

**Studying in the United States is an opportunity to gain world-class qualifications, explore America, share your culture and make friends with students from around the world. There are thousands of accredited tertiary institutions in the U.S., offering a wide variety of undergraduate and postgraduate programs. The quality of teaching, facilities and resources is renowned worldwide.**

## ★ Types of Degrees

There are two types of undergraduate degrees in the U.S. An associate's degree is a two-year degree awarded by a community college. A bachelor's degree is typically a four-year degree awarded by a college or university.

In the U.S. postgraduate study is called 'graduate' study. There are two levels of graduate degree programs in America. A Master's degree usually takes one to two years of fulltime study to complete, and a Doctoral degree can take three to five years of fulltime study. Both involve a combination of research and coursework.

## ★ Types of Institutions

Degree-granting institutions in the U.S. can be referred to as colleges, universities or institutes. As a general rule, colleges tend to be smaller and usually only offer undergraduate degrees, while universities also offer postgraduate degrees. Institutes usually specialize in degree programs in a group of closely related areas such as art and design, fashion or technology.

### Private University

These schools accept no money from the Federal Government. Their funding comes from internal revenue streams and private donations. Private schools tend to have smaller student populations, normally between 2,000 and 8,000. Private schools are also typically more selective. Because they do not accept government money, their fees are usually the highest of U.S. schools, though they also normally have the largest amount of financial assistance.

### Public University

Public schools accept money from the Federal and State Government, allowing them to, maintain lower fees than private schools, however international students pay higher fees than state residents. Public universities normally contain the largest student populations, with some schools reaching over 40,000 students. Public schools tend to have a large administration and extremely diverse range of degrees. Acceptance rates are slightly more relaxed for public schools.

### Community College

Sometimes called junior or two-year colleges, community colleges have close links to secondary schools, community groups and employers. They provide two-year associate degree programs as well as technical and vocational programs. Tuition costs are often lower than at four-year institutions. Many community colleges have agreements that allow students to easily transfer into a third year of a bachelor's degree at the local state university.

## ★ 5 Steps to Study

Follow these steps to get from the New Zealand classroom to an American campus!

### 1) Research Your Options

The first step is to research your options in order to find a college or university that best fits your needs. You shouldn't try to match yourself to the school, but rather find the school that matches your and your long-term goals. There is no official ranking system, so the best college or university is the one that meets your academic, financial and personal requirements.

### 2) Finance Your Studies

Invest in yourself! The cost of living and studying varies across the U.S. With the right amount of planning and research, pursuing a U.S. higher education can be made affordable with high returns on your investment. Each year international students receive significant amounts of financial assistance for their studies, but competition is high. Applications for financial aid go together with applications for admission.

### 3) Complete Your Application

Applying for U.S. study is a task that takes time and concentration as each application is different and involves collecting recommendations, writing essays and routing the results of required standardized exams.

### 4) Apply for Your Student Visa

Once you are admitted to a U.S. college or university, you can begin the process of applying for a student visa.

### 5) Prepare for Your Departure

Key components to this step include making your travel arrangements, attending a pre-departure orientation at your local EducationUSA center, gathering pre-departure materials and documents for arrival, as well as reporting to your school and attending orientations.

## ★ What is EducationUSA?

EducationUSA is a U.S. Department of State network of over 400 international student advising centers in more than 170 countries. The network promotes U.S. higher education to students around the world by offering accurate, comprehensive, and current information about opportunities to study at accredited postsecondary institutions in the United States. EducationUSA centers in New Zealand are located in the U.S. Embassy and Consulate.

## ★ Useful Websites:

[www.educationusa.state.gov](http://www.educationusa.state.gov)  
[bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search](http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search)  
[nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/](http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/)  
[www.petersons.com/college-search.aspx](http://www.petersons.com/college-search.aspx)