

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: dental, engineering or medical technician Terminal Occupational Education (vocational)
- ▶ 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 1<sup>st</sup>: 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](http://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](http://www.collegeboard.org)**

**[www.act.org](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.collegeboard.org)

## OBTAINING YOUR VISA

A valid passport and U.S. visa are needed to enter the United States. Before you can apply for a student visa (DS 160), you must first apply and be accepted by a U.S. institution of higher education that is accredited in the US <https://ope.ed.gov/dapip/#/home>.

## Procedure

- ▶ Apply online for your nonimmigrant visa DS 160 on <https://ceac.state.gov/genniv/>.
- ▶ Schedule an interview at the consulate. <https://lu.usembassy.gov/>
- ▶ Follow the procedure on the website of the U.S. Embassy. <https://lu.usembassy.gov/>  
<https://travel.state.gov>

## What is a form I-20A-B “Certificate of Eligibility”?

The I 20A-B is sent to you by a U.S. institution that considers you qualified for a full course of study.



# TUITION FEES

Almost all American institutions of higher education are not for free. 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](http://www.collegeboard.org)





## SEARCH ENGINES

- ▶ The College Board – Big Future  
<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search>
- ▶ College Navigator – National Center for Education Statistics  
<https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>
- ▶ College Scorecard  
<https://www.npr.org/2022/02/15/1080773523/student-loans-financial-aid-tool-college-scorecard>



## USEFUL LINKS

- ▶ Education USA <https://educationusa.state.gov>
- ▶ Study in the States <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov>
- ▶ Fulbright commission [www.fulbright.be/fr](http://www.fulbright.be/fr)
- ▶ The College Tour [www.thecollegetour.com/](http://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 you apply to must be accredited in order to get financial aid from the Luxembourg Ministry of Higher Education and Research!

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

Contact the Adviser on

[www.facebook.com/EducationUSALuxembourg](https://www.facebook.com/EducationUSALuxembourg)  
or through [luxembourgpublicaffairs@state.gov](mailto:luxembourgpublicaffairs@state.gov)





# STUDENT LIFE

## ACEL

ACEL (Association des Cercles d'Étudiants Luxembourgeois) informs you about all aspects of student life:

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



[www.acel.lu](http://www.acel.lu)

## EDUCATION USA LUXEMBOURG

[Luxembourg@educationusa.org](mailto:Luxembourg@educationusa.org)

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





# FINANCIAL AID

## FINANCIAL AID FROM THE LUXEMBOURG STATE

- ▶ 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!
- ▶ Contact the Financial Aid Department of the Ministry of Research and Higher Education in case of doubt.

[aide-fi@mesr.etat.lu](mailto:aide-fi@mesr.etat.lu)

### Application deadlines

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

### Eligible study courses

Consult the section "[eligible study courses](#)" on our website [www.mengstudien.lu](http://www.mengstudien.lu).



### More information on the financial aid application procedure and the eligibility criteria:

[www.mengstudien.lu](http://www.mengstudien.lu)

(with an integrated calculation [simulator](#))



Apply online via [www.guichet.lu](http://www.guichet.lu)!

**MyGuichet.lu**

[www.mengstudien.lu](http://www.mengstudien.lu)

- ▶ Studies
- ▶ Financial aid
- ▶ Student life



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by MESR



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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](mailto:etudes@mesr.etat.lu)

[www.mengstudien.lu](http://www.mengstudien.lu)



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[www.mengstudien.lu](http://www.mengstudien.lu)

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