

Middlebury Institute- International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)

Form I-20: Application Instructions

Applying for a Form I-20

To enter the United States in a status that allows study, non-U.S. citizens and non-Legal Permanent Residents of the United States must obtain a Form I-20 [Certificate of Eligibility for Non-immigrant (F-1) Student Status] issued from the Student Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). For Middlebury Institute to issue your Form I-20 you must complete the Academic Year Form I-20 Application Form complete with supporting documentation, available on the ISSS website.

Please note:

- Citizens of Canada and Bermuda need a Form I-20 and a valid passport; they do NOT need to apply for a visa at a U.S. Consulate. Instead, these citizens only need to present their valid I-20 and passport at the U.S. port of entry to enter the country in F-1 status.

If you are a non-U.S. citizen or non-U.S. Legal Permanent Resident and have a reason for not needing to obtain an I-20 or F-1 visa, please notify ISSS. If possible (and if you have not done so already), please provide us with a copy of any pertinent visa status or immigration documents so that we can update your records.

Students already in the U.S. in F-1 status also must submit the application and complete the I-20 SEVIS transfer process. **If you are currently studying in the U.S. on an F-1 student visa, please be sure to note that on your I-20 application;** special procedures for completing the I-20 transfer process will apply.

After you submit the I-20 Application

ISSS will work as promptly as we can to issue the I-20. We will not be able to honor requests to expedite, given our high volume workload at this time of year. It is important that you submit your complete I-20 application as early as possible.

Once the I-20 has been issued, ISSS will be in touch regarding: your SEVIS number, obtaining the I-20, how to pay your I-901 SEVIS Fee (which needs to be paid at least 3 days before your visa interview), and how to schedule a visa appointment at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate (ideally in your home country). (Please be aware that the U.S. Embassy or Consulate will not issue an F-1 visa more than 120 days prior to your I-20 program start date, found on page 1 of your I-20.)

Prior to receiving the I-20, we recommend that you check the website of the U.S. Consulate nearest you to learn more about the visa application process, including the process for making an appointment. For visa application guidance and wait times for obtaining a nonimmigrant student visa in your country, please see: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/wait-times.html>

Please note: While you may receive your F-1 visa up to 120 days prior to your program start date, **you may enter the United States in that visa status no more than 30 days before your program start date. Plan your travel accordingly.**

Upon receiving your Form I-20 from Middlebury Institute, you should apply for a visa as soon as possible. Applying for a visa can take **one month or more**, depending on the country. Additionally, if you are subject to administrative processing, the process could be delayed several weeks. **If you are unable to obtain a visa in time to arrive in Middlebury by your intended start date, alert ISSS as soon as possible so that we can advise on available options that you can consider.**

I-20 Application Instructions

For Middlebury Institute to produce your I-20, you must submit the following four items:

1. **Completed Middlebury I-20 Application Form** for Academic Year students located on the ISSS website. Carefully read through this document before starting your I-20 application. You will need to have scanned copies of your financial documents, passport ID page, and support letter to upload as part of the online submission process.
2. **Copy of your passport identification page** showing name, photo, date of birth and passport expiration date.
3. **Financial Documentation:** U.S. immigration law requires official certification that you have the necessary financial resources to pay for your tuition and living expenses for your first academic year in the U.S. Financial documentation includes both a bank letter and a financial sponsor letter. The bank and financial sponsor letters must adhere to the guidelines below.

Note to those receiving scholarships or grants from Middlebury: Subtract the amount of scholarship/grant for one academic year from the total estimated cost of your program to determine the amount you must show in order for Middlebury to produce your I-20. For example, if you received a scholarship of USD 5,000 per semester, then USD 10,000 (an academic year scholarship) would count as financial support towards the amount you need to show.

Student Required to Attend English Preparation for Graduate Studies (EPGS)

If you have been required to attend the summer EPGS program, the initial I-20 will be issued for the summer program only.

Upon successful completion of EPGS, ISSS will work with you to issue of an updated I-20 to reflect the master's degree program. To issue the updated I-20 for the MA program, a student will need to provide new financial documentation which shows funding for the first academic year of your program. ISSS cannot use the same financial documents that were used to issue the I-20 for EPGS.

A student can remain in the U.S. between the end of EPGS and the start of their MA program, they do not need to travel internationally or receive a new visa before the start of the fall semester.

Bank Letter. Provide a signed or stamped bank letter. Electronic copies accepted. The letter must:

- Be written in English or have an official English translation attached;
- Be dated no more than 6 months from the start of your program - *March 1 for students starting their program in fall semester and October 1 for students starting their program in spring semester.*
- Be on official bank letterhead;
- Include the account holder's name;
- Indicate the type of account. Funds need to be immediately available to the student, such as in a checking or savings account. Funds that are invested (mutual funds or tied up in assets) cannot be used to show financial support. (Certificates of Deposit need to mature and be available on or before program start date.);
- Indicate the balance of the account(s) from where the financial support will come.
- Indicate the currency of funds, preferably in U.S. dollars (US\$). If your bank cannot issue the letter with a currency conversion, the document must clearly state the currency of funds listed;
- Be signed by an official of the bank, and/or be stamped with the bank or employer's seal, if available;
- If you will not receive financial aid from Middlebury Institute, the bank letter must show funding to cover all estimated total costs for the first year of study, or for the length of your program (if less than one year).

4. **Signed Financial Sponsor Letter.** Electronic copies accepted.

The person(s) in whose name the bank funds are held (i.e. the account holder) must submit a letter that:

- Declares that, as your financial sponsor, they will cover the costs of the first year of your education with funds shown in the bank letter, and they intend to pay the costs of your entire enrollment at Middlebury;
- Refers to the relationship (parent, relative, etc.) between the sponsor and you;
- Is written in English or has an official English translation attached;
- Includes the account holder's original signature and date.

*If you are funding your own education and will provide a bank statement from your personal account, please note that a financial sponsor letter is still required. In the letter, you will indicate that you are your own sponsor and will use the funding in your person accounts towards your cost of education.

Submit the online I-20 Application Form with the required financial documentation and passport ID page.

Keep copies of all financial aid and related documents submitted to Middlebury Institute with this application. The U.S. Consulate may ask you to present this documentation when you apply for your visa, and in some cases, you may be asked to show them to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security when you enter the U.S.

Cost Overview. Middlebury Institute bases its estimated total cost of attendance on the following calculation:

Master's degree programs (including Joint BA/MA degree):

Tuition & Student Activity Fee	USD 46,726
Student Resource Fee	USD 300
Books and Supplies	USD 300
Housing and Food	USD 18,136
Local Transportation	USD 1,470
Personal Expenses	USD 1,800
Total Estimated costs (1 Academic Year)	USD 68,732

**Students are expected to maintain health insurance which provides coverage to them while they are in the U.S. for the duration of their program. For health insurance resources, please visit the Middlebury Institute website. Health insurance is estimated at USD 2,000 per calendar year.*

Additional Expenses. Students may need to consider the following additional expenses:

Taxes & Tax Liability

Students who receive any financial aid/awards from the Institute and/or earn income through authorized employment will need to file a tax return each year. Depending on your award or amount of earned income, tax liabilities can exceed \$500 per year.

- For tax-related questions, contact the Middlebury Tax Office at middleburymtaxoffice@middlebury.edu.
- For financial aid questions, please contact Student Financial Services at miisfinaid@middlebury.edu.

While ISSS is here to assist you, remember that you are responsible for completing all the necessary steps to obtain the documents you need to enter the U.S. to begin your studies at Middlebury Institute.

Questions:

If you have any questions about this process, please contact International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) at iss@middlebury.edu