

Information for International TEDS Applicants

Application Considerations for All International Applicants

Trinity welcomes students from all over the world to our campus; however, the added challenges for international students cannot be underestimated. In addition to the regular application process outlined above, international applicants must also consider the following four items: Pre-Application Information Form, Language Requirements, Financial Requirements, and Visa Requirements.

Pre-Application Information Form for International Applicants

This is a Trinity form that must be submitted prior to the actual application for admission. The Pre-Application Information Form provides the preliminary documentation necessary to demonstrate that a prospective international student has identified their sources of funding for both education and living expenses while at Trinity as required by the U.S. government. Applications for program admission will not be reviewed until the Pre-Application Information Form has been received and approved by Trinity. This begins the application process.

International applicants must demonstrate how all expenses related to education, travel, and living will be paid prior to issuing a student visa, according to U.S. law. International applicants may apply if they have a financial guarantor in the United States or if they have sufficient evidence from legitimate individuals or organizations that their expenses while attending Trinity can be met. Living expenses add more than \$20,000 annually to the costs of education (tuition, fees, books).

International students on an F-1 visa are limited by immigration restrictions to on-campus employment of twenty hours per week during the term when classes are in session and forty hours per week between the terms. Such jobs provide only a small percentage of the funds needed for education and living expenses. Immigration laws prohibit student spouses on F-2 visas from working. Do not anticipate funding your education through on-campus employment.

Subsequent to approval of the Pre-Application Information Form, the prospective student's Application for Admission will be received and reviewed for admission to Trinity.

Language Requirements

In addition to the regular application materials, international applicants *must* submit scores from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the Test of Written English (TWE), and the Test of Spoken English (TSE), if English is not the applicant's primary language of instruction. See the following chart for required tests and minimum scores:

English Language Test (TOEFL/TWE/TSE) Requirements¹

| Degree Programs | | | | | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Tests: | Cert. ² | MAR | MA | MDiv | ThM | DMin | PhD |
| TOEFL | 213 (550) | 237 (580) | 237 (580) | 237 (580) | 237 (580) | 237 (580) | 250 (600) |
| TWE | N/A | N/A | 4.5 | N/A | 4.5 | N/A | 4.5 |
| TSE ³ | N/A | N/A | N/A | 50 | N/A | N/A | 50 |

¹Computer scores for TOEFL are listed first, with paper scores listed in parentheses. Degree programs that do not require certain tests are listed as "N/A."

²Includes Certificate in Biblical Studies, Visiting Student, and Special Student.

³The TSE is an entirely separate test and must be arranged/scheduled *in addition to* the TOEFL and TWE.

Waivers from TOEFL, TWE, and TSE are not normally granted. If a waiver is granted, applicants are required to submit scores from the same standardized exam required for native English speakers (Graduate Record Exam [GRE] or Miller Analogies Test [MAT]). Waiver petitions must be submitted in writing to the director of admission a minimum of ninety days prior to the application deadline date in order to allow sufficient time for testing in case the petition is denied.

Failure to submit required TOEFL, TWE, and TSE scores may result in denial of admission or postponement of the application decision to a subsequent semester.

All applicants required to take the TOEFL must also complete the Trinity English Proficiency Exam during Orientation week upon arriving at Trinity. Those who demonstrate weak English skills on this Trinity exam are required to enroll their first semester in IG 410 Critical Reading and Writing Skills, which will further enhance a student's English language proficiency for graduate studies.

Financial Requirements

After the Pre-Application Information Form has been received, the Application for Admission will be reviewed. If an international applicant is accepted, formal evidence must then be submitted through Trinity's Certification of Finances (COF) form that adequate financial resources for both educational and living expenses has been identified by the applicant. The COF is sent to the international applicant with his or her letter of acceptance.

The Certification of Finances (COF) must identify monies readily available for the first year of study and document additional funding for the duration of the student's program. Most international applicants, depending on anticipated living arrangements and the number of family members accompanying them to the United States, will need to identify available funds from US\$25,000 to US\$40,000 to satisfy this requirement.

At this time an accepted international applicant must also submit a US\$2,000 tuition deposit (fully refundable) before the Certificate of Eligibility (I-20) for a student visa will be issued.

Visa Requirements

Trinity is authorized under U.S. law to enroll nonimmigrant alien students; however, these U.S. laws are becoming increasingly stringent. International students *must* enter the United States with an F-1 visa, which is granted by the U.S. government upon presentation of the Certificate of Eligibility (I-20) issued by Trinity. Applicants already in the United States in a visa category other than F-1 (including F-2, B-1 and B-2) may be admitted as Visiting Students and take one or two occasional classes for credit as long as the classes will not later be applied toward a degree program and the studies are not the primary purpose for being present in the U.S. Failure to observe this limitation will place one's visa status in doubt and could jeopardize a student's ability to secure an F-1 visa in the future should their educational goals change.

A U.S. Immigration Certificate of Eligibility (I-20) will be issued by Trinity, enabling the international applicant to apply for an F-1 student visa, after the following have been met:

1. Applicant has demonstrated English language competence meeting or exceeding Trinity's standards
2. Applicant has been admitted as a student
3. Applicant has demonstrated adequate financial resources through a Certification of Finances
4. Applicant has submitted a US\$2,000 tuition deposit

In accordance with U.S. immigration law, Trinity does not allow nonimmigrant aliens to register as full-time or degree-seeking students without an F-1 visa. Permanent residents are exempt from these limitations, as are certain other visa statuses (i.e., R-1 or H1B). Further questions regarding visa status and eligibility to study at Trinity may be directed to Trinity's Admissions Office on campus. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain legal immigration status.

Additional Application Considerations

1. EMPLOYMENT RESTRICTIONS: Although the I-20 only requires the student to show finances for the first two semesters of study, International students are expected to arrange for adequate funding for their entire program of study. International students on F-1 visas may work on campus if they maintain a full course load, remain in good academic standing and pre-register for the following semester. Students may work no more than twenty (20) hours per week when school is in session and no more than forty (40) hours during holidays and summer vacation.

All off-campus employment is **illegal** except with special permission from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). This includes exchange of goods and services. For instance, babysitting or other work in exchange for living quarters is prohibited.

F-2 visa holders (dependents of F-1 students) are not allowed to work either on or off campus under any circumstances.

2. GIFTS, HONORARIA, AND SCHOLARSHIPS: International students on an F-1 visa may accept any gifts or honoraria such as those given for a **one-time speaking engagement**. Regular employment such as working in a church in exchange for salary or other benefits is illegal. Gifts from personal friends or any other sources may be accepted.

3. PRACTICAL TRAINING: The U.S. Government allows F-1 students to apply for permission to work and be paid in an area that is closely related to their program of study. This is called "Optional Practical Training" and functions like an internship. Permission to do this must be granted by the INS through an application approved by the International Student Coordinator. A student must have been in legal student status for nine (9) consecutive months before being eligible for Practical Training. It is limited to twelve (12) months of full-time or part-time training.

Curricular Practical Training is also allowed if the student is getting school credit for this work. See the International Student Coordinator for more details.

4. FULL-TIME COURSE LOAD REQUIREMENTS: All F-1 visa students must maintain a full load of courses. Full-time status, as designated by Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and Trinity Graduate School, for the following programs is:

Master's level programs: a minimum of ten (10) credit hours

PhD/EDS, PhD/ICS, and PhD/THS: a minimum of nine (9) credit hours; up to twelve (12) months full-time status allowed for writing the dissertation.

International Student Personnel

The International Student Coordinator is designated by the school and approved by the U.S. Government to help you fulfill the necessary requirements with regard to your F-1 student status. This includes help with all forms, documents, and petitions that must be sent to the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Although there are limits to what can be done and problems may not be solved immediately, the Coordinator is available to assist you. Also, feel free to discuss any problems you have with cultural adjustment or adjustment to Trinity with the International Student Coordinator.

5. HOUSING: Please note that even if you are fully accepted for study at Trinity, this does not guarantee you a place to live either on or off campus. We try to reserve some campus housing for International Students, but we cannot guarantee that housing will be available in the term for which you have applied. Housing is very limited for married students and families. You should be sure to contact the Housing Office as soon as possible after you have been accepted. **If it seems that no campus housing is available when you apply, we strongly recommend that you delay coming until campus housing is available.**

The school takes no responsibility in finding you off-campus housing. However, off-campus housing **may be available** if you have some place to stay when you arrive. You will also need to have a car, an international driver's license that allows you to drive in the United States, and United States automobile insurance so that **you** are able to find the right house or apartment for you and your family. Unfortunately, there is limited public transportation in the U.S.

6. SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION: In some countries, acceptance in a school automatically implies a scholarship. **This is not true at Trinity and at most schools in America.** Acceptance means that you are admitted to study on the basis of your academic qualifications. **All students are expected to fund their own education and living expenses.**

If you are interested in applying for our scholarships and grants, please contact the Financial Aid Office (by email at finaid@tiu.edu or by telephone at 847.317.8060) or the Admissions Office (by email at tedsadm@tiu.edu or by telephone at 847.317.8000) to receive a booklet and an application.

Please note that scholarship funds available for first-year international students are *limited*. While some additional scholarships become available in the second year for students who qualify and meet our high standards of eligibility, our suggestion is that you seek support from other sources.

Transfer Applicants

A **Transfer Form** will be sent to International students who are already in this country on an F-1 visa at a different school. This form must be completed by the designated school official who issues I-20 forms at the student's previous school and returned directly to Trinity's International Student Coordinator. Upon your arrival at Trinity, you must see the International Student Coordinator **before Registration**. You will need to submit a new and valid Certification of Finances form for the program at Trinity. After it has been received, the International Student Coordinator will issue you a new I-20 and you will be permitted to register.