

studying in the...

USA



THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG
Ministry of Research and Higher Education



HIGHER EDUCATION

The U.S. higher education system is different from many other systems around the world as it is not subject to a central government authority and institutions are free to design their curriculum. Regional and national accreditation of U.S. colleges and universities helps to ensure that institutional standards are being met.

Higher education in the United States encompasses a diversity of institutions comprising public universities or colleges and also many private institutions.

ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER

- ▶ large, all-inclusive campus or close-knit campus with fewer students
- ▶ urban or rural setting
- ▶ state-funded or private institutions
- ▶ amount of funding and support for international students
- ▶ quality of campus facilities, from labs to athletic facilities
- ▶ diverse specializations or focused on one field

FOUR-YEAR OR TWO-YEAR COURSE?

Four-year university or college

- ▶ Bachelor of Arts (BA) or Bachelor of Science (BS) degrees
- ▶ highly flexible with a wide variety of courses (liberal arts philosophy)

Two-year college

A two-year college is also known as community or junior college:

- ▶ studies in a wide range of subjects
- ▶ low tuition rates (average of \$6,500)
- ▶ practical or vocational training
- ▶ possibility to transfer to a four-year Bachelor's programme (2 + 2 years)
- ▶ entrance requirements much less competitive than four-year degrees

VOCATIONAL

Technical Institute

- ▶ two- or three-year course of training
- ▶ semi-professional occupation
- ▶ one to three years of study
- ▶ preparation for immediate employment (not to continue to college or university)





DEGREES

In the American system of higher education, the following degrees are awarded:

- ▶ **Associate degrees:** conferred after 2 years of studies; students typically continue their studies afterwards
- ▶ **Bachelor's degrees:** 4 years of studies
- ▶ **Master's degrees:** 1 or 2 additional years after a Bachelor's degree
- ▶ **Doctoral degrees (PhD):** at least 2-3 years of further studies

THE CREDIT SYSTEM

American degrees are earned on the basis of the number of courses successfully taken. Each course earns “credits” or “units”.

- ▶ undergraduate student's load = 15-17 units per semester
- ▶ graduate student's load = 9-12 units, possibly with research

Each specialization will have different requirements for the total number of units in each subject.





APPLICATION

DEADLINES

- ▶ November to January: regular application deadlines, with most in January.

Begin your research at least 12 to 18 months prior to the academic year in which you hope to attend a college or university.

PROCEDURE

- ▶ August 1st: you can begin most of your applications.
The Common Application (used by over 600 American universities) and most other universities' applications become available online.
www.commonapp.org
- ▶ Finalise your university choices to the 2-8 universities to which you will apply.
- ▶ Register for and sit an admissions test (SAT or ACT).
September: request a transcript from your school and 2-3 reference letters.
www.collegeboard.org
www.act.org

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- ▶ a completed application form
- ▶ application fee (50-100 \$ per university)
- ▶ admissions exam scores (SAT or ACT, and TOEFL)
- ▶ 2-3 essays (personal statement)
- ▶ transcript (document listing your academic qualifications and marks)
- ▶ 2-3 letters of reference (for some universities)
- ▶ interview (for some universities)

How to write a personal statement?

Watch the videos on **www.fulbright.org.uk**

What is the SAT?

Like American students, you may be required to take the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) in the last year of your secondary studies. The SAT is offered in Brussels and in Luxembourg (International School www.islux.lu).

It is advisable to take the test as early as possible, so that test results can reach the university admissions officers before the application deadlines. Some universities do not require the SAT and others accept alternatives like the ACT (American College Test).

Register for a test on www.collegeboard.org

STUDENT VISA

A valid passport and U.S. visa are needed to enter the United States.

Before you can apply for a student visa (visa category F or M), you must first apply and be accepted by a U.S. institution of higher education that is accredited in the U.S..

<https://ope.ed.gov/dapip/#/home>

Once accepted, you will receive a Form I-20 from your designated school official (DSO).

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students/prepare/students-and-the-form-i-20>

Visa application procedure

1. Receive your I-20 and pay the SEVIS I-901 fee
www.ice.gov/sevis/i901
2. Complete your nonimmigrant visa DS-160 application form
<https://ceac.state.gov/genniv/>
3. Check required documents and fees
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study.html>
4. Schedule an interview with the consular officer at the U.S. Embassy
<https://lu.usembassy.gov/>

Apply early!

TUITION FEES

At almost all American institutions of higher education, you have to pay tuition and fees, which vary widely depending on location, size, specialization, and other factors. Institutions can be grouped according to public or private, two-year or four-year, but choosing the best institution for you depends on other features. Here is a general overview about the various tuition fees:

- ▶ Public four-year colleges
 - > Tuition and other fees: \$ 23,890 (out-state fees)
- ▶ Private non-profit four-year colleges
 - > Tuition and other fees: \$ 32,410

www.collegeboard.org



SEARCH ENGINES

- ▶ BigFuture <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/>
- ▶ College Navigator – National Center for Education Statistics <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

USEFUL LINKS

- ▶ Education USA <https://educationusa.state.gov>
- ▶ Study in the States <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov>
- ▶ Fulbright commission www.fulbright.be/fr
- ▶ The College Tour www.thecollegetour.com/

There is no official ranking system for colleges and universities in the United States. The best college or university is the one that is best for you and meets your requirements – academically, financially, and personally.

Keep in mind that the schools and the degrees you apply to must be accredited in order to get financial aid from the Luxembourg Ministry of Research and Higher Education!

The EducationUSA Adviser in Luxembourg can help you find the best college or university for you.

Contact: educationusluxembourg@state.gov

Office: +352 46 01 23 39

Mobile: +352 691 400 485



STUDENT LIFE

The following websites provide information on:

- ▶ housing
- ▶ social security
- ▶ student jobs
- ▶ internships

<https://mengstudien.public.lu/fr/etudier-etranger/etats-unis.html>

<https://acel.lu/cercles/LUAM/>

EDUCATION USA LUXEMBOURG

Luxembourg@educationusa.org

<http://www.educationusa.be/>





FINANCIAL AID

STATE FINANCIAL AID FOR HIGHER EDUCATION – AideFi

- ▶ The Ministry of Research and Higher Education offers grants and loans to students enrolled in higher education and meeting certain conditions.
- ▶ Financial aid is awarded only for recognised degree courses!
- ▶ Check the eligibility of your courses in the section **“eligible study courses”** on our website www.mengstudien.lu and contact the Financial Aid Department of the Ministry of Research and Higher Education in case of doubt.
aide-fi@mesr.etat.lu

Application deadlines

- ▶ from August 1st to November 30th (winter semester)
- ▶ from January 1st to April 30th (summer semester)

More information on the financial aid application procedure, the amounts and the eligibility criteria at www.mengstudien.lu



Apply online via www.guichet.lu!

MyGuichet.lu

www.mengstudien.lu



- ▶ Studies
- ▶ Financial aid
- ▶ Student life



*meng***studien.lu**



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Contact the Higher Education Information Service of the Ministry of Research and Higher Education to ensure that the higher education qualification you are aiming for is recognised!
etudes@mesr.etat.lu

www.mengstudien.lu



Ministry of Research and Higher Education

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