

Form I-20 FAQ

What is a Form I-20?

The Form I-20 Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status is a U.S. government document issued by Sarah Lawrence College, a Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) certified school. The Form I-20 certifies the following:

- You are or expect to be a matriculated student.
- You meet Sarah Lawrence College admissions requirements.
- You will pursue a full course of study or full-time enrollment.
- You have proven to the college that sufficient financial resources to cover your educational and living expenses.

Why do I need a Form I-20?

You need a Form I-20 to Apply for an F-1 student visa or changing status to F-1 while in the United States or to travel with other valid government documents. The I-20 is also needed for other official purposes such as applying for a social security number, driver's license, or doing employment verification paperwork when starting an on-campus or off-campus job.

Do all international students need a Form I-20?

Only those who wish to apply for an F-1 student status require an I-20. If you are in another nonimmigrant status in the United States then it is advised to contact your immigration attorney to make sure you are allowed to study with your nonimmigrant status.

How do I apply for a Form I-20 from Sarah Lawrence College?

The U.S. government requires you to prove to Sarah Lawrence College that you can support the costs of living and studying in the U.S. for at least one year of your program of study.

As an F-1 student there are strict restrictions on employment in the U.S. Do not expect that you will be able to work in the U.S. to help meet your annual costs. On-campus employment is limited to part-time which is a maximum of 20 hours per week during the academic semester. Off campus employment (paid, unpaid, internships, volunteer) requires employment authorization by International Student Services or by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) agency. This also requires a certain amount of time allowed in status in order to be eligible.

Do citizens of Canada and Bermuda need a Form I-20?

While citizens of Canada or Bermuda do not need to apply for a student visa to enter the U.S., they do require the Form I-20 and other documents such as: proof of payment of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) I-901 fee (www.fmjfee.com), proof of financial funding, and the Sarah Lawrence College Admission letter. When entering the U.S. to begin your program, you must request F-1 status by presenting your form I-20 with the additional supporting materials to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers.

Where can I find the cost of living and studying at Sarah Lawrence College?

For the most current Annual Expenses for International Students please go [here](#) for graduate program and [here](#) for undergraduate. These expenses represent a modest average budget that does not include luxuries of any kind. We strongly recommend that you budget at least 10% more if possible. We ask that students and their families look closely at the costs of living and studying in the U.S. and

make careful plans to be sure your needs will be met. Expect annual increases in tuition and living costs of approximately 3% to 5%

What information will my financial sponsor need to show?

The college will email your sponsor(s) a form called an ***Affidavit of Support***. This form will be filled out on-line. During this process they will be asked to submit a Bank Statement with their name on it. This Bank Statement should be in English and include monthly balances and deposits. Before scanning the document for submission, the Sponsor will be asked to circle the closing balance and the amount must show the funds in U.S. Dollars on the statement. This statement must be uploaded with the Affidavit of Support. ***Please note:*** Each Sponsor Affidavit of Support will include the amount that you specified on your Application for the Form I-20. The Bank Statement provided by your sponsor(s) must be equal to or greater than that amount.

I am already studying in the U.S. and will be transferring my SEVIS record to SLC from another institution. What do I do?

If you are currently in the United States on an F-1 student status and intend to transfer your SEVIS record to Sarah Lawrence College, you will be asked to complete the F-1 Transfer In section of the Application for the Form I-20. When you complete this section, you will provide the college with the contact information for the person responsible for SEVIS reporting at your institution.

What if I currently have B visa or I have a visa waiver status?

This status is generally for pleasure, tourism, or medical treatment; or for visiting a friend or relatives for a short period of time. This visa is NOT appropriate to attend a degree program at Sarah Lawrence College. If you wish to student at Sarah Lawrence College then it is advised to apply for an F-1 visa stamp in your home country in order to enter the United States in F-1 status. You can change your visitor visa to F-1 while in the United States, but it can be tedious and requires a knowledgeable immigration attorney to help you file for a change of status with USCIS.

Do all international students require an F-1 visa?

If you have obtained a Form I-20 from Sarah Lawrence College, then you require an F-1 visa (exceptions are Canada and Bermuda) to enter the United States in F-1 status. If you have another nonimmigrant status, please contact your immigration attorney to confirm you are allowed to study in the U.S.

When can I enter the U.S. with an F-1 visa?

F-1 visa holders cannot enter the United States earlier than 30 days before the program start date on the Form I-20.

How do I start the process of applying for the Form I-20 at Sarah Lawrence College?

Go to the on-line form located on your application status portal: <https://apply.slc.edu/account>. The form will be available after May 1st.

What do I need in order to fill out the on-line form?

As part of the on-line form, you will be required to submit **financial documents** to prove that you have enough funds to cover all educational costs of your program for at least one year. (These costs include tuition, fees, housing, health insurance, personal expenses, travel, etc.) This year the cost of attendance amount is as follows:

For **Graduate** students the cost of attendance is by program:

Masters Program	Total
Art of Teaching	\$64,655.00
Art of Teaching and Child Development dual degree	\$64,655.00
Child Development	\$64,615.00
Child Development dual degree	\$84,599.00
Dance	\$64,413.00
Dance/Movement Therapy	\$64,797.00
Human Genetics	\$68,463.00
Theatre	\$64,413.00
Writing	\$65,837.00

For Undergraduate students the cost of attendance is \$98,065.00

Your financial support can come from any combination of the following sources and may consist of those you provide yourself, as well as the documents supplied by your financial sponsors:

- Sponsor funds (parents, relatives, friends, organizations, etc.)
- Personal funds
- Funds from Sarah Lawrence College (scholarships, financial aid awards)
- Outside scholarships

All financial documents must be less than three months old.

When you fill out the on-line form you will provide information about your sponsor(s) and the amount they promise to provide. Your sponsor(s) will be emailed an *Affidavit of Support* form. They will upload their financial documents proving they have the financial resources to cover the amount you specified. Please note:

- A sponsor should promise only as much money as they are able to give you each year.
- Financial documents must be in the name of the sponsor and be in a personal account.
- If the bank statement is in the name of more than one person, each individual must complete the Affidavit of Support.
- Company bank statements are not accepted.
- Each financial document submitted by you or your sponsor(s), must clearly state the currency equivalency in U.S. dollars before you scan it for upload.
- Please scan your documents in PDF format. Please do not upload the pages one at a time. All of the pages of a single document should be scanned together in one file before uploading
- Please do not send picture files.

You will only upload financial documents pertaining to the personal funds, Sarah Lawrence award, or outside scholarships that cover the amount you are personally providing.

Acceptable Proof of Financial Funding

Bank Letter: The bank letter must be issued within 3 months prior to the submission of the I-20 application. The bank letter must be on official bank letterhead and stamped or signed by a bank representative. The letter must be in English or accompanied with an official translation. The letter must contain: the Account holder’s name; account number; type of account (checking or savings);

and current balance in US Dollars.

Bank Statement: The bank statement must be issued within 3 months prior to the submission of the i-20 application and show history of transactions (deposits and withdrawals). The bank statement must be in English or accompanied with an official translation. The bank statement must contain: Account holders name; account number; type of account (checking or savings); and current balance in US Dollars.

Certificate of deposit: Certificates of time/fixed deposit must be issued within the most recent 3 months in the student's and/or sponsor's name with a maturity date no later than the start date of the academic term at Sarah Lawrence College. If the maturity date is after the semester start date or no maturity date is specified, the financial institution must specify the exact amount of funds, in US dollars, that are liquid and can be freely withdrawn.

Approved educational loan: Loan paperwork must show the student's name as the loan holder, the amount of the approved loan, the date the loan takes effect, and the terms and conditions of the loan.

Guaranteed Scholarship Award letter: Must show your full name and amount. It must also come on official letterhead.

Investment Accounts: The investment account statement must be issued within 3 months prior to the submission of the i-20 application. The investment account statement must show holdings in the student's and/or sponsor's name. The statements must specify the exact amount of funds, in US Dollars, that are liquid and can be freely withdrawn.

Unacceptable Proof of Primary Financial Funding:

Non-liquid funds; retirement and pension accounts; 401K accounts; life insurance; public providence funds; salary and income letters; tax returns; rental income; real estate property deeds; jewelry or vehicle deeds; certification of assets by chartered accountants; third party evaluation of funds; cryptocurrency accounts; unapproved or conditional educational loans; credit card accounts.

Other than financial documents, what other documents will I need to upload with my application for the Form I-20?

Please scan the information page of your passport in PDF format and upload this when asked.

What happens after I complete the on-line application for the Form I-20?

Once we receive all of your information (I-20 application, financial documents) through your portal, we will issue your I-20 form and will email it to you, password-protected. We will also include instructions about how to apply for a F-1 student visa.

We will contact you if we have any questions about your form or financial documents.

Who should I contact if I have any questions about this process?

Please email slcadmit@sarahlawrence.edu with any questions.

Sarah Lawrence Tuition & Cost links:

Undergraduate - <https://www.sarahlawrence.edu/financial-aid/undergraduate/tuition.html>

Graduate - <https://www.sarahlawrence.edu/financial-aid/graduate/tuition.html>