

Information for International Students at North Lake College

North Lake College has a growing international student population currently representing more than 80 countries.

Affordable out-of-country tuition and small class size help make North Lake a great place to pursue your education. Some of the other benefits you will enjoy are:

- Courses that are fully transferable to four-year colleges and universities as well as a variety of technical/occupational programs that apply to today's workplace
- Free tutoring labs for many courses including English and math
- A student resource center with computer facilities, Internet and email access
- An opportunity to live in an exciting metropolitan area featuring many cultural, recreational and intellectual opportunities



Admission for International Students

- Students must submit the required documents to the International Center before the deadline in order to be considered for admission to a degree program. The college will issue an I-20 for the F-1 student visa only after the necessary documents have been received and evaluated by the international student advisor.
- Please submit all documents together. Incomplete application packages will not be processed. Upon receipt of required documents, allow the college a minimum of three weeks to complete the application procedure. It is essential that all applicants provide correct contact information (phone number, address and e-mail).
- International students may NOT apply online.
- Visit <http://www.northlakecollege.edu/intl/forms.html> for information regarding required forms and documents



Questions? Please visit the college International Student Center in office A-418 or call 972-273-3155.

Our mailing address is
North Lake College
International Student Center
5001 N. MacArthur Blvd
Irving, Texas 75038
USA
Fax: 972-273-3138
Office Hours:
Monday - Thursday: 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Friday: 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Saturday - Sunday: Closed



North Lake College

DALLAS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

www.northlakecollege.edu

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Studying at North Lake College



- **Degree and Certificate Programs**

- In the United States, most bachelor degree programs require two years of “basics” which include subjects like English, math, science, history and political science. North Lake College offers all the “basics” which are fully transferable toward a bachelor degree at four-year colleges and universities. An Associate in Arts or Science degree is available to transfer students. The Associate’s degree is recognized throughout higher education and the business community as equaling the completion of two years of college. The college also offers a variety of technical/occupational degree programs that provide specialized training to prepare students for immediate employment in the field of their choice.
- Visit <http://www.northlakecollege.edu/academics/degrees.html> for a complete list of programs offered at North Lake College.

- **Placement Testing**

All students are required by Texas law to complete placement testing in reading, writing and math prior to registration. This testing does not affect your admission to the college. If your test scores indicate that you need improvement in any skill area, an academic advisor will assist you in registering for the appropriate course(s). To learn more about this placement test, visit www.thea.nesinc.com

- **Textbooks**

All required textbooks (new and used) can be found in the Follet Bookstore at North Lake College. Books may also be available for online purchase at the following Web sites. www.efollett.com



The Student Visa

After admission to North Lake College, the students are issued an I-20. The United States Citizenship and Information Services (USCIS) form I-20 (available at www.uscis.gov) is the certificate of eligibility for students on F-1 status, and is one of the required documents to apply for the F-1 student visa at a U.S. consulate overseas.

Once you are in possession of your I-20, you should apply to the U.S. Consulate in your country for an F-1 visa. This visa is granted to students whose purpose is to pursue a full course of study and, upon completion, return to their home countries. To secure the F-1 visa, students must present:

- A valid passport
- Proof of financial support
- Letter of acceptance
- The I-20 issued by our College that serves as verification of admission to North Lake College.
- I-901 fee receipt

All visa applicants are encouraged to request a multiple entry visa rather than a single entry visa, as U.S. visas may no longer be renewed in this country. If you enter the U.S. on a B (tourist) visa, it may not be possible to change to an F-1 visa while in the U.S. unless the consul indicates on the visa that you are a prospective student.

Canadian Citizens

If you are a Canadian student, you DO NOT need to get a visa from the U.S. Consulate, but a valid passport is required. A border official will interview you before you enter the U.S. Please be prepared to present your I-20, letter of acceptance, financial documents and other pertinent documents to customs officials. You will be issued an arrival document (I-94 card), which indicates your student immigration status. You will need this card, so BE SURE to get your I-94 card at the border.

The Student and Exchange Visitor Processing Fee

All new F-1 student applicants must file Form I-901 (available at www.FMjfee.com) and pay the "Student and Exchange Visitor Processing Fee" prior to obtaining a Visa or entering the United States. Your fee receipt will be required along with your form I-20 and letter of acceptance at the U.S. Embassy. Visit the website for the current fee.

F-1 Visa Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is an F-1 student visa?

An F-1 visa is a non-immigrant visa issued by a United States Consulate abroad to an alien who is coming to the United States to pursue full-time studies in a United States academic institution. Generally, the US consular officer has the total discretion to grant the visa or not.

2. Who is an F-1 international student?

F-1 International Students, as defined in the immigration laws, are foreign students pursuing a full course of study in approved colleges, universities, seminaries, conservatories, academia high schools, private elementary schools, other academic institutions, and in language training programs in the United States.

3. What privileges does an F-1 student have on an F-1 visa?

- An F-1 visa allows students to come to the United States to pursue an academic program leading to an undergraduate or graduate degree.
- Legally work on-campus on part-time basis when school is in session or full-time during vacation periods.
- Bring your spouse or dependent children to the United States under F-2 visas.

4. What are the restrictions on an F-1 visa?

F-1 students are not allowed to work off-campus except with USCIS authorization. Students must maintain full-time status which means 12 credit hours for an undergraduate program.

5. How long can a student stay in the United States with an F-1 visa?

The I-20 indicates the specific time students should begin and finish their academic programs. As long as they are in status, the students are allowed to remain in the United States until they finish their course of study. Students may apply for an extension if necessary.

6. Under what circumstances can a student fall out of status?

- Failure to maintain full-time enrollment.
- Work off-campus without USCIS authorization (illegally)
- Failure to request a program extension or transfer before the I-20 completion date.

7. What happens if the visa expired while the student is in the U.S.?

The F-1 visa does not determine how long the student can stay in the United States. As far as the student holds a valid I-20 and remains in status she/he can stay in the U.S. until they complete their academic program. If the student decides to leave the country and his/her visa is expired, he/she will need to apply for a new F-1 visa to re-enter the country.



Planning Your Stay



Due to limited staffing, the International Center will be unable to assist you in settling into the Dallas community. You will be responsible for arranging living accommodations, transportation and all other basic needs. Because of this, we highly encourage all students who will be arriving directly from overseas to seek out family and friends in the Dallas area for assistance.

We hope you have a safe trip to Texas and we look forward to meeting you upon your arrival. If you have any questions, please contact the International Center at (972) 273-3155 or fax at (972) 273-3138.

Arrival

You are eligible to arrive in the United States 30 days prior to the date on your I-20. Plan to report to North Lake College NO LATER than the date indicated in your acceptance letter. No provisions for late registration are available. If you cannot arrive in time to complete registration and begin classes on the stipulated date, DO NOT attempt to use your North Lake I-20 to enter the U.S. If you do, you will be in violation of immigration regulations. Instead, contact the International Center to defer your enrollment to the next semester.

Check-In

After you arrive, you will need to check in at the International Center, which is located in the Administration Building (suite A-418). Bring all of your original documents and copies of your immigration documents (passport, I-20, I-94 arrival record). At that time, you will sign up for a required International Student Orientation session.

Orientation

All international students must attend a MANDATORY orientation session prior to registration. The orientation will provide valuable information to help you understand your academic program and comply with immigration law and campus policies. Several sessions on various dates will be offered for your convenience. More information will be provided when you report to the college to check in.

Transportation

Public transportation is currently limited in Irving. Two bus routes, 301 and 314, service North Lake College and are available via the DART transportation system. The DART Rail planned expansion will offer a conveniently located North Lake campus station scheduled to be completed in 2012. For information about schedules and fares, visit www.dart.org. Taxi cab service is very expensive. The passenger must pay by the mile, plus a gratuity. Most students prefer to purchase their own car. However, automobile ownership can be very costly due to maintenance, mandatory insurance, gasoline expenses, in addition to yearly inspection fees. The state of Texas requires a valid driver's license. For more information visit www.txdps.state.tx.us/DriverLicense/ApplyforLicense.htm.





Money Matters

New students will incur a variety of “start-up” expenses upon arrival. Tuition and fees must be paid in full at the time of registration. The college is unable to “hold” classes for students who do not pay, so it is imperative that you have tuition money available for immediate use. An application fee, a deposit and the first month’s rent are required for renting an apartment. Therefore, you should plan to have at least \$3,000 (Travelers checks, etc.) in your possession upon arrival in Irving. All checks should be made payable directly to you, not to North Lake College. Any check drawn on a foreign bank account will require approximately three weeks for processing before the money is released to you. Be aware that the college is unable to accept wire transfers. Please plan accordingly. Employment options are extremely limited on campus. Do not expect to pay for your expenses through employment or to “work your way through school.” Your financial sponsor must provide all funds for all expenses.

Banks

In the United States, international students are responsible for the management of their own funds. It is a good idea to open a bank account and keep track of expenses. Although selecting a bank is a personal choice, there are several companies with offices located within close proximity of the North Lake College campus.

Taxes

Regardless of status or income, every person living in the United States must file a tax return every year.

- International students who hold on-campus job are required to file their taxes after getting their W-2 forms. In order to complete their income tax return, they must also submit forms 1040NR (U.S. Nonresident Alien Income Tax Return) and Form 8843 (Statement for Exempt Individuals). To obtain updated forms, additional information and assistance preparing tax returns visit: www.irs.gov.
- F-1 students who are not employed must file form 8843.

What are the English Admission Requirements?

In order to be admitted to the College, you must earn a score of 530 (197 on the computerized version) on the Test of English as a Foreign Language or TOEFL. This test is given world-wide, and must be taken before application is made. Indicate the institutional code 6519 on the TOEFL registration form to have the TOEFL scores sent directly to North Lake College. For more information about this exam, contact the Educational Testing Service at 609-771-7100. If you need to study English before beginning a degree program, you are encouraged to contact the ESOL/International Student Services office for more information.

Living Arrangements

North Lake College does not operate any student housing. There are, however, a number of apartment complexes located within a 2 mile radius of the College. Apartments rent for approximately \$500-900 per month, depending on the amenities offered. The cost of rent does not include utilities (e.g. electricity, phone). If you do not have friends or family in the Dallas/Irving area who can provide temporary lodging when you arrive, you will need to bring extra money with you to stay in a hotel until permanent accommodations are established.

Health

Because medical care in the United States is expensive, it is essential that students carry health insurance. There are no programs other than private insurance to assist international students with health care expenses. Students who fail to carry insurance and suffer illness or injury resulting in high medical bills have often been financially unable to continue their education. DCCCD has a selection of insurance policies designed specifically for international students. These policies do not include coverage for dental work. It is strongly recommended that all dental work be completed before arriving in the United States.