

## **Form I-20 FAQ**

### **What is a Form I-20?**

A Form I-20 is a government document that lets the US Government know that you are eligible for F-1 student status. It certifies that:

- You are or expect to be a matriculated student.
- You meet Sarah Lawrence College admissions requirements.
- You will pursue a full course of study.
- You have proven to the college that you have enough money to study and live in the US without working illegally or suffering from poverty.

### **Why do I need a Form I-20?**

You need a Form I-20 to obtain an F-1 student visa, or to keep lawful F-1 status when transferring or changing schools within the US.

### **Do all international students need a Form I-20?**

If you are maintaining another nonimmigrant status in the US, you do not need to have an I-20 and may attend school full- or part-time. Dependent students in E, H, I, J, L, M, N, O, P, R, or S status need to change status after their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday or if they marry.

### **Do Canadian citizens need a Form-I20?**

While Canadian citizens do not need a student visa to enter the U.S., they **do** need the I-20 and proof of payment of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) I-901 fee ([www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com)). When entering the U.S. to study, you must request F-1 status and present the I-20 with the supporting materials and your SEVP fee receipt to the immigration inspector.

### **What are the rules for getting my Form I-20 from Sarah Lawrence College?**

The U.S. government requires you to prove to Sarah Lawrence College that you can support the costs of living and studying in the U.S. for at least one year of your program of study.

Do not expect that you will be able to work in the U.S. to help meet your annual costs. On-campus employment is limited and competitive and off-campus employment is strictly controlled by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

### **Where can I find the cost of living and studying at Sarah Lawrence College?**

For the most current Annual Expenses for International Students please go to the [SLC Website](#). These expenses represent a modest average budget that does not include luxuries of any kind. We strongly recommend that you budget at least 10% more if possible. We ask that students and their families look closely at the costs of living and studying in the U.S. and make careful plans to be sure your needs will be met. Expect annual increases in tuition and living costs of approximately 3% to 5%.

### **What information will my financial sponsor need to show?**

The college will email your sponsor(s) a form called an ***Affidavit of Support***. This form will be filled out on-line. During this process they will be asked to submit a Bank Statement with their name on it. This Bank Statement should specify monthly balances and deposits. Before scanning the document for submission, the Sponsor will be asked to circle the closing balance and write the U.S. dollar equivalent on the statement. This statement must be uploaded with the Affidavit of Support. ***Please note:*** Each Sponsor Affidavit of Support will include the amount that you specified on your Application for the Form I-20. The Bank Statement provided by your sponsor(s) must be equal to or greater than that amount.

### **I am already studying in the U.S. and will be transferring to SLC from this institution. What do I do?**

If you are currently in the United States on an F-1 visa and intend to transfer to Sarah Lawrence College, you will be asked to complete the F-1 Transfer In section of the Application for the Form I-20. When you complete this section you will provide the college with the contact information for the person responsible for SEVIS reporting at your institution.

### **What if I currently have B visa status?**

If you use a B visa to enter the U.S., you are saying “I’m here as a visitor” *only*. B visitors are prohibited by U.S. law from pursuing a course of study prior to obtaining a change of status to F-1 status.

### **Do all international students require an F-1 visa?**

You must enter the U.S. with an F-1 visa unless you are under another status that permits you to study in the U.S.

### **When can I enter the U.S. with an F-1 visa?**

F-1 visa holders cannot enter the United States earlier than 30 days before the program start date on the Form I-20.

### **How do I start the process of applying for the Form I-20 at Sarah Lawrence College?**

Starting this year new first year undergraduates and new undergraduate transfer students will use an on-line form located on their application status portal: <https://apply.sl.c.edu/account>. The form will be available after May 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **What do I need in order to fill out the on-line form?**

As part of the on-line form, you will be required to submit **financial documents** to prove that you have enough funds to cover all educational costs of your program for at least one year. (This includes tuition, fees, housing, health insurance, personal expenses, etc. This year, the cost of attendance is \$77,897.00.)

Your financial support can come from any combination of the following sources and may consist of those you provide yourself, as well as the documents supplied by your financial sponsors:

- Sponsor funds (parents, relatives, friends, organizations, etc.)
- Personal Funds

- Funds from Sarah Lawrence College (scholarships)
- Outside scholarships

All financial documents must be less than three months old.

When you fill out the on-line form you will provide information about your sponsor(s) and the amount they promise to provide. Your sponsor(s) will be emailed an *Affidavit of Support* form. They will upload their financial documents proving they have the financial resources to cover the amount you specified. Please note:

- A sponsor should promise only as much money as they are able to give you each year.
- Financial documents must be in the name of the sponsor and be in a personal account.
- If the bank statement is in the name of more than one person, each individual must complete the Affidavit of Support.
- Company bank statements are not accepted.
- Each financial document submitted by you or your sponsor(s), must clearly state the currency equivalency in U.S. dollars before you scan it for upload.
- Please scan your documents in PDF format. Please do not upload the pages one at a time. All of the pages of a single document should be scanned together in one file before uploading
- Please do not send picture files.

You will only upload financial documents pertaining to the personal funds, Sarah Lawrence Award, or Outside Scholarships that cover the amount you are personally providing.

**Other than financial documents, what other documents will I need to upload with my application for the Form I-20?**

Please scan the information page of your passport in PDF format and upload this when asked.

**What happens after I complete the on-line application for the Form I-20?**

Once we receive all of your information (I-20 application, financial documents) through your portal, we will issue your I-20 form and send to you express mail and also electronically. We will also include instructions about how to apply for a F-1 student visa.

We will contact you if we have any questions about your form or financial documents.

**Who should I contact if I have any questions about this process?**

Please email [slcadmit@sarahlawrence.edu](mailto:slcadmit@sarahlawrence.edu) with any questions.