



How to have

an:// internationally.friendly

Website

The Educational Information and Resources Branch within the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs provides professional development and educational resources for advisers at the nearly 500 **EducationUSA** centers around the world and strives to strengthen links between centers and U.S. higher education institutions. Following are suggestions from advisers on how U.S. institutions can make their websites more accessible to prospective students from abroad

DO provide	DON'T
Link for international students on home page.	Require Social Security Numbers Most international students don't have them
Regional accrediting association	
Tuition and cost information – List total amount that will appear on required documentation as well as individual programs costs	Require GPAs - Many countries do not offer GPAs
FAQs	
Deadlines – prominently listed	Require zip codes or a U.S. address
Checklist for required documents and tests	
Contact information for all offices dealing with international students. Automated responses are often not received overseas.	Give 800 phone numbers – They are not toll free outside the U.S.
Names of months and specific dates for completion of required testing, application deadlines, notification, orientation and enrollment.	
Metric measurements (campus size in hectares, average local temperatures in Celsius, distances in kilometers etc.)	Use “college” to refer to university-level programs
Number of credit/hours needed to be enrolled full-time	
Course catalog with course descriptions	Require original copies of academic certificates. Many international students cannot obtain multiple originals of their academic certificates. Provide instructions for submitting certified true copies instead.
Downloadable applications in a variety of formats	
Application fee waivers or allow students without credit cards to mail application fee after completing on-line applications	
State which programs are open to international candidates and which are not.	
Minimum requirements for as many national education systems as possible	

PLEASE CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

- **Admissions process:** Give some philosophical background. It's not based simply on grades and scores – why? General requirements don't help. Sites should specify clearly who qualifies and what profile potentially admissible students should have.
- Mention **score cut offs** or averages. If scores are just one part of the application, specify what parts of the application are given more weight.
- **Be clear** about what you do not want: no folders, no plastic sleeves, no copies of awards or extracurricular accomplishments, no SAT-II in your native language, etc.
- **Financial aid:** the university could also include ways to reduce the costs of college, and give realistic views on how much the student can expect to earn from on-campus jobs (stating whether jobs are readily available to international students), how much they can save from e.g., being a resident assistant in the dorms, etc. A big attraction are web pages that state clearly what financial aid, scholarships and work opportunities are available to foreign students.
- **Deferred Enrollment:** Give information about deferred enrollment, especially for students serving compulsory national service. State whether scholarships may be deferred. Specify whether students who know they plan to defer enrollment may apply Early Decision.
- **TOEFL requirements** should be clarified. Address needs of bilingual students, non-native speakers of English with 700 SAT verbal scores, non-native speakers who have been in English-language instruction for the past four years. State if students may submit ELPT or IELTS test results instead of TOEFL.
- **Unfamiliar Terms:** Explain terms that may be unfamiliar such as:
 - room & board
 - Middle name (for most Middle Eastern students; this is the father's name and not the US definition of middle name)
 - Ethnicity
- **Transfer information:** Provide information on eligibility for transfer admissions for international students.
- **16th year:** Mention the 16th year requirement for 3 year bachelor's degree holders for overseas. Include:
 - what kind of credentials are acceptable and what are not, e.g., if you need a completed master's program as a prerequisite, state that those who complete only a first year of a masters program are ineligible.
 - whether postgraduate diplomas are acceptable or not.
 - whether degrees obtained through distance learning are acceptable or not.
 - countries where this 16th year rule applies.
 - Emphasize that this is for applicants to graduate programs.

IMPORTANT LINKS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- Many international students look for the words” prospective students” on the first page. From there sites should link to:
 - School description with costs and housing information
 - *International* undergraduate/graduate admissions
 - Proportion of international students at that university and class profiles
 - Quotes from international students
 - Requirements and documents that apply to international students.
 - Visas: *Up-to-date* information with new SEVIS regulations is located at:
 - <http://www.unitedstatesvisas.gov>
 - <http://UnitedStatesVisas.gov/studying.html>.
 - <http://travel.state.gov/DS-0156.pdf> - is the place to download visa application forms
 - http://travel.state.gov/foreign_student_visas_handout.html
- **EducationUSA Centers:** Link to <http://educationusa.state.gov> and encourage students to contact the Department of State EducationUSA advising center in their country.
- **Examples** of good international-friendly websites:
 - Yale University’s international home page
<http://world.yale.edu/>
 - UC-Berkeley’s list of minimum international qualifications:
<http://admissions.berkeley.edu/pdf/international.pdf>
 - Michigan’s list of minimum international qualifications:
<http://www.admissions.umich.edu/internatbrochure.html#ib6>
 - Duke’s FAQ page: <http://www.duke.edu/web/ug-admissions/intstud.htm>
 - Wisconsin’s general information page, including details about weather, what clothes to bring, and even an overcoat loan service! <http://jumpgate.acadsvcs.wisc.edu/admissions/admission/internat.html>

And Finally

Update your site regularly and
present a **welcoming** appearance!