

A Canadian School Counsellor's Guide to Supporting U.S. Bound Students

Crossing Borders

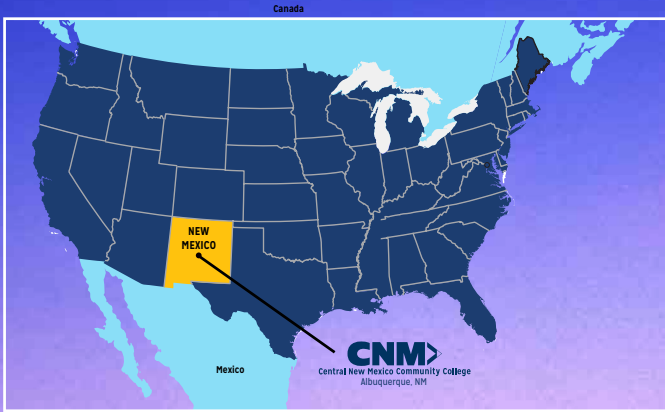
MAGAZINE

Short-Term Exchanges, Summer and Pre-College Programs



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AND ENGAGEMENT

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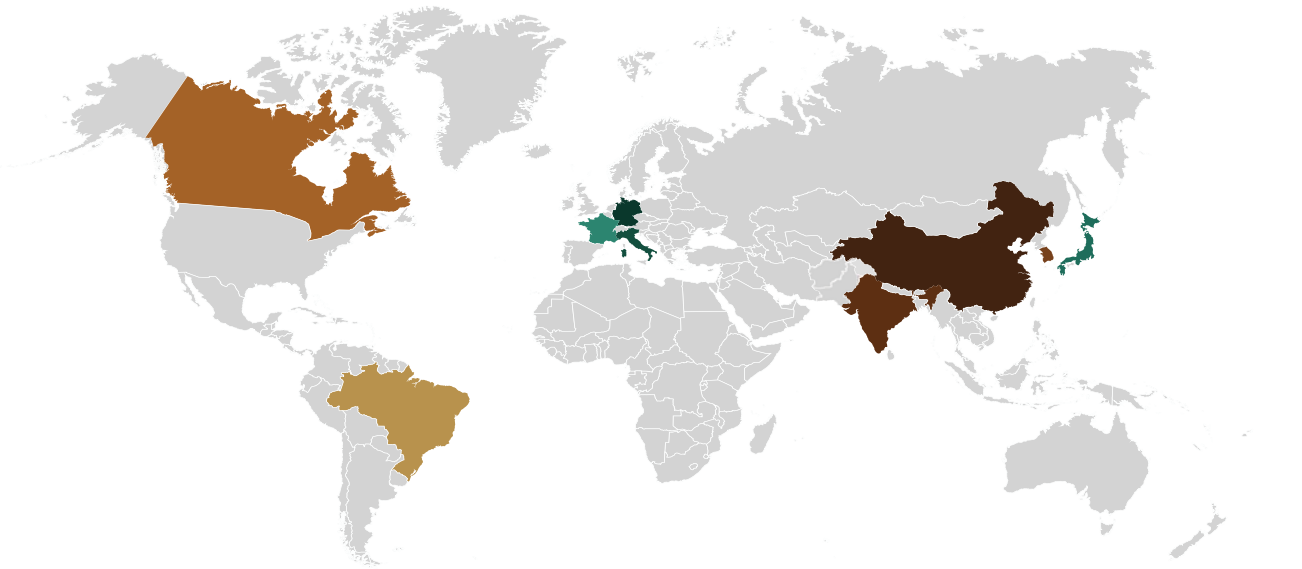
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Leading Places of Origin Academic Year: 2020 - 2021

INTERNATIONAL SCHOLAR DATA FROM THE 2021 OPEN DOORS REPORT

Leading Places of Origin	Number of Scholars	% of Total	% Change
China	26,254	30.7	-38.7
India	12,714	14.9	-5.9
South Korea	4,928	5.8	-29.7
Canada	3,863	4.5	-12.2
Brazil	2,584	3.0	-39.5
Germany	2,419	2.8	-42.1
Italy	2,275	2.7	-36.4
Japan	2,243	2.6	-37.1
France	2,117	2.5	-28.4



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Kalyn Koyanagi
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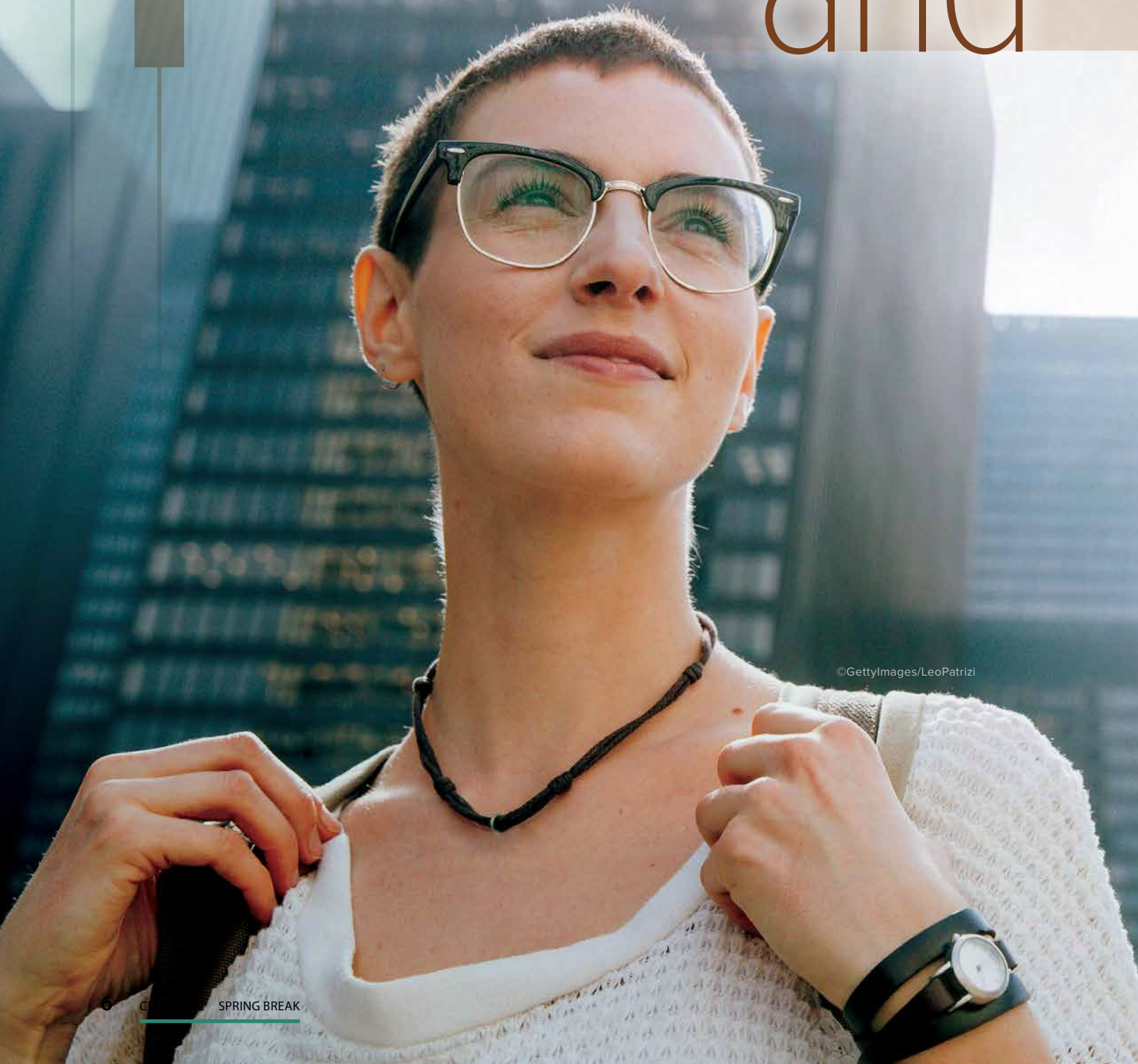
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Summer and



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SPRING BREAK

Exchange Engagement:

Will 2022 be the year?

By: Lindsay Taylor

For many of us, 2020 and 2021 are years we'd sooner forget than look back on. The bright side of that, however, is that it is now 2022 and we can see the light at the end of the tunnel. The uncertainty of days ahead is much less stressful and planning for the future seems more realistic as opposed to an exercise in futility.

For most Canadian high school students who are planning for their careers and exploring post-secondary options, the pandemic has certainly limited options. Cross border travel was at a standstill for much of 2020 – 2021, and even today has limitations and restrictions that make the access to international programs challenging.

"...MORE AND MORE COLLEGES ARE WELCOMING STUDENTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD BACK TO IN-PERSON LEARNING."



©Gettyimages/
A-Digit

But many of the colleges and universities were quick to respond to the need for virtual or online offerings and continue to evolve and expand the ability to access short-term exchange and pre-college or summer programs.

In-person experiences will likely remain the first choice where available. Having the opportunity to enroll in a US college program, live on the campus and experience the culture and environment of a campus that could be your new home is at the top of the list for many. For too long, many of these courses were moved to an online format. Despite the resurgence of Omicron which

seemed to suggest this might be the case through 2022, more and more colleges are welcoming students from around the world back to in-person learning, or at least offering a hybrid model for consideration.

SHORT-TERM EXCHANGE

There are several different options for Canadians who are looking to take advantage of short-term exchange as way of familiarizing themselves with a college or a destination.

Some programs will work with you to find you suitable accommodations –

your home away from home. This may include placement within a host family which will offer the foundation for the experience. These families will always have been thoroughly screened, interviewed and evaluated before they're approved. An integral part of the process is matching applicants with suitable and compatible hosts who may share similar interests and family dynamic for a smoother, and quicker transition and adaptation. The individual will reside within the home and become part of "the family". This path will provide the student with an immersed cultural experience enabling them to thrive in their destination of choice while in a real-life setting.



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Another option programs may provide is residing in dorms. This is a terrific alternative for the more independent individual who is motivated to explore and meet locals and mingle with fellow-minded travellers. These such programs are very closely monitored and are arranged directly through the college or through a program service organizer.

As always, the need for all applications to be submitted with accompanying documentation in advance of the enrollment deadline will be mandatory; living through a pandemic may continue to present challenges and students must be sure they're aware of, and in possession of all requirements. Students may also be asked to share grade averages to ensure the program they're applying to will provide them with the appropriate balance that combines an academic and cultural experience best suited to them.

The Youth Ambassador Program¹ with Canada for example, is a leadership exchange program for Canadian youth ages 15 – 18. This program provides full scholarships for 13 students and two adult educators from Canada to take part in an eight-week program, exploring civic education, digital leadership and community service. This is all executed through an in-person exchange.



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According to the Fulbright Canada website, 2022 exchanges will take place during the summer with exact varying dates. At this point, program formats are subject to change and activities may take place as an exchange to the United States, a Canadian

domestic program or a 6-week virtual exchange – all dependent of course, on the public health guidelines.

Fulbright Canada says this program is “designed to support energetic applicants who are ready to develop



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their skills in order to be effective leaders in their schools and communities.” There are eligibility criteria which includes:

- Canadian citizen
- Between 15 – 18 years of age at the start of the exchange, with a minimum of 4 months of high school [or CEGEP] remaining before graduation
- Demonstrated leadership potential and community involvement
- Willing to complete a Community-Based Service Initiative in their Canadian community after the exchange
- Virtual program alumni from 2020 and 2021 cohorts may reapply if they have successfully completed the program and their community project (and still meet the requirements above)

PRE-COLLEGE SUMMER PROGRAMS

A pre-college program will offer high-school students the opportunity to take classes at a college and experience college life during the program. They are offered by colleges and universities across the United States for Canadian high school students; the benefit to prepare the student for the transition to an international, post-secondary education. The programs will often feature college-level courses; some will be online while others will give the chance the experience college life, living on campus. Pre-college programs will typically run for several weeks over the summer and are a great addition to enhance one’s academic resume.

These programs are best tailored to high-achieving, academically motivated individuals who are looking to challenge themselves by exploring a rigorous schedule. This allows them to explore a college fit, academic majors and careers before making a formal decision. For many students, the primary aspect of enrolling in a summer, on-campus program is that it allows them to – likely for the first time – experience independent living, away from their homes and family. It enables them to develop the maturity one may acquire through adjustment and through learning with peers in a shared space with one or more dormmates. Summer programs

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can be costly, however, so it is important that the student is serious and committed to using the time and the experience for future academic evaluation.

Many such programs offer a similar curriculum as in undergraduate courses but are condensed into a shorter, more intense timeline. The courses also allow individuals to learn about themselves while learning; finding the areas of study that they excel in or may find their more passionate about. It gives them the chance to test the waters in new areas with the shorter commitment that they may otherwise not consider for a full semester.

Some programs will have open enrollment which allows anyone to attend. There are others, however, that will require admission through a formal application process. This will include SAT's, letters of recommendation and application essays.

Whether your student thrives in the sciences, has a knack for business and entrepreneurship or is a natural in the public limelight, there's a program to fit all sizes. It's been a long two years and many have struggled. It may be a little

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longer but looking ahead to the future is something we need to continue to pursue and prioritize. Explore the options, find the resources and ignite the student to propel them to the future.

Be positive and encouraging. The world's opening so let's not leave anyone behind! **CB**

¹<https://www.fulbright.ca/programs/youth/youth-ambassadors>

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Perfecting The Admission Essay

By: Sarah McClanahan

For students interested in applying for admission to a college or university in the United States, writing a strong application essay is a critical piece of the process.

The college application essay is a feat that frequently causes anxiety and stress for students and families alike, because of the pressure to present something seemingly perfect to the admission staff. Not only can this pressure stunt the process of writing and cause writer's block, but also it frequently clouds a student's ability to be authentic. As a previous international admission counsellor, I read countless student essays. These are my top five tips for perfecting the admission essay to be used by counsellors as they advise their students on navigating the process of brainstorming, writing, and editing their admission essays.



START EARLY - DON'T PROCRASTINATE

Most higher education institutions will post their essay prompt(s) at least 6-months before their admission deadline, allowing for plenty of time for students to write a strong essay. Keep in mind that the essay is the chance for students to show a piece of themselves that their test scores and GPA cannot - their personality.

A vital part of writing a strong essay is for students to start early and allow themselves enough time to create several drafts of their writing. Procrastinating the writing process prevents those drafts from happening, and forces quick and unedited writing. There's no such thing as starting too early with preparing the college essay. The longer time students allow to mull over their thoughts, the more likely the students' finished product will be clear and well developed.

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DEVELOPING CONTENT

CREATE A STRONG THESIS

When writing an admission essay, it's important to consider several things. First, is there a strong essay thesis? Within the first few sentences, the essay topic and/or direction should be clear to the reader. What is the student trying to say? That should be clear to the reader early in the essay's first paragraph.

CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES AND HUMOR

It's important to be cautious with controversial issues (politics, religion, etc.) making sure not to offend the reader, since you won't know their background. Utilizing humor is fine, but certainly be sensitive with its use. Something that may seem funny to the writer may not be funny to the reader, and may actually come across as the quite the opposite.

AVOID EXTREME OR GENERAL STATEMENTS

Always avoid extreme or general statements with little evidence. Don't provide generalizations, instead it's

important to use detail - the more the better! Personal stories will always be more powerful than stating general information, and students should strive to show and not tell their story. make sure you submit the information correctly the first time.

CHOOSE THE PROMPT WISELY

Depending on the institutions that the student decide to apply for, there will be varying options when it comes to the available essay prompt. For schools that accept the Common Application, the student will be able to choose one of five essay prompts. Other schools may have their own essay or other supplements that are required. If given an option, your student should brainstorm and think of how they might respond to each potential prompt. From this initial brainstorm, it's best to select the essay topic that gives them the best opportunity to express a unique and important part of who they are as an individual.

When students are writing their first draft, they shouldn't overthink it. They should let their thoughts flow, and once the first draft is written, let it sit. It's best to come back to it another

day. If starting early enough, they'll have plenty of time to fix mistakes and improve their writing later. It's best if they give their brain a chance to disconnect from the topic, and by the time they revisit the essay, they will view it with a fresh perspective.

BE HONEST

The essay prompt might ask something such as discuss a life failure that shaped who you are today, or describe your best quality you would bring to that certain institution. When faced with these types of prompts, students should write from a place of honesty, and not just say what they think the admission staff want to hear.

VISUALIZE YOUR STORY

Use adjectives to describe the setting, the smell, the taste, and the emotion involved. Using vivid words will connect the reader with the student's story by making it seem like they are immersed in the experience. The more detail that can be provided by the student, the more vivid the essay will become to the reader.

SELECT A CREATIVE TITLE

Titles should not be generic or bland; what is the best way the student can think of to summarize their story? They should consider the tone when selecting a title, as it will be the first impression of the essay to the reader. It can also be helpful to utilize a hook that will intrigue the reader and make them interested in reading the essay.

PROOFREAD WITH CARE

Editing is a crucial part of the essay writing process, and it's important to make sure that the essay is

- free of spelling, grammatical, and structural errors, and
- sounds like the student and represents who they are as an individual.

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SPELL CHECK - NOT ALWAYS A STUDENT'S BEST FRIEND

While checking for spelling problems, remember that spell check isn't always the most reliable friend. My office once came across an admission essay where a student was trying to write "I aspire to be a doctor", but actually wrote "I perspire to be a doctor". That second statement certainly does not have the same meaning as the first, and is an example of a simple spell check error. Applicants should never accept spell check recommendations on a computer unless they have seen each of them and know for certain that they are accurate.

USE A THESAURUS WITH CAUTION

It's not necessary to try and "upgrade" the language of an essay in order to sound more intelligent. Sprinkling a few less common words throughout an essay is fine, but one should not overdo the use of such words. Similar to being careful with spell check, students should always look up words they want to change to ensure that what they are changing it to does in fact have the same meaning in the same context. Having additional sets of eyes from a counsellor or a trusted family member or friend can also help to catch such errors in an essay.

KEEP YOUR VOICE

When students show their draft to family, friends, counsellors or teachers, they should ask them if it sounds like them. When they read the essay, they should be able to hear the writer's voice throughout the writing. While it's important to receive and apply feedback and recommendations for improvement, the student must make sure that the essay doesn't lose their voice in the process.

SUBMIT AND TREAT YOURSELF!

By following these tips, the students should be able to feel confident upon submission that they've written a strong and authentic essay that represents them as a unique individual and prospective



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student to the school(s) they have applied for. Once the essay is submitted, worrying about it only causes stress and unnecessary worry. They've worked hard, and should treat themselves!

Writing the college admission essay is something that can either be a

stressful and anxiety-filled experience, or an experience filled with growth, authenticity, and excitement. Remind your students that these applications are the starting point of a life filled with unlimited doors of opportunity, so they should enjoy the process and put their best foot forward. Happy writing! **.CB**

Previously published in Crossing Borders

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General Information

School Type: Public
Total Enrollment: 6,000
Academic Calendar: Semester
Setting: Rural

Academic Life

Average Class size: 16
Student / Faculty Ratio: 18:1
Graduation Rate: 90%
Summary – Student Life: N/A

Application Process: Summary

Our application process is easy and all done online. Just complete the online application through the link below and then submit the rest of the required documents:

- Application for admission: https://www.snow.edu/international/international_application.html
- Copy of your passport
- Copy of your transcripts or high school diploma if available
- Copy of TOEFL (63)/IELTS(6.0)/Duolingo (95) if available
- copy of a bank statement showing \$19,000 to cover the expenses of the first year.
- Scholarship link: https://www.snow.edu/international/scholarship_application.html

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