

## STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT BUFFALO

### Special Instructions and Information for International Applicants

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**Eligibility for Graduate Admissions:** Applicants must have completed an academic program equivalent to a U.S. Bachelor's degree prior to enrolling. Students may apply during their final year of such a degree program but must furnish proof of graduation before the end of their first semester of enrollment. The following are not by themselves considered to be satisfactory for admission to the Graduate School:

- Taiwan - Diplomas from junior colleges or nondegree-granting institutions;
- British educational systems - O.N.D.s or H.N.D.s;
- Bangladesh, Burma, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka - Two- and three-year bachelors' degrees (only the B.E., B.Sc.Eng., and all masters' degrees are considered equivalent to U.S. undergraduate degrees);
- Nigeria - Nigerian Certificates of Education.

#### **Admission Requirements:**

**(1) English Language Proficiency:** All applicants who are not native speakers of English, including those who are transferring from or who have completed degree programs at other U.S. colleges or universities, must prove their English language proficiency by taking the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and having their score reported directly to the University. TOEFL score reports must be dated within two years of enrollment in this University. Further information about the TOEFL may be obtained from the U.S. Embassy or U.S. Information Service in your country or by writing the Educational Testing Service, P.O. Box 6151, Princeton, New Jersey, 08540-6151, U.S.A.

Applicants who have not yet achieved a 550 score on the TOEFL (217 with the new system) should consider the possibility of attending the Intensive English Language Institute (IELI). Students who fall below the minimum TOEFL requirement but who meet other criteria for acceptance may have their admission deferred (with departmental permission) until satisfactory completion of intensive English courses. IELI offers such courses during the summer (6- and 12-week sessions), fall, and spring semesters. Information and application forms for IELI may be obtained by contacting: IELI, 320 Baldy Hall, Amherst Campus, State University of New York at Buffalo, Buffalo, New York 14260. **IMPORTANT:** No Certificate of Eligibility will be issued until a satisfactory TOEFL score has been submitted.

(2) **Financial Documentation** - All international applicants must document their ability to meet all educational and personal expenses for the entire period of intended study before this University can issue an I-20. It is essential that you read the Foreign Applicant Financial Statement carefully. Complete and return that form along with supporting documentation as outlined in the instructions. **No Certificate of Eligibility will be issued without satisfactory financial documentation.** Financial documentation is required for visa issuance only. The information provided will in no way affect your application for departmental financial awards. Students who are requesting departmental financial assistance must still submit adequate financial documentation with their application. If departmental assistance does not cover all mandated financial requirements, students who have not submitted documentation will experience further delays in the issuance of I-20.

#### **Admission Information:**

**(1) Financial Assistance:** Depending upon departmental policy, Teaching, Graduate, or Research Assistantships are sometimes awarded to newly admitted international graduate students. The assistantships include a stipend and a tuition scholarship. In return for this study grant, the assistant will be required to teach, assist with research, or perform other duties as assigned by the department. For further information regarding these appointments, contact the department to which you are applying.

**(2) Visa Information:** Applicants recommended for admission by a graduate department are considered eligible for a visa certificate only after they have satisfied the language and financial requirements listed above. All international graduate students are issued a Certificate of Eligibility (I-20) for a Student Visa (F1). The issuance of an IAP-66 for the acquisition of Exchange Visitor status (J1) is restricted to the following applicants: (1) those funded by the U.S. government or by an international organization; (2) participants in formal SUNY at Buffalo exchange programs; (3) those currently in the U.S. on a J1 visa and transferring to this University to continue their original program purposes; (4) those from countries which require all departing students to possess Exchange Visitor Visas (J1). **Indicate the type of visa necessary on the application form.**

**(3) Part-time and Non-degree Study:** All international students are required to enroll in a full-time degree program. International students may be admitted as non-degree candidates only if they are funded by an institution or international agency for the specific purpose of non-degree study (e.g. exchange students). If approved, such study may not exceed one calendar year in duration.

Part-time (less than 12 credit hours per semester) enrollment of international students is permitted only in the following cases: (1) Canadian nationals who intend to commute to this University for their coursework; (2) persons holding non-immigrant visas other than F1 or J1; (3) spouses or dependents of persons holding F1 or J1 visas.

All non-degree students must meet all admission requirements applicable to full-time matriculating international students, including financial documentation. Courses taken by non-degree students do not automatically apply toward a graduate degree, if the student eventually matriculates into a degree program.

#### **(4) Final Admission and Pre-arrival Information:**

- If admitted, you will receive a formal admission letter from the Office of Admissions and the necessary immigration documents with instructions. You will use these documents to obtain an F-1 Student Visa from the closest US Embassy or Consulate in your country of residence. You will also receive information about housing and orientation programs for new students.
- Do not enter the U.S. on a Visitor's Visa (B2) unless it is stamped "prospective student," as it is extremely difficult to change your visa status while in the U.S.
- Do not enter the U.S. on an I-20/IAP-66 issued by another U.S. university and expect to enroll at the State University of New York at Buffalo.