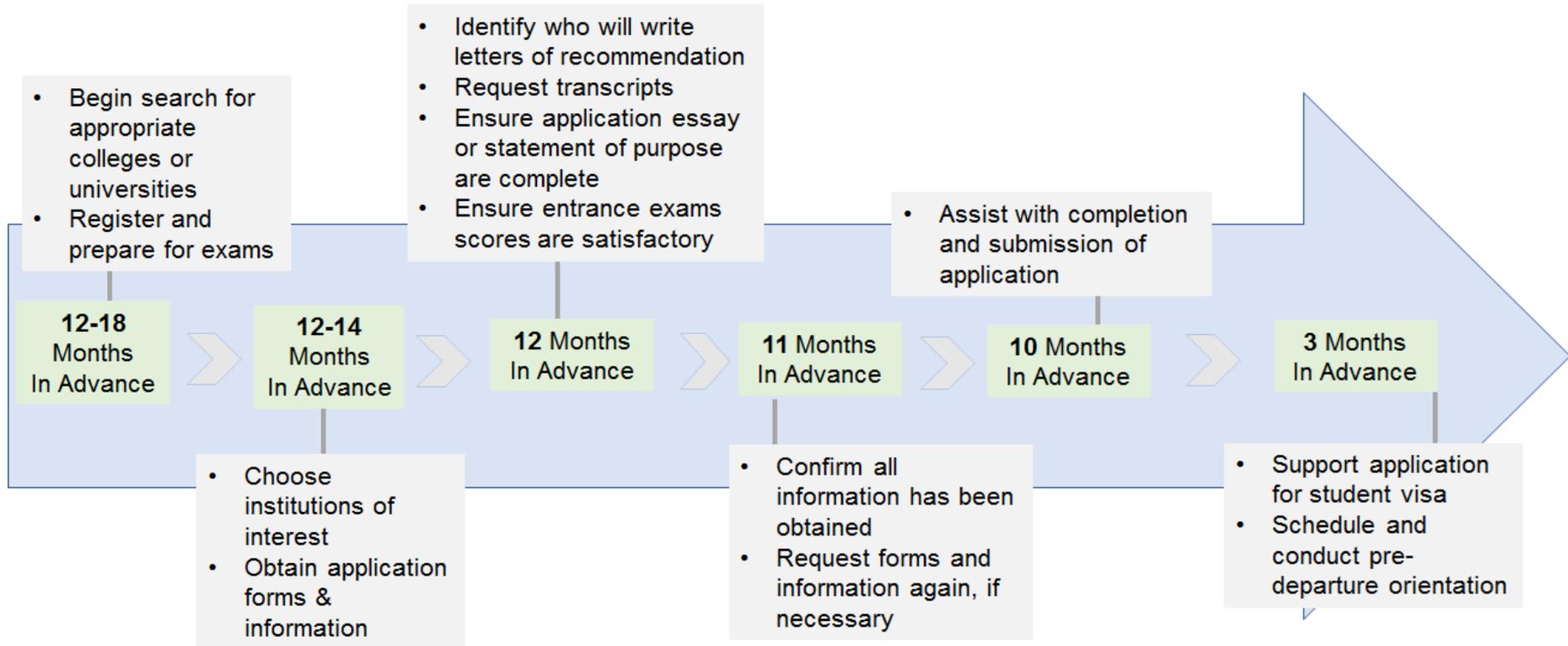
The admissions process is a very important and time-consuming part of seeking to study in the United States. Please keep the following suggestions in mind when navigating this process:

- Start early: 12-18 months before admission.
- Attend special sessions on financial aid to select schools, fill out forms, write SOP / essays, sign up for standardized tests, obtain recommendations.
- Review institution websites and note a list of information
- Attend fairs, webinars, and workshops
- Beware of fraudulent scholarship agencies!



Make a Plan

For the specific institution you are seeking to apply for, please consider the Admission Office's specific timeline for prospective international students. The following timeline provides an overview of what this process may entail:



Components of the Application

A **letter of recommendation** often accompanies a student's application. This letter can dramatically influence the admission decision and offers of financial aid.

These letters of recommendation should:

- Be written by someone who knows the student well.
- Assess the applicant's qualifications.
- Compare this particular student with other students, both at home and in the U.S.
- Be detailed, honest, and specific.

Applications may also include a **Statement of Purpose** for graduate programs. A Statement of Purpose (SOP) is perhaps the single most important element in your application package for securing admissions and scholarships. This is especially true at the graduate applications. All other elements aside, your SOP has the power to make or break your chances at an acceptance letter.

Components of the Application

APPLICATION

TRANSCRIPTS / ACADEMIC RECORDS

TOEFL/IELTS/PTE/DET SCORES

GRE / GMAT

PERSONAL STATEMENT/SOP / ESSAY

RECOMMENDATION LETTERS (2-3)

WORK / RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

COSTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Goal Setting for Prospective Graduate-Degree Students

Recommending EdUSA recommends using the following [Define Your Priorities](https://educationusa.state.gov/your-5-steps-us-study/research-your-options/graduate/define-your-priorities) worksheet to identify your academic and professional goals to determine which graduate degree program is appropriate for your career trajectory. (<https://educationusa.state.gov/your-5-steps-us-study/research-your-options/graduate/define-your-priorities>)

Questions prospective graduate students should answer include:

- Is there employment in the home country in a specific field?
- Is specialized training needed?
- Does the profession require an advanced degree?
- Can such training not be obtained in the home country?
- Does the applicant want to specialize in a subject that is of great importance, either for career goals or for personal satisfaction?

Once these questions have been answered, and you feel confident that you have clearly defined goals, and we can provide the best advising support to YOU.

Selecting an Institution

Some factors to consider when choosing a graduate degree program include:

- Quality, prestige and reputation of the program
- Competitiveness – in other words, will he/she be admitted?
- Availability of funding for the degree
- Location
- Faculty – Who works at the university? What do they do?
- Research facilities
- Future plans after graduation

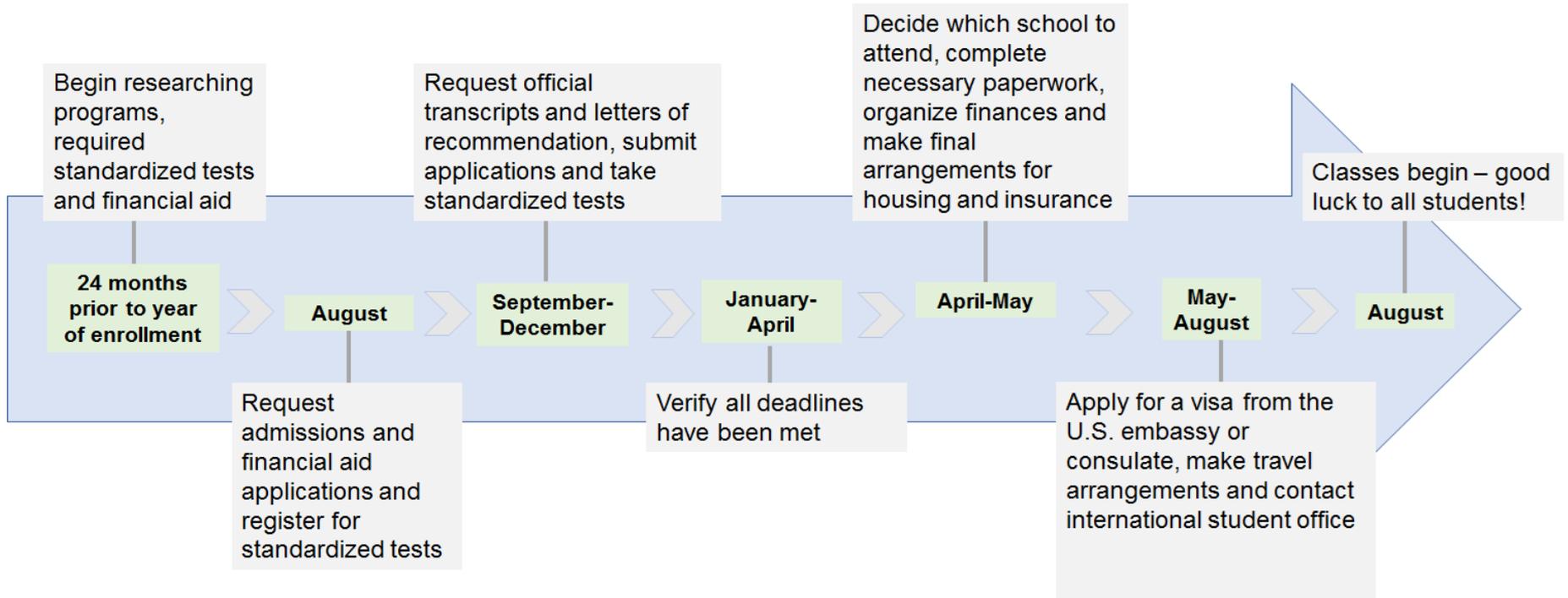
Selecting an Institution

Resources for researching graduate degree programs include:

- Websites such as www.Petersons.com, www.PhDs.org or www.GradSchools.com. Students can search by discipline, find links to university websites and compare programs using their own parameters.
- Program websites at individual colleges or universities. You can find information about a specific discipline or program under headings such as “Academics,” “Academic Programs” or “Degree Programs.” Be sure you read the program descriptions and requirements in their entirety, paying close attention to specific details.
- Peterson’s guides. Program information is organized by discipline and you can learn more about specific universities, financial aid and details for international students.

Planning for Graduate Admissions

It is important you plan far in advance and ensure adequate time to complete every step of the admissions process to submit a complete admissions package
Your plan should include the following:



Goal of university search ...

- Research until you find 10 – 20 universities that are most likely to give you admission.
- Select universities that will consider you an asset, where you would be strong academically (and hopefully financially) compared to the applicant pool, where you can convincingly and uniquely show what you would contribute to the quality of the department/program.
- For each program you are interested in, complete a worksheet.
- Analyze your choices, critically and strategically. Remove all non-viable universities. Think hard, be decisive. Don't apply to any universities that cannot meet your needs, academically, financially, and personally.
- Discipline yourself: follow a strict timetable, pay attention to detail. Work as hard on your applications as you will work when you get there. Go above and beyond the requirements. Think about what you do when you strive for a goal that is beyond your reach.
- In the end, most students apply to 4 – 8 universities.

Financing U.S. Education

Financial Planning

In addition to elements of the admissions process, such as the application or standardized testing, that you just learned about, you must also ensure that you plan adequately for their finances.

Here are 4 steps that need to be taken into consideration:



Costs

Tuition & Fees

- Educational instruction
- Facilities
- Lab equipment
- Libraries

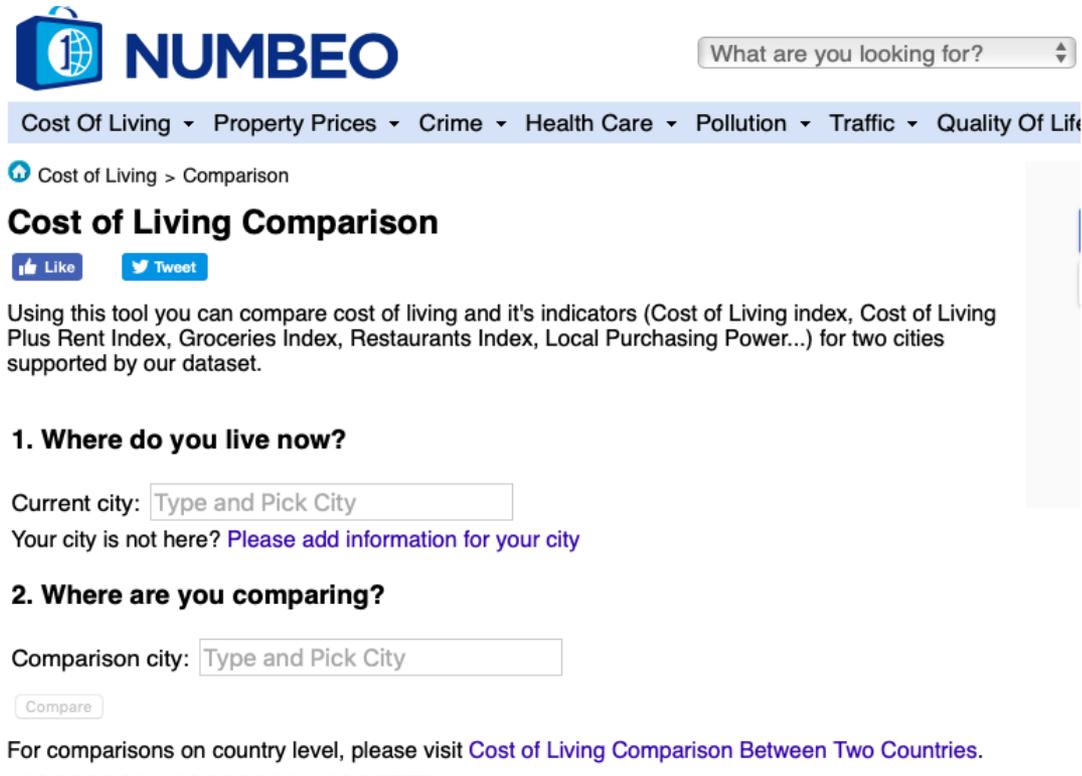


Living Costs

- Room & board
- Books & supplies
- Transportation
- Personal expenses

Understanding Real Life Expenses

There are various independent websites and platforms which can help you to understand the cost of living. Here is an example -



The screenshot shows the NUMBEO website interface. At the top, there is a search bar with the text "What are you looking for?". Below it, a navigation menu includes "Cost Of Living", "Property Prices", "Crime", "Health Care", "Pollution", "Traffic", and "Quality Of Life". The main heading is "Cost of Living Comparison", with "Like" and "Tweet" buttons. A description states: "Using this tool you can compare cost of living and it's indicators (Cost of Living index, Cost of Living Plus Rent Index, Groceries Index, Restaurants Index, Local Purchasing Power...) for two cities supported by our dataset." The form has two sections: "1. Where do you live now?" with a "Current city:" input field containing "Type and Pick City" and a link "Your city is not here? Please add information for your city"; and "2. Where are you comparing?" with a "Comparison city:" input field containing "Type and Pick City" and a "Compare" button. A footer note says: "For comparisons on country level, please visit [Cost of Living Comparison Between Two Countries](#)."

Understanding Total Expenses

Your 2019-2020 Financial Aid Award

Award	Fall	Spring	Total
International Student Grant	\$41,389	\$36,626	\$78,015
Acad Year Student Contribution	\$1,150	\$1,150	\$2,300
Total			\$80,315

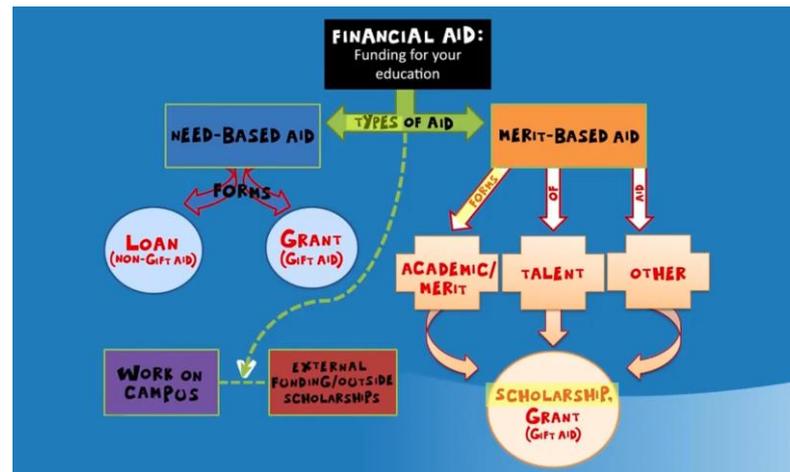
Estimated Cost of Attendance for 2019-2020 Year

Estimated Costs	Amount
Direct	
Tuition	\$50,788
Activity Fee/Rec Center Fee	1,272
Housing	11,044
Meals	5,866
Engineering Laboratory Fee	800
First-Year Experience Fee	836
New Student Transcript Fee	100
Health Insurance	3,162
Total Direct Costs	73,868
Indirect	
Personal/Misc Allowance	1,662
Engineering Laptop Allowance	1,600
Books/Supplies	1,294
Your Travel Allowance	2,516
Total Indirect Costs	7,072
Total Estimated Cost of Attendance	\$80,940

Financial Planning

Funding patterns differ between graduate and undergraduate study.

For the academic year 2016/17, the Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange reported that 61.1% of international graduate students enrolled at U.S. colleges and universities received their primary funding from personal or family sources, while 31.1% of international graduates' primary source of funding is their U.S. college or university.

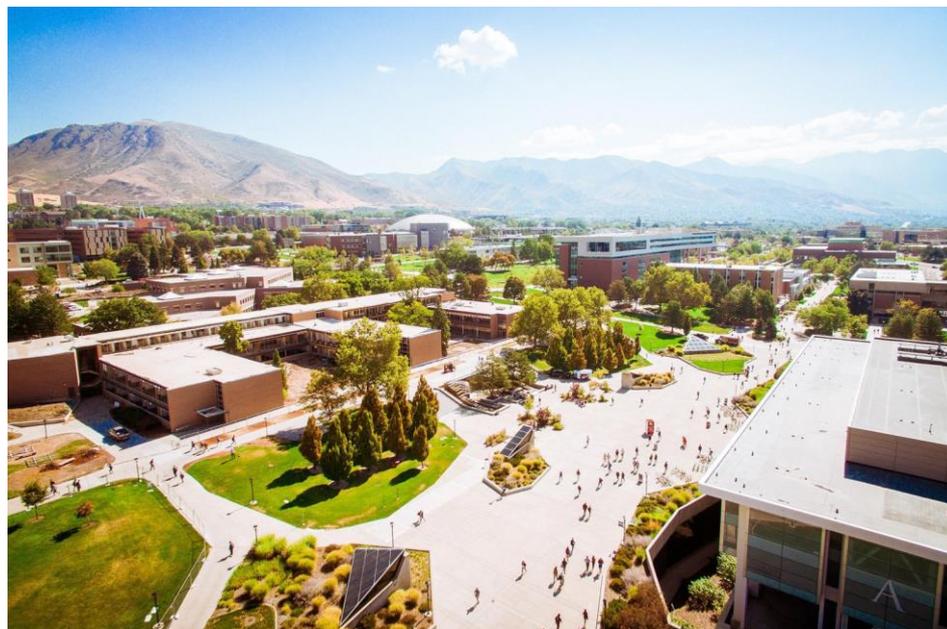


Funding Studies in the U.S.

International students can fund their studies in the U.S. through various means.

This could include:

- **Scholarship, fellowship, grant:** Funds that do not need to be paid back.
- **Work/Study:** Funds you will receive from on-campus work.
- **Loan:** Funds that must be paid back.



Graduate Financial Aid

Funding for graduate studies is awarded primarily on merit, though exceptions do exist. Merit-based support for graduate students at U.S. universities often comes in the form of a fellowship or an assistantship.

- **Fellowships** are direct grants, awarded to those individuals whom universities most want to attract. Awarded based on academic achievement; does not require work, just being an excellent student; can cover part or all of tuition and living expenses.
- **Assistantships** mean that the graduate student assists the professor in teaching undergraduate classes or conducting research. Assistantships include a tuition waiver and monthly stipend to cover living expenses. Financial award in return for work provided to the university can cover part or all of tuition and living expenses; usually 10-20 hours per week;

Graduate Financial Aid

- **Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTAship)** cover the expenses for graduate studies.
- **Work responsibilities:**
 - Co-teach a course with more experienced professors
 - Grade papers, quizzes, and exams
 - Run laboratory sessions (in STEM)
 - Admin work for a department
- **What does it cover?** - Out-of-state tuition, monthly stipend to cover housing and other living expenses (utilities, food and personal expenses), and health insurance coverage in some cases.
- **What should international students know about TAships?** – Some universities require 24+ points on the speaking part of the TOEFL, and GRE is also generally required.

Internships and Cooperative Education

Combining real-world experience with academic studies is becoming an integral part of many graduate programs.

- **Internships** provide practical experience conducted under the joint direction of an on-site supervisor and a campus-based mentor. It is common for interns to receive compensation directly from the cooperating entity, while the university normally grants academic credit.
- **Cooperative education** integrates work experience with academic study. International students are permitted to participate in co-op programs but must comply with immigration regulations. Students should check with their international student adviser for more information about these regulations.



Funding Studies in the U.S.

Let's see U.S. Department of State Educational and Professional Exchange Programs available in Bangladesh.

For more information, visit:

- Student Exchange Programs - <https://bd.usembassy.gov/education-culture/student-exchange-programs/>.
- Programs for Scholars - <https://bd.usembassy.gov/education-culture/programs-for-scholars/>.
- Programs for Professionals - <https://bd.usembassy.gov/education-culture/programs-for-professionals/>.
- English Language Programs - <https://bd.usembassy.gov/education-culture/english-language-programs/>.

Fulbright Foreign Student Program

- For young Bangladeshi academics and professionals to pursue graduate study in the United States.
- Website address: <https://bd.usembassy.gov/education-culture/student-exchange-programs/>

Eligibility Requirements:

- Have at least a four-year bachelor's degree, with an outstanding academic record
- Have at least two years full-time professional experience.
- Not have degree from a U.S. university or any third country.
- Have relevant degrees or professional experience in their proposed field of study.
- Have a valid TOEFL score and be fluent in English.
- Be Bangladeshi citizens residing in Bangladesh at the time of application.

Fulbright Visiting Scholar Program

- Three-to -Nine Months Research or Teaching Fellowships at the Post-Doctoral Level
- Website address: <https://bd.usembassy.gov/education-culture/programs-for-scholars/>

Eligibility Requirements:

- Be senior faculty members /researchers holding a PhD or equivalent professional training or experience
- Have a minimum of ten years professional experience
- Excellent publication records
- Have excellent English language skills
- Submit a detailed project statement of proposed activity at a U.S. institution.
- Be committed to return to Bangladesh immediately upon completion of their research / teaching assignments

Professional Exchange Programs

Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program

One of the U.S. government's prestigious Fulbright program offerings that brings accomplished young and mid-career professionals to the United States for a year of non-degree graduate-level study, leadership development, and substantive professional collaboration with U.S. counterparts.

Provide future leaders and policy makers with exposure to U.S. society, culture, and professional fields, the program provides a basis for lasting, productive ties between Americans and their professional counterparts overseas. This unique, one-year program is open to professional candidates in the public and private sectors, including from non-governmental organizations. The announcements is usually made in **May** and the applications are open till **July**. More information can be found at <https://www.humphreyfellowship.org/>.



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Professional Exchange Programs

Community Solutions Program

- It is a professional leadership development program for the **best and brightest community leaders** worldwide.
- The goal of the CSP is for engaged community leaders to positively impact the complex economic, environmental, political, and social challenges in their communities and become ambassadors for mutual understanding.
- It also increases the capacity of U.S. partner organizations by nurturing collaboration and partnerships with international professionals and organizations.
- Community Solutions Fellows complete a four-month fellowship with a U.S. nonprofit organization or local government agency.
- Our Community Leadership Institute provides an integrated leadership curriculum and individualized coaching throughout the fellowship. Fellows return home to apply their new skills through a community action project. Announcements are made in **October** and the fellows start the fellowship in mid of the following year.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.irex.org/project/community-solutions>.



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Professional Exchange Programs

Community Engagement Exchange Program

- A transformational leadership development experience, CEE is a year-long program designed to enable civil society leaders, ages 20-27, to harness the power of networks, relationships, and information for the public good, specifically on issues related to civic dialogue and peacebuilding, open and participatory government, women and gender, resilience and sustainable development, and youth engagement.
- CEE fellows are matched to civil society organizations throughout the United States. Designated supervisors and peers support the fellows through a three-month, hands-on professional fellowship. With the help of their U.S. host organization and mentors, CEE fellows design and plan a community engagement project to carry out after they return home. Once the fellows depart the U.S., they put these projects into action in their home communities. Announcements are made in September for a start in the following year.
- More information can be found here: <https://www.irex.org/program/community-engagement-exchange-program-application-information>.

Additional Resources on financial aid for international graduate students:

- Special Opportunities And Financial Aid - <https://educationusa.state.gov/find-financial-aid>.
- Funding for U.S. Study, Institute of International Education - <https://www.fundingusstudy.org/>.
- Peterson's Graduate and Professional Programs - <https://www.petersons.com/graduate-schools.aspx>.

Other resources -

- University Databases such as Michigan State University <https://grad.msu.edu/funding/> and The University of Wisconsin <https://www.library.wisc.edu/memorial/collections/grants-information-collection/> (for example).
- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute's clear directives on writing the statement of purpose for your graduate application. <https://www.rpi.edu/dept/cdc/students/graduate/essays.html>.

Applying for a U.S. Student Visa

Applying for a U.S. Student Visa

Students whose primary purpose is to enter the U.S. to pursue a study program must enter with a student visa.

Upon acceptance to a U.S. educational institution, the student must complete the required forms, pay the required fees, and complete the required interview at the local U.S. embassy or consulate.

Also, the student must maintain full-time status throughout the course of study listed on the I-20.

- ✓ **Familiarize yourself with the U.S. Embassy's Visa website and student visa process.**
- ✓ **Attend information sessions on student visas EducationUSA hosts.**



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Student Visas

Student visas are issued in one of three categories:

- **F - 1:** The most common student visa category – almost 90% of international students in the United States are on F-1 student visas.
 - The admitting school will send the student a Form I-20 to use in obtaining a visa.
- **M - 1:** Issued to students attending vocational programs in community colleges.
 - The admitting school will send the student a Form I-20 to use in obtaining a visa.
- **J - 1:** Used by students receiving a stipend from the U.S. government and by students with financial support from foreign governments, foundations, organizations and institutions.
 - The admitting school will send the student a DS-2019 to use in obtaining a visa.

Refer to the website of the U.S. embassy to find comprehensive guidance on procedures, forms and requirements for student visas.

Facts and Resources

A variety of resources are available to ensure that the information about the student visa process that you share with students is as accurate and up-to-date as possible.

- Five Steps to U.S. Study - Step 4 - <https://educationusa.state.gov/your-5-steps-us-study/apply-your-student-visa>
- Websites of U.S. Embassy - <https://bd.usembassy.gov/>
- Student Visas - <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/student-visa.html>
- Travel in the United States - <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en.html>

Preparing for Your Departure

The Pre-departure Orientation

EdUSA Advisors are also responsible for conducting pre-departure orientations for students preparing to travel to the U.S. for their higher education studies.

These orientation sessions are designed to prepare students for an easy transition to U.S. campus life and address topics such as:

- Student visa regulations and interview preparation
- Travel preparation and tips
- Arrival on campus (student orientations, housing, etc)
- Student life (academic and extracurricular)
- Cultural adaptation
- Mental Health and Socializing

The pre-departure orientation is usually conducted 2 months prior to the start of the academic semester. For example, students beginning their studies in the Fall semester, the session is held during the summer (usually in June).



Helpful Resources and Tools

Finally, let's talk about some tools that you will want to keep in your toolkit as you identify your next steps to study in the United States. Please find below a few of the resources readily available to help you begin your journey today.

Materials produced by Department of State and ECA

- The EducationUSA website - <http://educationusa.state.gov/> is a great source of information. Be sure to save it as a bookmark - you will refer to it often!
- EducationUSA Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/EducationUSA>, Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/educationusa/>, Twitter - <https://twitter.com/educationusa>.
- EducationUSA Bangladesh Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/EdUSABangladesh>.
- U.S. Embassy, Dhaka Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/bangladesh.usembassy/>, Twitter - <https://twitter.com/usembassydhaka>, YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/user/TheUSEmbassyDhaka>.
- EducationUSA TV - <https://www.youtube.com/user/EducationUSAtv>.
- Publications, periodicals, brochures, books and handouts from EducationUSA Centers.



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THANK YOU!

ANY QUESTIONS?

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