The U.S. Experience

Presented by the Commission for Educational Exchange Between the United States and Belgium
Why Study in the U.S.

• Wide array of options
• Flexibility
• Not just academic study
• Internationalize your CV
• Opportunity to travel to the US
Belgian Mobility

2014: 948
## Interesting Facts

### Top Undergraduate Institutions

- New York University
- Santa Barbara City College
- Northeastern University
- Duke University and Medical Center
- The New School

### Top Graduate Institutions

- Columbia University
- New York University
- Stanford University
- Harvard University
- University of Chicago
Levels of Study

- Undergraduate Education
  - 4 years directly after High School (Lycée).
  - End result = a bachelors degree (B.A. or B.S.)

- Graduate Education
  - Higher degrees taken after completion of a bachelors degree (M.A., M.S., MBA, Ph.D, J.D., M.D., etc.)
  - Most Ph.D. programs do not require a Master’s degree to apply
Degree Types

Master's Degree

- One to three years beyond a bachelor’s degree
- Specialized branch or field
- Academic or professional; thesis or non-thesis option

Doctoral Degree

- Four to seven years beyond a bachelor’s degree
- Academic or Professional
- Comprehensive exam and dissertation
Types of Institutions

Public
- Also called State Schools

Private
- Possible religious affiliation
Differences to Expect

• No central government authority
• No ranking system
• Entrance exams
• Application process- letters of recommendation, personal statements
• Teaching and classroom styles
• On-campus life and opportunities
12 – 18 months... prior to departure

Choose: 5 – 6 universities to apply to

Evaluate: your motivation & objectives

Determine: all requirements

Register: for required tests

Note: all deadlines on a calendar
How to choose

- Accredited?
- Size?
- Location?
- Number of international students?
- Programs offered?
- Opportunities – publishing, conferences, alumni
- Cost?
Accreditation

- Chea www.chea.org/search

- Dept of Education
  http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation
Searching

- http://www.gradschools.com/
- http://www.topmba.com/
- http://www.phds.org/

Search academic publications to see where the authors are coming from

Network at conferences and through your current professors

Check the websites of professional organizations in your field
The first step to studying in the United States is researching your options 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 you and your priorities and long-term goals.

Remember that no official ranking system exists for colleges and universities in the United States. The best college or university is the one that is best for you and meets your requirements—academic, financial, and personal.

At least 12 to 18 months prior to the academic year in which you hope to attend a U.S.
Applying
6 - 12 months prior to U.S. study:

1. Research Your Options
2. Complete Your Application
3. Finance Your Studies
4. Apply for Your Student Visa
5. Prepare for Your Departure

- Understand your admission requirements
- Write your personal statement
- Request Transcripts
- Request your recommendation letters
- Take your standardized tests

FULBRIGHT BELGIUM LUXEMBOURG USA
Transcripts

(Under)graduate coursework
- Courses completed
- Grades/marks received in each course

Original or certified
- Original transcript or certified copy
- Verification from a foreign credential evaluation service
Entrance Exams

**GRE**
Graduate Record Exam

- For admission to Graduate Schools *(except Law programs)*
- Subject-specific tests required for certain programs
- Scores range from 130-170 and are available 10-15 days after the exam. They are good for 5 years.


**GMAT**
Graduate Management Admission Test

- For admission to Business Schools
- Scores range from 200-800 and are available 20 days after the exam. They are good for 5 years.

- [http://www.mba.com](http://www.mba.com)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GMAT Test Section</th>
<th>Number of Questions</th>
<th>Question Types</th>
<th>Timing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analytical Writing Assessment</td>
<td>1 Topic</td>
<td>Analysis of an Argument</td>
<td>30 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Reasoning</td>
<td>12 Questions</td>
<td>Multi-Source Reasoning, Graphics Interpretation, Two-Part Analysis, Table Analysis</td>
<td>30 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>37 Questions</td>
<td>Data Sufficiency Problem Solving</td>
<td>75 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>41 Questions</td>
<td>Reading Comprehension, Critical Reasoning, Sentence Correction</td>
<td>75 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Exam Time</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3 hours, 30 min</strong></td>
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English Tests

- $245
- Brussels, Luxembourg, Paris, Arnhem
- Speak with a computer
- [http://www.ets.org/toefl](http://www.ets.org/toefl)

- €202
- Accepted by many but not all universities
- Speak with a human
- [http://www.britishcouncil.org/brussels-exams-ielts.htm](http://www.britishcouncil.org/brussels-exams-ielts.htm)

- $270
- Accepted by many but not all universities
- 3 hours, Brussels
- Score in 5 days
Recommendation Letters

Who can write them?
- Professors, administrators, or employers
- Choose someone who knows you well, inside and outside of the classroom

What should they include?
- Length and capacity of relationship
- Quality and examples of your academic and/or professional work
- Comparison to others, when appropriate
- Potential to do well
Recommendation Letters

- Develop strong relationships with academic and professional colleagues
- Ask for letter of recommendation early and in-person
- Talk about your motivation for applying
- Provide them with resources like your CV to help them know what elements to include
- Give them a pre-addressed stamped envelope
- Follow up to make sure the letter is sent!
Personal Statement

Past qualifications and where your interest stems from

Why now is the right time and there is the right place

Details about how you plan to use the degree in the future

Clear, Concise, Specific, Persuasive
3 Simultaneous Actions

1. Choose 5-6 universities & prepare the applications for each one.

2. Determine which tests are needed to apply & take them (TOEFL, IELTS, GRE, GMAT, etc).

3. Look for financial support.
Primary Source of Funding (International Graduate Students, 2013 - 2014)*

- Personal and Family: 64.70%
- U.S. College or University: 19.30%
- Foreign Government or University: 7.50%
- Current Employer: 5.60%
- U.S. Private Sponsor: 0.50%
- Foreign Private Sponsor: 1.10%
- U.S. Government: 0.50%
- International Organization: 0.20%
- Other Sources: 0.60%

*Source: Open Doors Report, 2014
Funding Sources

1. Personal funding
2. Money from U.S. university
   • Research fellowship
   • Teaching assistantship
   • Salary
3. Loan
   • From a bank
   • From Lazard Foundation in Belgium
4. Scholarship from other organizations
   • Fulbright, BAEF, Rotary
   • http://www.fulbright.be/awards/non-fulbright-awards/
## Employment

<p>| | |</p>
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<td><strong>EducationUSA.state.gov</strong></td>
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Financial Aid

Assistantships
- Work For Institution in Research/Teaching/Administration for approx. 20 hours/week
- Provides Tuition + Living Stipend
- Limited departmental funding, so important to express interest early

Fellowships
- Merit- and need-based
- Covers Costs, Admin, Living, etc. AND offers programming
- Government, Institutions, and Organizations
## Aid by Field

<table>
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<th>Field</th>
<th>PhD Candidates</th>
<th>Master’s Candidates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)</strong></td>
<td>82% funded by universities</td>
<td>55% funded by universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Humanities and Social Sciences</strong></td>
<td>56% funded by universities</td>
<td>41% funded by universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Professions (Business, Health, Communications, Education, Law)</strong></td>
<td>University funding is rare: most students are funded by loans arranged through universities or private sources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
Fellowships: Sciences

- NRC Research associateship programs (science, engineering, atmospheric, aeronautical, OSHA, Energy, NOAA)
- National Science Foundation
- National Labs (ex. Lawrence-Livermore, Los Alamos)
- National Academy of Engineering
- American Western Universities (AWU)
- NIH, NSF, HHMI
- Foundations for disease research: American Cancer Society, Parkinson’s Disease Foundation, Leukemia Society, March of Dimes
- Industry: Pharma companies like Pfizer, DuPont, Amgen, Genentech, SAIC, Merck
- General med research: Damon Runyon, Helen Hay Whitney, Charles King Trust, Jane Coffin Childs, Markey, Life Sciences
Fellowships: Humanities

- Woodrow Wilson Post Doc Fellowships in Humanities
- Social Sciences Research Council
- American Philosophical Society
- Arts (Ahmanson, Getty)
Loans

• Common form of aid for American students
• Some private banks and financial institutions offer loans to international students as well, but usually at a higher interest rate and only with the support of an American co-signer
• In Belgium, the Fernand Lazard Foundation offers interest free loans of up to €25,000 for EU citizens. You can learn more about these here: [http://www.redweb.be/lazard/fr.htm](http://www.redweb.be/lazard/fr.htm)
Scholarships

- BAEF: www.baef.be
- Rotary
- Other non-Fulbright awards:
  http://www.fulbright.be/awards/non-fulbright-awards/
Fulbright Awards
“to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and people of other countries”

former Senator J. William Fulbright
Who can apply?

- Students, Researchers, Lecturers
- Mid-career journalists
- Language teaching assistants
- Secondary school teachers
Benefits

- Up to $30,000 (average $15,000)
- Sickness and accident insurance
- J-1 visa sponsorship
- Discount on Brussels Airlines plane tickets to NY & DC
- In-country programming— including Gateway Orientations, Enrichment Seminars
- Prestigious title and alumni network
Eligibility

- Belgian or Luxembourgish citizenship
- English proficiency
- Minimum of a Bachelor’s degree
- Academic excellence (generally a distinction every year or grand distinction in the last year of study)
- Admission or affiliation with an accredited US university or think tank
Conditions

• No J-1 visa in the student or scholar categories within the past two years

• Ambassadorial qualities necessary for educational and cultural exchange

• Must return to Belgium/Luxembourg/EU for 2 years following grant

How to apply?

December 1
- Final Application

January 2016
- Interview – 10 Minutes

February 2016
- Notification

Prepare
- 3 letters of rec
- Transcripts
- Essays

As soon as possible
- Provide letter of acceptance

Prepare
- As soon as possible
Application Form

Please note that this application form is only valid for BELGIAN citizens. If you are a citizen of another EU country, please check out www.fulbrightschuman.eu or the website of the Fulbright Commission in your country.

Which grant are you applying for?
- Boas Grant
- Journalism Grant
- Research Grant
- Student Grant
- Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Program
- Summer Institutes in American Studies

What do you plan to do in the US (ex: Masters of Law or Research in Engineering etc)?

Personal Information

- First name
- Last name
- Nationality: Belgium

Do you have a 2nd nationality?
Recommendations

If you wish to edit the registration information of a recommender who has not yet started the recommendation:

1) Delete that recommender below.
2) Re-register that recommender with the updated registration information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommender Name</th>
<th>Date Registered</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Date Submitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Register another Recommender ▶

Resend Registration Email ▶

If you wish to delete a recommender, select from the droplist below, then click 'Delete Recommender'.
Note: Any recommendation information your recommender has completed will be deleted. You will not be able to delete recommenders who have submitted a recommendation for you.

Delete Recommender
Select one:

Delete Recommender ▶
FLTAs

- Teach French, Dutch, or German at a US university where you are placed
- Take courses that interest you
- Tuition, housing, meals, stipend
- Must take TOEFL to apply (we have vouchers!)
Harvard BOAS

• For candidates whose FIRST CHOICE is Harvard

• Graduate Studies Award – Offers one year scholarship and travel stipend. Preference is given to full-degree seeking students with at least one year of professional experience, but this award is open to Visiting Scholars, too.

• Applicants must apply to Harvard and Fulbright at the same time, and they must email a copy of their final Harvard application to fulbright@fulbright.be for consideration during the scholarship selection process.

• Notifications in December and March

• Unsuccessful applicants allowed to re-apply in the spring
Journalism Award

• Earn a journalism degree or research how US journalists approach a certain aspect of the field
• Preference is given to candidates with at least two years of professional experience
• $15,000 or $30,000
NEW: MU Journalism Award

• For mid-career journalists
• Audit any two classes at Missouri journalism school, Participate in guest lectures and round table discussions with students and scholars.
• €3000 /month for 4 months plus money for the flight. University of Missouri’s School of Journalism website

Fulbright
Belgium
Luxembourg
Education
USA
Fulbright Schuman

- Graduate Study, Pre-Doctoral Research, Post-Doctoral Research, or University Lecturing
- Open to all EU citizens whose projects relate to U.S.-EU relations, EU policy, or EU institutions
- Must have minimum of three months experience in two or more Member States
- Preference given to candidates with at least two years of professional experience
- €2,000 travel stipend and €3,000/month
Graduate Studies

- Fulbright Awards
- Boas Scholarships for Harvard
- Ambassador Fox Award
- Ambassador Blinken Award
- Margaret Nicholson Fund
- Fulbright Alumni Association Award
- American Women’s Club of Belgium
- University of Chicago Alumni Award
- Columbia Club of Belgium Award
- Harvard Club of Belgium Scholarship
Grants for MBA

- Liedekerke, Wolters, Waelbroeck & Kirkpatrick Award
- Covington & Burling Award
- Baker & McKenzie Award
- Loyens & Loeff Award
- Skadden Award

Grants for Law (LLM)
Summer Institutes

• For European Student Leaders on Environmental Stewardship
• 6 weeks, all expenses paid
• Young Belgian with no to limited US experience
• Good grades and community involvement
• Apply by late February
Interview Dates January 2016

• Mon., Jan. 25: American applicants (via Skype)
• Tues., Jan. 26: Belgian LLM students, journalists
• Wed., Jan. 27: Other Belgian Students, FLTA and SUSI
• Thurs., Jan. 28: Belgian scholars
• Fri., Jan. 29: Fulbright-Schuman European applicants (via Skype)
• Mon., Feb. 1: Fulbright Schuman American applicants (via Skype)
Internships in the US
Internships

The State Department’s goal in creating the program was to provide a ‘true learning experience’ for international students that will ‘reinforce their academic study’, that is ‘an integral part of [their] ongoing education’, that will enhance their skills ‘through exposure to American techniques, methodologies, and expertise.’

An intern must be a foreign national who is:
(a) currently pursuing a degree outside the US
(b) Has graduated within 1 year of start date
(c) Maximum 1 year
(d) Minimum 32 hours/week
Internships can be paid or unpaid.  
Academic credit is a possibility.  
Could cost between 700-2500 USD to secure a visa.  
- Negotiate covering cost of visa by employer  
Develop expectations AHEAD of time  
All interns must travel to the US on a J-1 visa, no matter how long you will be there.
Step 1: Find a sponsor

- www.J1visa.state.gov
- For business: www.belcham.org
- For politics: www.twc.edu/internships
- For teaching: www.amity.org
- For paid positions: www.intraxinc.com
- CIEE: www.ciee.org
Step 2: Apply for a visa

- [http://belgium.usembassy.gov/applying.html](http://belgium.usembassy.gov/applying.html)
- Original, signed DS-2019 Form
- DS-7002 (Training/Internship Placement Plan)
- DS-160 visa application and receipt
- Proof of financial support
- A passport valid for 6 months past departure

Website for visa questions and appointments: [https://usvisa-info.com/](https://usvisa-info.com/)
Where to begin

1. Search Google using keywords like “internships” plus your academic field
2. Visit the “Jobs/Careers” section on the website of organizations that interest you
3. Call Career Development Offices of U.S. Universities
4. Networking/informational interviews
5. Internship databases like www.internqueen.com
6. Paying your J-1 visa sponsor to find an internship for you
Belgium Initiative

Offers scholarships to Belgian students through the Flemish government

- **The Blinken Award Scholarship** of up to $5,000 for one student coming from Belgium for the summer semester 2016
  - Alan Blinkenman Scholarship
  - Ackermans and Van Haaren Scholarship
  - Leonard and Patrizia Schrank Scholarship
Belgium Initiative

- Artevelde University College Ghent
- Ghent University
- Hasselt University
- Hogeschool-Universitait Brussels
- Howest, University College West Flanders
- University of Leuven-KU Leuven
- University of Antwerp
- Vrije Universiteit Brussels
Other Benefits Washington Semester Program

- Program Components:
  1. Internship
  2. Academic Course
  3. Leadership Forum
  4. Civic Engagement Project
  5. Internship Portfolio
Websites to use

General job sites
- http://www.careerbuilder.com
- http://www.craigslist.org
- http://www.hotjobs.com
- http://www.hound.com
- http://www.indeed.com
- http://www.monster.com

Nonprofit job sites
- http://www.idealista.org
- http://www.opportunitynocks.com
- http://www.philanthropy.com/jobs

Internship and student job sites
- http://www.aboutjobs.com
- http://www.coolworks.com
- http://www.campusinternships.com
- http://www.internjobs.com
- http://www.internships.com
- http://www.internships4you.com
- http://www.internweb.com
Resume Tips

• Your resume must be short - one or two pages at the most.
• Personal contact information at the top – omit pictures, nationality, gender, marital status, etc.
• Proofread: take care with the presentation, design, spaces, and spelling of your resume. Don't use abbreviations.
• Be organized: your resume should be a quick & easy read
• Emphasize sections and things that are important with underlines or bold type.
• Organize in reverse chronological order
Resume Tips

• Write your resume in third person singular form.
• Use action verbs
• Emphasize your skills and achievements without lying.
• Do not attach diplomas or documents unless asked to.

Adapt your resume for each job that you apply to so it best fits the position sought and the company's needs.
Items to Include

- **Education** starting with the last school attended or graduated. Include name of institution, location, degree earned, dates attended, area of study as well as grade point average if it is high. Include thesis title if applicable.

- **Work experience** in chronological order including job title, company name and location, achievements (not duties), and dates of employment.

- **Publications**

- **Scholarships** including the date and funding body.

- **Affiliations**: extracurricular, volunteer work, community involvement and professional activities.

- **Skills**: languages, computer skills, industry specific knowledge

- Only include **interests** that can be points of conversation
Cover Letter

• An American cover letter is an integral part of your job applications. It should refer to your present and future plans, showing your prospective employers what you want to do now and what you will do for them in the future. Adapt each cover letter to fit with the job to which you are applying.

• It should be in the same font and style as your resume.
First paragraph:

• State why you are writing and where you heard about the opening (from a newspaper ad, your school's career center, or somewhere else).

• Indicate that you know something about the company and its excellent work.

• Let them know why you would be a good candidate by highlighting important achievements in past work and the relevant experience you have had.

• Try to engage the reader in the first paragraph. Make your letter stand out!

• Make it personal, don't give the impression that this is a standard letter.
Content

Second paragraph:
• Clarify what position you're interested in.
• Give your reasons for interest in the job.
• Emphasize your qualities that best fit the position.
• Explain why are you interested in working for their company and how can the company benefit from your employment.

Final paragraph:
• Conclude by saying you will call the contact person in the next couple of weeks as a follow up (and then make sure to call them), and express interest in having an interview and state availability.
• Indicate again that you are enthusiastic about the position.
• Finally, remind them how to contact you.
The Interview

• Smile
• Dress professionally
• Maintain eye contact
• Have a firm handshake
• Avoid personal details
• Prepare: be articulate and concise about your knowledge, your wants, and how they align
• Don’t be modest: let them know why you are an asset
• Ask questions
Internship Tips

• Start early!
• Follow instructions
• Adapt your CV/cover letter
• Americanize
• Addressed properly
• Remember who you contacted and when
• Multiple languages
2013, FULBRIGHT / DECEMBER 3, 2013

SHARING STORIES OF EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE: FULBRIGHT BELGIUM ALUMNI AND CURRENT US GRANTEES VISIT RED STAR LINE MUSEUM

READ MORE
MARCH 9, 2014

RECOMMENDATION LETTERS FOR APPLICATIONS TO U.S. UNIVERSITIES

When applying to U.S. graduate schools students need to submit recommendation letters. This video explains: who can write recommendation letters and what they should...

MARCH 8, 2014

HOW TO WRITE A PERSONAL STATEMENT FOR APPLICATION TO U.S. UNIVERSITIES

In this video, you’ll find out what you need to pay attention to when write a personal statement in your application process to universities...

LATEST POSTS
LLM at Georgetown University: Aurélie Kadima
301 views 2 months ago
Aurélie Kadima received an LLM from Georgetown University. In this video, she discusses the effect of doing an LLM in the U.S. on her career and she gives advice to other international students.
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Italy  www.fulbright.it
Luxembourg  http://luxembourg.usembassy.gov/fulbright.html

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Norway  www.fulbright.no
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