

SARAH LAWRENCE COLLEGE

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES

1 Mead Way
Bronxville, NY 10708

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE FORM I-20 FOR U.S. STUDENT F1 VISA

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a Form I-20 and why do I need one?

A Form I-20 is a government document that let the U.S. government know that you are eligible for F-1 Student Status. It certifies that 1) you are or expect to be a “bona fide” student, 2) you meet Sarah Lawrence College admissions requirements, 3) you will pursue a full course of study, 4) you have proved to us (Sarah Lawrence College) that you have enough funds to study and live in the U.S. without working illegally or suffering from poverty.

You need a Form I-20 to obtain an F-1 student visa, or to keep lawful F-1 status when transferring or changing schools within the U.S.

*There is a U.S. government mandated fee for international students to cover the costs of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP). For more information and to learn how to pay this fee visit: www.fmjfee.com; **you need to show the payment receipt when you apply for your student visa.***

Does everybody needs a Form I-20?

A few international students do not need I-20s. If you are maintaining another nonimmigrant status in the U.S., you do not have to have an I-20 and may attend school full- or part-time. Dependent children in E, H, I, J, L, M, N, O, P, R, or S status need to change status after their 21st birthday or if they marry. If you have no legal status, you may attend school but you are not eligible to change status and do not need an I-20.

Please note: Canadian citizens do not need to attend an interview at an embassy or consulate; but **DO** require the form I-20 and proof of payment of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) fee (www.fmjfee.com). When entering the U.S. to study, you must request F-1 status and present the I-20 with the supporting materials and your SEVP fee receipt to the immigration inspector.

What are the rules for getting my Form I-20 from Sarah Lawrence College?

- You must prove to Sarah Lawrence College that you can fund the costs of living and to study in the U.S. for at least one year of your program of study -- this is a requirement of the United States.
- 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 and competitive; off-campus employment is strictly controlled by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.
- Carefully review the Sarah Lawrence College “Estimated Annual Expenses for International Students” (attached) or visit the SLC website – Tuition and Costs.
- 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 5% to 7%.

What does my financial sponsor need to show?

1. An Affidavit of Annual Support is required from each sponsor.

2. Bank Statement in the name of the sponsor. The bank statement should specify monthly balances and deposits. Please circle the closing balance and state the U.S. dollar equivalent.

What if I am transferring to SLC from another institution?

If you are currently in the United States on an F-1 visa and intend to transfer to Sarah Lawrence College, you must complete the "F-1 Transfer In" form.

Any other rules to keep in mind:

- Do not enter the U.S. with a B visa status. If you use a B visa to enter the U.S. you are saying "I'm here as a visitor" *only*. B visitors are prohibited by U.S. law from pursuing a course of study prior to obtaining a change of status to F-1 student.
- Enter U.S. with an F-1 visa, unless you are under another status.
- F-1 visa holders cannot enter the United States earlier than 30 days before the program start date on the Form I-20.

General Instructions

- Please complete the application form, which is fillable and e-mail it to me with the supporting materials.
- We will send your Form I-20 via FedEx, to the address indicated on your application, along with instructions on further steps for applying for your student visa.

Financial Support Documentation

- In order to receive the Form I-20, you must attest that you have enough funds to cover all educational costs of your program, including tuition, fees, housing, health insurance, personal expenses, etc. In order to estimate educational costs please consult the SLC website OR see the attached information.
- All financial documents must be less than three months old and clearly state the currency in US dollars and in English.
- Your financial support can come from any combination of the following sources:
 - Personal funds
 - Sponsor funds (parents, relatives, friends, organizations, etc.)
 - Outside scholarships and/or funds from Sarah Lawrence College (scholarships, assistantships, or fellowships)
- Documentation showing available funds must be enough to cover educational costs for at least one year. A sponsor should promise only as much money as they are able to give you every year.
- Financial documents must be in the name of the sponsor and be in a personal account. No company bank statements are accepted. If the bank statement is in the name of more than one person, each individual must complete the Affidavit of Support.

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SPONSOR'S AFFIDAVIT AND PROOF OF FINANCIAL CAPABILITY

WHAT DOES THIS AFFIDAVIT MEAN?

By completing this affidavit, you are swearing to the U.S. government that you will provide this student with a specific amount of money from your own financial resources **for every year** of their studies at Sarah Lawrence College and live in the U.S. You are also proving that you can afford the financial support you are promising with the documents you have attached.

Before signing the affidavit, you must understand that you are making a financial commitment to the student that should not be broken. Do not expect that the student will be able to help support the costs through employment. Employment is strictly controlled by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and is very limited.

HOW TO COMPLETE THIS FORM:

- Fill this form out completely in English. Promise only the amount of money you are able to provide.
- Attach the documentary evidence of support. Demonstrate that you are financially capable of providing support for *every year* of the student's program, and attach **a monthly bank statement of deposits and balance in your name** to the affidavit of support. If another person's name appears on your bank statement, that person must complete a separate affidavit permitting those funds to be considered as financial support for the student. Please include the other bank statements as proof of financial resources
- Sign, date and email the affidavit with the supporting documents to **the Office of Graduate Admisson at grad@sarahlawrence.edu**

SARAH LAWRENCE COLLEGE

THIS IS MY SWORN AFFIDAVIT OF SUPPORT

By completing and signing this affidavit, you are swearing to the U.S. government that you will provide this student with a specific amount of money from your own financial resources **for every year** of the student's program of study at Sarah Lawrence College and while they live in the U.S. You are also proving that you can afford the support with the documents you have attached.

Do not expect that the student will be able to help support the costs through employment. Employment is strictly controlled by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and is very limited.

I, _____, hereby declare and promise that I am willing and able
Your name

to provide financial support for _____
Student's full name

in the amount of US _____. This yearly financial support will be used for tuition, fees, room, board, insurance, books, supplies, and personal expenses while the above named student attends Sarah Lawrence College in the United States.

Please indicate your relationship to the student: _____
(Example: parent, spouse, uncle, aunt, brother, sister, friend, or other)

Address: _____
Number and Street

City Postal Code Country

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

I have attached the following required documents:

☐ Bank Statement(s) in US dollars ☐ Proof of Income in US Dollars

I swear that the information I have provided above is true and correct

Sponsor signature _____ *Date* _____