



## SUSLA Student Guide to Study in the States

### Prepare

If you want to study in the United States, the first step is to learn more about Southern University at Shreveport at [www.susla.edu](http://www.susla.edu) programs that most interests you. The Southern University at Shreveport has several postsecondary options for F-1 international students, including community colleges level Associate programs and M-1 Vocational/ Certificate programs.

- **Apply to Southern University at Shreveport (SEVP-Certified School)**

For more information about how to apply, please contact the Office of Admissions at 318-670-9426 or email [admissions@susla.edu](mailto:admissions@susla.edu)

Apply Now: <http://www.susla.edu/page/web-admission-application%20>

Southern University at Shreveport (SUSLA) is certified by the Student and [Exchange Visitor](#) Program (SEVP) can accept international students. Follow the instructions on the school's website [www.susla.edu](http://www.susla.edu) to apply for admission. SUSLA requires IEITS, TOEL, and PTES scores (no English speaking countries) for admission, so plan accordingly. SUSLA International School page <http://www.susla.edu/page/international-students>

- **Receive Your Form I-20**

once accepted via email acceptance from the Office of Admissions into Southern University at Shreveport ([SEVP-certified school](#)), you will receive a [Form I-20, "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status."](#) from your [designated school official \(DSO\)](#). DSOs work at SEVP-certified schools and are there to help you understand and follow the rules for studying in the United States. It is important that you know who your DSO is and how to contact them at SUSLA Multicultural and International Affairs: Calvin Lester, Director of Multicultural and International Affairs at [clester@susla.edu](mailto:clester@susla.edu) or 318-670-9211. Whatsapp @

The Form I-20 is an important document that you should keep safe, as you will need it throughout the international student process. For more information about the Form I-20 and when you need it, please visit the [What is the Form I-20?](#) page on Study in the States.

- **Bring Your Dependents**

As an F-1 international student, you may bring your spouse (for example, husband, wife, legal partner) and children with you while you study in the United States. However, they will also need to receive a Form I-20 from your DSO and follow specific rules while they are here. Visit the [Dependents](#) page for more information about bringing family to the United States.

### Travel

Traveling to the United States requires that you take certain steps before your arrival. It is also necessary to be prepared and organized when you arrive at the U.S. port of entry. Additional travel information can be found on the [Getting to the United States](#) page.

- **Pay Your I-901 [SEVIS Fee](#)**

After you receive your Form I-20, the next step is to pay your [I-901 SEVIS Fee](#). Regulation requires that all international students pay this fee before the Department of State issues them a visa. Visit the [Paying the I-901 SEVIS Fee](#) page on Study in the States and watch the [I-901 SEVIS Fee payment tutorial](#) to learn about each step of the payment process.

Remember to keep your I-901 SEVIS Fee payment receipt and be sure to check that the Student and [Exchange Visitor Information System \(SEVIS\)](#) identification (ID) number on the receipt matches the SEVIS ID number that appears on your Form I-20. Please [contact SEVP](#) if the SEVIS ID number on these two documents does not match, or if you encounter other issues in the process.

- **Apply for a U.S. Visa**

After being accepted to an [SEVP-certified school](#) and getting a receipt for payment for the [I-901 SEVIS Fee](#), you [can apply for a visa](#) at a U.S. embassy or consulate. Visit the [U.S. Department of State's website](#) for more information about applying for an F-1 visa. You can also find your nearest embassy or consulate by visiting the [U.S. Embassy website](#).

Once you receive your visa, check to make sure that you received the right type of visa (F-1) and that your name and date of birth are correct and match the information in your passport. Remember that a student visa does not guarantee entrance into the country, but it does give you permission to arrive at a U.S. port of entry.

- **Arrive at U.S. Port of Entry**

You may enter the United States up to 30 days before your official program start date listed on your Form I-20. When you arrive at the U.S. port of entry, you will meet a U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) officer who has the authority to admit or deny your entrance into the country. You must present the CBP officer with your Form I-20, as well as your valid visa and passport. It is also a good idea to have your acceptance letter from your SEVP-certified school, your [evidence of financial support](#), and the name and telephone number of your DSO. Be sure to keep these documents and information in your carry-on luggage, as you will not be able to access any of your checked baggage until after you pass through the U.S. port of entry.

A CBP officer may direct you to [secondary inspection](#) and interview you further to determine if you may enter the United States. If you do not have all your documents or if the officer cannot verify your information, they may deny you entry into the country or issue you a Form I-515A, "Notice to Student or Exchange Visitor." If you receive a Form I-515A, you must work with your DSO to respond to it within 30 days. Visit the [What is the Form I-515A?](#) page for more information.

- **Receive a form I-94**

If CBP admits you into the country, they will give you an admission stamp in your passport

and issue an electronic [Form I-94, “Arrival and Departure Record.”](#) The [Form I-94](#) includes information about when you were admitted, what status you must maintain (F-1) and how long you can stay in the United States. The CBP officer will inform you where to find your electronic Form I-94. You should verify that the “Admit Until” date on your Form I-94 and admissions stamp on your passport lists “D/S” (that means, [Duration of Status](#)) and not a specific date. For more information about the Form I-94 and the arrival process in the United States, visit the [CBP website](#).

## **Study**

While studying in the United States, it is important to maintain your status which relates to the purpose or reason for why you want to come to the United States. As an F-1 student, your primary purpose for coming to the United States is to complete a full course of study at an SEVP-certified school. This means you must not take any action that detracts from fulfilling this purpose and follow the regulations associated with studying in the United States. Additional information can be found on the [Maintaining Your Status](#) page.

## **Arrive at SUSLA and Enroll in a Full Course of Study**

### **Locations:**

Southern University at Shreveport Main Campus  
3050 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Shreveport, LA 71107

### Contact:

Dr. Calvin B. Lester Jr.  
Director of Multicultural and International Affairs  
Southern University at Shreveport  
3050 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive  
Shreveport, La. 71107  
Fine Arts C3  
CLester@susla.edu  
318-670-9211 (o)  
318-417-7090 (m)

Students must arrive within 30 days of the semester start day please refer to you DSO.

### Reference:

Adopted by Official Department of Homeland Security.

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/guide-to-studying-in-the-states>