

# INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The university encourages qualified international students to seek admission to VCU. U.S. government regulations and VCU admission policies require nonimmigrant applicants to demonstrate:

- Satisfactory academic achievement
- Adequate English language proficiency
- Ability to finance all educational and living expenses

International students are advised to refer to university and program admission requirements in this bulletin for other information requested of all applicants. An applicant must have earned a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution in the United States or an equivalent degree from a recognized foreign institution. Official academic records must be submitted.

## English language proficiency requirement

To ensure maximum benefit from academic study at VCU, all non-native English-speaking applicants, regardless of immigration status, must provide evidence of English language proficiency before admission and/or enrollment in the university.

An applicant may satisfy university English proficiency requirements by obtaining a satisfactory score on the TOEFL. The university minimum TOEFL score requirement is 550 (paper-based) or 80 (Internet-based). Some graduate programs will accept satisfactory scores on the IELTS as evidence of English proficiency. The university minimum IELTS score requirement is 6.5. The PTE is also accepted with a minimum score of 65. Individual programs may require higher scores. TOEFL, IELTS and PTE scores are valid for two years.

The Office of Admissions reserves the right to require additional testing and study in the VCU English Language Program prior to full-time enrollment in university courses. The university offers a full-time English-as-a-Second-Language noncredit program. For information on the VCU English Language Program, including fees, international students can contact the English Language Program, Virginia Commonwealth University, Box 843043, Richmond, VA 23284-3043, United States; (804) 828-2551, or by email: [oie-elp@vcu.edu](mailto:oie-elp@vcu.edu); or visit the ELP webpage (<http://www.global.vcu.edu/elp/>). online.

## Nonimmigrants (students with temporary U.S. visas)

Because of the amount of time required to process applications from international students and for international students to obtain their visas, prospective students should apply well in advance of the international application deadlines. The deadlines are April 1 for fall semester, Oct. 1 for spring semester and Feb. 1 for summer session. Students also must meet specific program deadlines. All required admission documents must be submitted no later than eight weeks prior to registration if appropriate immigration documents are to be issued. Applicants who are unable to meet this credential deadline will need to defer the intended semester of entry.

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As VCU does not generally provide financial support for graduate international students, applicants needing a student visa (F-1) or a visiting scholar visa (J-1) also must present documented evidence

of available financial support to cover annual living and educational expenses while studying at VCU.

Proof of current visa type must be submitted with the application for applicants who are in the United States on student visas. F-1 students and J-1 visiting scholars admitted to VCU must submit copies of all immigration documents to the VCU international student adviser prior to enrolling in classes.

## Immigrants (permanent residents, resident aliens and asylum/refugee applicants)

Because immigrant applicants usually are in the United States at the time applications are submitted, these students are required to meet the same application deadlines as U.S. citizens.

If educated in the United States, immigrant students will be considered for admission under the same academic policies as those applied to U.S. citizens. If educated outside the United States, the same academic records are required as those for nonimmigrant students.

VCU requires detailed information concerning U.S. immigration status. Proof of permanent residency or application for permanent residency must be submitted with the admission application.