Admitted International Students

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
School of Professional Studies
Congratulations on your admission to an M.S. degree program at Columbia, and welcome from the staff at the ISSO!
Agenda

- Immigration
- Campus Resources
- NYC Transportation
- Registration Requirements
- Q&A
Immigration
International Student Scholars Office (ISSO)

International House North
524 Riverside Drive, Street Level

212-854-3587
newintlstudent@columbia.edu
Things to Consider Before Your Arrival

1. What is F-1 status? What is SEVIS?
2. Applying for a visa
3. Arriving at a U.S. Port of Entry
4. Reporting your arrival to activate your SEVIS record
5. Maintaining F-1 Status
6. Returning from a trip abroad during your program
ISSO Information

You must apply for and obtain a Columbia I-20 (Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant F-1 Status) which is required as part of an F-1 visa application at a U.S. consulate or to transfer your F-1 SEVIS record to Columbia from another U.S. university.
U.S. immigration law does not provide a visa status that permits part-time studies. International students on in F-1 student immigration status must be enrolled full-time, defined as 12 credit points at Columbia.
I-20 (Certification of Eligibility for F-1 Status)

Students admitted to a fulltime program of study apply to the ISSO for this document at http:// isso.columbia.edu

You will see that a complete application for an I-20 consists of an online application PLUS supporting documentation comprised of:
- a copy of your letter of admission
- a copy of the identification page of your passport
- documents showing that you have enough funds available now for the first year of your program for the amount indicated on the chart.

All of the documentation should be scanned as one pdf that you will email to issodocs@columbia.edu

Your I-20 application will be in a queue with more than 3200 other new international student applicants. It may take up to 3-4 weeks to process your complete application, depending on how many applications are ahead of yours.
I-20 (Certification of Eligibility for F-1 Status)

You need the I-20 **BEFORE** you make a VISA appointment. The I-20 is required when applying for F-1 entry visa from U.S. consulate. The appointment wait time and the visa processing time varies for the all the different U.S. embassies and consulates, so check for information specific to the post at which you will apply at

https://usvisa-info.com/static/niv-landing.html

You should **NOT** buy a plane ticket **UNTIL** you have obtained the F-1 entry visa in your passport.

When making travel plans, keep in mind that you may not enter the U.S. in F-1 status more than 30 days in advance of the start date of the term, printed on your I-20.

The I-20 is required at port of entry for admission in F-1 status when arriving in the U.S.
Citizens of Canada and Bermuda

While the F-1 Visa is not required for citizens of Canada and Bermuda, you still must submit an application for the I-20 Document.
**Department of Homeland Security**  
**U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement**  
**I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status**  
**SEVIS ID:** N0004705512

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>SURNAMES/PRIMARY NAME</strong></th>
<th><strong>GIVEN NAME</strong></th>
<th><strong>CLASS</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doe-Smith</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>F-1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COUNTRY OF BIRTH**  
**UNITED KINGDOM**

**DATE OF BIRTH**  
**01 JANUARY 1980**

**ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE**

**SCHOOL INFORMATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>SCHOOL NAME</strong></th>
<th><strong>SCHOOL ADDRESS</strong></th>
<th><strong>SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEVIS School for Advanced SEVIS Studies</td>
<td>0000 Main Street, Washington, DC 20744</td>
<td>Geme Robertson</td>
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**PROGRAM OF STUDY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>EDUCATION LEVEL</strong></th>
<th><strong>MAJOR 1</strong></th>
<th><strong>MAJOR 2</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DOCTORATE</td>
<td>Economics, General 45,666</td>
<td>43,000</td>
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**NORMAL PROGRAM LENGTH**  
**72 Months**

**PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**  
**Required**

**FINANCIALS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR 9 MONTHS</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition and Fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenses of Dependents (1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL**  
$37,300

**REMARKS**


**SCHOOL ATTENTATION**

I certify under penalty of perjury that all information provided above was entered before I signed this form and is true and correct. I executed this form in the United States after review and evaluation in the United States by me or other officials of the school of the student's activity, transcripts, or other records of courses taken and proof of financial responsibility, which were received at the school prior to the execution of this form. The school has determined that the above named student's qualifications meet all standards for admission to the school and the student will be required to pursue a full program of study as defined by 8 CFR 214.2(C)(3)(vii). I am a designated school official of the above named student and authorized to issue this form.

**DATE ISSUED**  
21 April 2015

**PLACE ISSUED**  
Washington, DC

**STUDENT ATTENTION**

I have read and understood the terms and conditions of my admission and those of any extension of stay. I certify that I will comply with all of the regulations and requirements of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. I certify that I will not enter or remain in the United States temporarily, and solely for the purpose of pursuing a full program of study at the school named above. I also authorize the named school to release my information from my records needed by DHS pursuant to 8 CFR 214.2(C)(3)(vii). I have read and agreed to comply with the terms and conditions of my admission and any extension of stay. I certify that I will comply with all regulations and requirements of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. I certify that I will not enter or remain in the United States temporarily, and solely for the purpose of pursuing a full program of study at the school named above. I also authorize the named school to release any information from my records needed by DHS pursuant to 8 CFR 214.2(C)(3)(vii).
SEVIS

SEVIS – Student & Exchange Visitor Information System
Government database that contains information on:
- F-1 students
- J-1 exchange students
- F-2 and J-2 dependents

Accessible to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), U.S. Consulates and Universities
- Collects, maintains and tracks information pertaining to international students and J-1 exchange visitors
- F-1 and J-1 forms are processed through SEVIS

Updates are made to your SEVIS record throughout your program, including arrivals and departures, your enrollment status each term and authorized employment. First essential update is having your SEVIS record activated by the ISSO after you report your arrival with the online form.
Documentation Required at Port of Entry

Carry these items with you and *not* in your luggage:
1. Passport
2. I-20
3. Proof of SEVIS payment.
4. Financial documents
5. Columbia’s acceptance letter
US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Customs and Border Protection (CBP)

- CBP officer will process your admission to the U.S.
- Have your passport open to F-1 visa page.
- The officer should stamp your passport with admission in “F-1 status” until “D/S”. D/S means “duration of status.”
- Your duration of status covers the period of time needed to complete your program as indicated on your I-20—unless you finish earlier—plus an additional 60-day grace period after the completion date in item 5 of your I-20.
Electronic I-94 Admission Record

1. A day or two after arrival check to see that you have been admitted correctly in F-1 status.
2. Follow instructions at www.cbp.gov/I94
3. Print out a copy for your personal records each time you arrive in the U.S. during your academic program.
SEVIS Arrival Report Form

All Columbia International students must report their arrival to the ISSO within one week with the online form linked below:
http://tinyurl.com/issoncheckin

The ISSO uses this information to update and activate your SEVIS record.
Very Important!

If you do not do this in a timely manner, your SEVIS record will automatically cancel out as a “no show”, meaning someone who entered the U.S. in F-1 status with an I-20 but did not report to the university.

This can cause significant problems for all future visits and visa applications.
Maintaining F-1 Status

- Be enrolled fulltime every term (limited exceptions)
- Work only with authorization! In your first academic year in F-1 status, you may work on-campus up to 20 hours/wk. After the first year, may be eligible to apply for Practical Training (employment related to your field of study).
Full-time Enrollment Exceptions

- All exceptions require ISSO approval in advance!
- Final term exception: In your final term, you are not required to take more than you need to complete degree requirements. For example, if you are enrolled in a 30-credit master’s program and you take 12 credits in each of the first 2 terms, in the final term you are permitted to register for the 6 remaining credits you need to graduate.
Full-time Enrollment Requirement and Exceptions

First term exceptions
Occasionally, a student may be eligible for a reduced course load because of academic adjustment in the first term. Students must seek advisement from their Academic Advisor in conjunction with the ISSO to qualify.
Full-time Enrollment Requirement and Exceptions

DO NOT DROP BELOW full-time registration status unless you have approval from the ISSO based on your academic advisor’s recommendation.
Returning from a Trip Abroad During your Program

YOU NEED TO HAVE:

- A passport valid until at least 6 months into the future from the date of return unless waived from that requirement. See Question 2B of http://www.ice.gov/sevis/travel/faq_f2.htm
Useful Websites

EducationUSA Pre-departure Orientations
https://www.educationusa.info/students-orientations.php

DHS (Department of Homeland Security) website for International Students
studyinthesates.dhs.gov

Immigration and Customs Enforcement
http://www.ice.gov/sevis/

Coming to Columbia:
Essential Information for New International Students
http://www.columbia.edu/cu/ isso/incoming/
Benefits

New York City

- Writing Center
- Student Clubs
- 22 Libraries
- Dodge Fitness Center
- University Events/Lectures
- Passport to New York
Additional Resources

Writing Center
bit.ly/cuwritingcenter

45 minute sessions
Workshops & writing groups
Clubs

Cycling Team  Ballroom Dance
glee club  Peace by Peace
Amnesty International
ROCK CLIMBING  Hiking  Tennis
Intramural Sports  CU UNICEF

And many more!
bit.ly/cuclclubs
Passport to New York

Free entry to 34 NYC museums and discounts at participating restaurants

For more information, go to cuarts.com
Off-Campus Housing Assistance (OCHA)

OCHA manages a database known as the Housing Registry which includes available rooms and apartments in non-Columbia-owned buildings and sublets of units in Columbia-managed housing.

Prospective roommates can also post and search profiles on this site.

In addition, OCHA offers one-on-one housing search counseling and is supported in these efforts by our cooperative relationships with two New York City real estate/relocation agencies.
Single Ride
$2.75

OR

Unlimited Bus/Subway
$116 - Monthly
$30 - Weekly

The MTA charges a $1.00 "new card fee" for the purchase of a new MetroCard
Yellow Cabs
Available all over Manhattan

Green Cabs
Available above 110th street and in the outer boroughs

Signs on Cabs

Drivers are *not* permitted to refuse passengers with more than one stop

A taxicab driver is *required* to drive a passenger to any destination in the five boroughs
From the Airport to Manhattan

Take a taxi from the taxi stand outside the terminal ONLY.

You must add toll & tip to fares.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Airport</th>
<th>Fare Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John F Kennedy</td>
<td>$52 flat fare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Guardia</td>
<td>Metered fare, plus tolls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newark</td>
<td>Metered fare, plus a $17.50 surcharge and all tolls</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the Airport to Manhattan

Shuttle $15–30
/tinyurl.com/lgashuttle
/tinyurl.com/ewrshuttle
/tinyurl.com/jfkshuttle

Public Transportation

John F Kennedy - $13.00
Airtrain to Jamaica Station then LIRR to Penn Station.

La Guardia - $2.75
Take the M60 Bus to 125th Street and transfer to subway.

Newark - $12.50
Airtrain to NJ Transit train to Penn Station.
Registration Requirements

Immunization

Measles, Mumps, & Rubella
Meningococcal Meningitis

health.columbia.edu/about/immunization-requirements
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ISSO</td>
<td>212-854-3587          <a href="mailto:newintlstudent@columbia.edu">newintlstudent@columbia.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admissions Office</td>
<td>212-854-9666         <a href="mailto:sps-inquire@columbia.edu">sps-inquire@columbia.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Support</td>
<td>212-854-9666         <a href="mailto:spsssupport@columbia.edu">spsssupport@columbia.edu</a></td>
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