INTERNATIONAL STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

Overview & Step by Step Packet

Initial Enrollment Requirements Overview

International students outside the U.S. desiring to attend Charis and receive an **I-20 (Certificate of Eligibility for non-immigrant M-1 student)** must meet the following criteria to be approved:

- Must be proficient in English.
- Abide by the International Student Guidelines and the *Charis Student Handbook.*
- Agree to attend Charis Bible College full-time day school in the Fall Semester – **Starting in the Spring Term is not an option** for international students on an M-1 visa.
- Parent/guardian signatures are required for students under the age of 18
- May not be employed in the US or earn income while attending Charis.
    - This includes internships and most volunteer opportunities.
- Upon completion of the academic year at Charis Bible College you must agree to exit the U.S. and/or return to your country of origin.
- Must meet all financial requirements
    - **Charis Bible College does not offer have any financial aid, sponsorships or scholarships programs.**
- Complete, sign, and submit all required documents.
- Must have a current copy of passport as well as current copy of passports for spouse and/or dependents traveling with you, if applicable.
    - ***Note: All Passports must be current and not expire in the next 6 months.***
        - If a passport is expiring within 6 months of the end of the school year, a copy of the receipt for the passport renewal is required to be submitted as well.
            - SEVP recommends keeping passports current and generally requires passports to be valid for at least 6 months beyond the date of re-entry into the U.S. for international travel.

Requirements to Attend Year 2 or 3 – Continuing students

1. Application and Admission Requirements

All Year 2 and Year 3 students must submit a new application to attend Charis the following year, resubmit all required documents, and follow the same admission process.

Active Charis students may be eligible for admission to the following program year once they have successfully completed all academic requirements for the first semester of their current program year. We do not offer conditional admission to students.

Example: A student currently enrolled in Year 1 may be eligible for admission to Year 2 after successfully completing all academic requirements for the first semester of Year 1. Once the student meets the academic requirements for admission to the following program year, we can process their enrollment and issue a new I-20.

2. Proof of Funds Requirements

When applying for admission to the following program year, students must provide proof of funds to cover both:

- The remaining months of their current school year.
- The full required I-20 amount for the following school year.

Important: Funds for the following school year must be separate from and in addition to the funds required to cover the remainder of the current school year.

Basic living costs are estimated at **$19,900 for 9 months (September–May)**, which equals **$2,211.11 per month**.

Example: If you have 3 months remaining in your current school year, you must show:

- **Remaining current school year:** $6,633.33 (3 months × $2,211.11).
- **Following school year:** The required I-20 amount:
    - Year 2: $28,500.00
    - Year 3: $26,450.00

These funds must be separate from and in addition to the funds required for the remainder of your current school year. This information will be detailed on your financial assurance form.

3. Processing and Issuance of a New I-20

Once all academic, financial, and other admission requirements are met, we will process your enrollment and issue your new I-20 for the following program year right away.

4. SEVIS Fee and Returning to the United States

Before returning to the United States, **you must pay a new I-901 SEVIS fee online before re-entry**.

To pay the SEVIS fee, visit: I-901 SEVIS Fee Payment.

5. M-1 Visa Renewal and Re-entry Requirements

If your M-1 visa requires renewal, you must return to your home country to complete the renewal process.

Even if you hold a five-year visa, you are still required to leave the United States at the end of each academic year and re-enter using your **new I-20** for the new academic year.

Please check with the U.S. Embassy to confirm whether you need to visit the embassy to update your visa with the new SEVIS number assigned to your I-20 for the upcoming program year.

FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR I-20

Why do I Have to Prove Funds?

As an M-1 student, the US government requires you to prove to the **Designated School Official (DSO)** that you have the finances available to support yourself for one academic year before the DSO can issue your I-20. **You are not permitted to work.**

The amount stated is Charis' estimate of how much a student might spend while living in the US for one academic year. Charis reports this number to **SEVP (Student Exchange and Visitor Program),** and SEVP requires students to prove that the funds are available to the student should they need them.

Amount of Funds You Must Prove:

Student Total Base Cost: $25,850.00 USD* - The total cost amount reflects the upfront Advance Pay discount of $250.00 if paid by registration. Listed below are additional costs for Year 2 and Year 3 students.

$5,950.00 Base Tuition must be paid in full prior to the student's arrival into the U.S. (includes upfront Advance Pay discount of $250.00)

- Year 1 Tuition: **$5,950.00**
- Year 2 Tuition: **$8,600.00**
  - $5,950.00 + $2,650.00 for the Mission Trip Fundraising amount**
- Year 3 Tuition: **$6,550.00**
  - Any additional Year 3 trips are self-funded and not included in the above amounts.

***Please see additional financial requirement below for continuing students.**

$19,900.00 Basic Living Cost:

- Rent approximately $1,200.00 monthly
- Groceries are approximately $550.00 monthly
- Amenities are approximately $460.00 monthly

Spouse or Dependent Living Cost(s): $9,900.00 USD (spouse) or $9,900.00 USD (each dependent)

- This cost is for a spouse or each dependent (younger than 21 years) not attending school to cover living expenses.
- Each student applicant must show full proof of funds, even if the spouse is also attending as a student (see Student Total Cost Above)

All amounts include tuition and/or basic living expenses whether you choose on-campus or off-campus accommodations. These amounts are subject to change. These amounts are for a very basic lifestyle needed to support your household during attendance. It does not include the purchase, maintenance, and fuel for an automobile, childcare, health insurance, furniture, or other amenities.

I-20 Amounts:

Year 1 - $25,850.00

- **$19,900.00 - basic living expenses**
- **$5,950.00 - tuition**

Year 2 - $28,500.00 ***Please see additional financial requirement below for continuing students.**

- **$19,900.00 - basic living expenses**
- **$5,950.00 - tuition**
- The above amount includes the **$2,650.00 USD** required for the Year 2 Mission Trip fundraising amount. **

*** The Year 2 mission trip fundraising amount is $2,650.00 USD which is due and must be fundraised or paid by the end of Year 2.* ***Please note that this is not required to be paid on or before Registration Day****. It is included in the $28,500.00 USD total required to show proof of funds for tuition and living expenses. The funds must be either fundraised, sponsored, or raised from the student's personal funds.* Students will receive instruction on methods to raise these funds as part of their Year 2 curriculum.

- ***International students, whether a nonimmigrant visa holder or a green card holder, will complete their mission trip in the United States.***

Year 3 - $26,450.00 ***Please see additional financial requirement below for continuing students.**

- **$19,900.00 - basic living expenses**
- **$6,550.00 - tuition**
    - Any additional year 3 trips are self-funded and not included in the above amounts.

Click here to visit our website for more information on current tuition.

*Continuing students' additional financial requirement:

When applying for admission to the following program year, students must provide proof of funds to cover both:

- The remaining months of their current school year.
- The full required I-20 amount for the following school year.

Important: Funds for the following school year must be separate from and in addition to the funds required to cover the remainder of the current school year.

Basic living costs are estimated at **$19,900 for 9 months (September–May)**, which equals **$2,211.11 per month**.

Example: If you have 3 months remaining in your current school year, you must show:

- **Remaining current school year:** $6,633.33 (3 months × $2,211.11).
- **Following school year:** The required I-20 amount:
    - Year 2: $28,500.00
    - Year 3: $26,450.00

These funds must be separate from and in addition to the funds required for the remainder of your current school year. This information will be detailed on your financial assurance form.

Bringing a Spouse or Dependent Children:

The M visa allows you to bring your spouse or dependent children with you, if the children are younger than 21 years old. The following additional documentation is required:

- Spouse: Spouse's passport.
- Children: Each child's passport.
- You will need to show additional funds for your spouse and each dependent (see current amount in Financial Requirements).

Spouse/dependent Amount of Funds You Must Prove:

For each spouse and/or dependent - $9,900.00 each (to cover living expenses)

Notes:

- If your spouse or child is a US citizen, you do not need to include them in your application.
- **If the spouse or dependent intends to be a student, each applicant must show full proof of funds to attend school. (see above)**

Requirements for Proof of Funds:

- A 60-day consecutive bank statement showing Savings or Checking Account with the required funds for the year. This proof of funds must show that the funds have been in the account for the most recent 60 consecutive days.

Can I use more than one bank statement?

Yes! You can use any combination of bank statements and student sponsorship agreements. We require that they add up to the total amount required for the year, and all bank statements provided must show the most recent 60 consecutive days of activity.

Information Required on Documents*: *Note: All documents must be translated into English!*

Financial documents must be issued by the bank or financial institution and specifically state all of the following:

- Name of the account holder.

    - This must match the name on the Financial Assurance Form and/or International Student Sponsorship Form.
- The date that the account statement was printed must show 60 days of activity with the funds needed to meet the minimum requirement for the year.
- Denomination or currency type of funds in the account: The account doesn't need to be in USD, but the amount needs to be converted to match the minimum required in USD.

Notes:

- The student or responsible person(s) sponsoring the student must complete a Financial Assurance Form (one form per contributor).
- A copy of the bank statement must be attached.

SPONSONSORSHIP INFORMATION

Sponsorship Notes

- The sponsor is required to pay for tuition before your arrival to the U.S. Even if they are showing proof of funds through monthly stipends.
- Charis Bible College does not offer or have any financial aid, sponsorships or scholarships programs.
- If sponsorship is not received, is discontinued, or the sponsor is unable to fulfill the financial commitment, the student will need to secure a new sponsor and provide updated sponsorship details in order to remain compliant and continue as a student.
- Charis Bible College reserves the right to approve/deny a sponsor without explanation.

Sponsored by an Individual

If the bank statement has your father, mother, spouse, or anyone else's name, **that person must fill out and sign the International Student Sponsorship Form AND a Financial Assurance Form.** (one form per contributor)

Sponsored by a Company, Organization or Church

If an organization wants to financially sponsor you to study at Charis, please submit the following documents from that organization. All documents need to be translated into English.

1. Financial Assurance Form:
    a. Ensure the authorized signer signs in the Sponsor section.
    b. Specify the exact amount of financial support, ensuring it matches both the International Student Sponsorship Form and the Sponsorship Letter.
2. International Student Sponsorship Form:
    a. Ensure that the authorized signer completes this form.
    b. Specify the exact amount of financial support, ensuring it matches both the Financial Assurance Form and the International Student Sponsorship Letter.
3. Sponsorship Letter with Company Letterhead:
    a. Student Name.
    b. Promise to pay educational and/or living expenses for a student to study at Charis.
    c. Total amount of money the company is promised to the student.
        i. The amount must match the Financial Assurance Form and International Student Sponsorship Form amounts.
    d. Signed by company authorized signer and dated.
    e. The name of the company letterhead must match the name on the document that proves funds are available. (see Proof of Funds)
4. Proof of Funds:

a. Examples:
    i. Corporate bank statements showing the most recent 60 days of history
        1. Balance must be equal to or greater than the sponsored amount.
        2. No personal accounts accepted (see Sponsored by Individual Section)
    ii. Bank Letter: Showing sponsored amount is reserved for this student's education

5. Proof of Organizational Legitimacy:
    a. Examples:
        i. Articles of Incorporation
        ii. Business-Registration Certificate
        iii. Apostilled with certified English translation
6. Proof of Signer Authorization
    a. Examples:
        i. Board Resolution (template below)
        ii. Incumbency Certificate on letterhead
        iii. Bylaws page listing who can sign
        iv. Power of Attorney
        v. Apostilled with certified English translation

BOARD RESOLUTION TEMPLATE (copy-paste)

[Company Letterhead]

BOARD RESOLUTION

RESOLVED: That [Signer Name], [Title], is authorized to pledge up to USD $XX.XXX for the education of [Student Full Name] at Charis Bible College, including full tuition pre-payment.

FURTHER RESOLVED: These funds are irrevocable and not contingent on employment.

Adopted: [Date]

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

[Position] [Position]

International Admittance Process (Step by Step)

STEP 1: Submit Required International Admissions Documents

Our Fall semester begins **August 24th, 2027, for Year 1 and 2** students and **August 17th, 2027, for Year 3** students. To begin school in the **Spring Term is NOT an option** for international students. Note that the **deadline for international applications is July 1, 2027**, so please ensure that you have enough time to submit all the required documents.

Active Charis students may be eligible for admission to the following program year once they have successfully completed all academic requirements for the first semester of their current program year. We do not offer conditional admission to students.

Example: A student currently enrolled in Year 1 may be eligible for admission to Year 2 after successfully completing all academic requirements for the first semester of Year 1. Once the student meets the academic requirements for admission to the following program year, we can process their enrollment and issue a new I-20.

Once all academic requirements are met, we will process your enrollment and issue your new I-20 for the following year right away.

Once you have filled out all the required documents, you will need to upload them to the application portal. **You will find instructions to upload your documents attached to this email**. They will then be reviewed by the Compliance and Admissions team to determine an admittance decision. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at dso-sco@awmcharis.com.

The following are the **Documents Required** (All documents must be translated into English):

1. Complete & sign the following forms
    - **2. International Student Guidelines**
    - **3. International Student Questionnaire**
    - **4. Financial Assurance Form**
        - **Please complete a separate form for each bank account you are submitting as proof of funds.**
    - **5. International Student Sponsorship Form (if applicable)**
        - **Please complete a separate form for each sponsor who will provide financial support for you.**
        - **For each sponsor, please also complete a separate financial assurance form for every bank account being submitted as proof of funds.**
2. Upload **Proof of Residency**
        - **You must show ties to your home country. Please submit a copy of either official mail, a utility bill, or a lease or rental agreement that**

includes the international address that you provided on your application. If you reside with a family member, they can write a letter stating that you are a resident at that address. A drivers' license, passport or a resident ID card is not an accepted form of proof of residency.

3. Current copy of passport for the applicant and any accompanying family members.
    - ***Note: All Passports must be current and not expire within the next 6 months***
        - If a passport is expiring within 6 months of the end of the school year, a copy of the receipt for the passport renewal is required to be submitted as well.
            - SEVP recommends keeping passports current and generally requires passports to be valid for at least 6 months beyond the date of re-entry into the U.S. for international travel.
4. Upload **Proof of Funds** – Bank Statement from responsible/sponsor party(ies) showing proof of funds during the most recent 60 consecutive days.
5. **Previous education transcript** - **If** applying for **Year 2** – copy of transcripts/certificate for Year 1 from an International Campus, Online Campus, or correspondence.
6. **Previous education transcript** - **If** applying for **Year 3** – Copy of Year 2 Certificate of Completion.

***Please review the financial requirements for the I-20 amounts.**

Note: International students (and their spouse and/or dependent/s) are not permitted to work or earn income while in the United States on an M-1 student visa. Regardless of whether they are working remotely for their home country or earning any other means of income. If the Designated School Official (DSO) learns that a student is working or earning an income while studying here at Charis, they are required to report the violation to SEVIS. Unlawful employment in the United States is a reason for terminating your M-1 status and deporting you from the United States.

STEP 2: Application reviewed by Admissions

Once all your documents have been received and approved by the DSO, the Charis Admissions team will review your application and upon approval, you will receive an email with your official admittance letter to Charis Bible College.

STEP 3: I-20 Issued by DSO

An I-20 is required to request an M1 Student visa from the US Embassy in your country. The admissions team will notify the DSO that you have been admitted to Charis Bible College, and the DSO will issue you a signed I-20 for the Fall 2027-28 school year. Charis serves many international applicants each semester, and I-20's are processed on a first-come-first-served basis.

All Countries EXCEPT Canada and Bermuda:

- After receiving your I-20, you will need to complete the online nonimmigrant visa application (DS-160), available HERE. You will need to fill out a separate application for each person accompanying you. For more information on the DS-160 visa Application, click HERE.
- Pay the SEVIS fee (I-901 form). You must pay the SEVIS fee before going to the United States embassy or consulate for your visa interview, to obtain the M-1 visa, to enter the United States as a student. To learn more and pay the SEVIS fee, click HERE. **(Proof of payment will be required at your interview.)**
- After you have received your I-20 and have paid your SEVIS fee, make an appointment with the American Embassy in your country to get your M-1 visa – click HERE for a list of US Embassy locations in your country. You will want to make the visa appointment as soon as possible, as available appointment times will vary, depending on your country and location.

ONLY for Canada and Bermuda:

An M-1 visa IS required, as well, for Canadians and Bermudans. However, you will not need to apply for an M-1 visa interview. You will still need to obtain an I-20 Certificate of Eligibility from Charis Bible College and submit all required documentation.

- After receiving your I-20, Pay the SEVIS fee (I-901 form). You must pay the SEVIS fee before you travel to the United States. To obtain the M-1 visa at the US border, you must show proof of SEVIS (I-901 form) payment to enter the United States as a student. To learn more and pay the SEVIS fee, click HERE. **(I-20 and Proof of SEVIS payment will be required at the US border.)**
- When crossing the border to begin your studies in the United States, be prepared to answer questions at the US border. You will need to provide the Officer at the port of entry with the following documents:
    - A current passport (not expiring within the next 6 months).
    - The original signed I-20 (or DS-2019) certificate.
    - Proof that the SEVIS fee has been paid.
    - Proof of ability to pay tuition and living expenses in the United States.
    - Proof of ties to your home country.

STEP 4: Preparing for your visa interview:

What Documents to Bring*

1. I-20 from Charis Bible College, signed by applicant and DSO.
2. Your Admittance Letter to Charis Bible College.
3. Valid passport for yourself and all accompanying dependents for at least six months into the future.
4. Receipt for paid I-901 Fee.
5. Proof of current residence.
6. DS-160 visa application confirmation page.

7. Proof of Funds - Evidence of Financial Support proving enough funds for an entire year of studies at Charis Bible College.

*Please refer to the official USCIS website, the Homeland Security site as well as your DS-160 confirmation page for any additional documents that may be required.

What to Prove During Your Interview

Preparation is vital when applying for a student visa. It will be essential for you to communicate to the consulate officer that you wish to return home upon completing your studies at Charis Bible College. To increase your likelihood of being granted a student visa, it is crucial to prove the following during your visa Interview:

1. Prove your primary purpose for obtaining a visa will be to study full-time at Charis as a student.
2. Prove that you have strong ties that bind you to your country of residence (family, house, finances, job/business, etc.). Explain the benefits of your program to your home country.
3. Prove that you have sufficient funds to support yourself (and your family, if applicable) for an entire academic year, while studying at Charis, by providing financial statements.
4. Have a valid passport
    a. Be sure your passport has been issued with more than six months left before its expiration.

STEP 5: Applying for On-Campus Student Housing

Once your visa appointment is in place (if required), you will be able to pay your initial tuition deposit in order to fill out an application for on-campus housing (if interested), using your new Charis student email. More information about on-campus housing is available HERE. The admissions team can also provide you with off-campus relocation resources once you have been admitted and if you are not interested in on-campus housing.

STEP 6: Paying Tuition

Once your visa is approved and you have received your M-1 visa, please send a copy of your visa to the Charis DSO at dso-sco@awmcharis.com. You can then proceed to pay your student tuition **in full**.

- **All International students are required to pay their tuition in full before arriving in the US.** It is highly recommended that you make the payment from your home country, to qualify for the advance pay discount and avoid any bank issues. Without the full payment, you will not be able to register. Non-registration may result in your M-1 visa status being withdrawn and your I-20 being terminated, which will require you to return to your home country immediately. Please check with your bank/card for limits, or fraud protections, that may hinder payment and then contact the Admissions team to pay your tuition.

- **Please note that should you have a sponsor, the sponsor is required to pay tuition in full before your arrival in the USA. Even if they are showing proof of funds through monthly stipends.**
- M-1 visa holders are not permitted to work or volunteer in any work-related capacity — SEVIS regulations strictly prohibit M-1 students from any form of employment or unpaid work that benefits an organization, including internships and volunteering. Unlawful volunteering in the United States is a reason for terminating your M-1 status and deporting you from the United States. This means you are prohibited from applying for internships at Charis.
- You may make monthly payments for on-campus housing and meal plan costs if you are approved to reside in the On-Campus Housing. Please note that this is not included, and these are separate costs to the tuition that are due at registration.
- The Year 2 mission trip fundraising amount is $2,650.00 USD which is due and must be fundraised or paid by the end of Year 2. Please note that this is not required to be paid on or before Registration Day. It is included in the $28,500.00 USD total required to show proof of funds for tuition and living expenses. The funds must be either fundraised, sponsored, or raised from the student's personal funds. Students will receive instruction on methods to raise these funds as part of their Year 2 curriculum.
    - **International students, whether a nonimmigrant visa holder or a green card holder, will complete their mission trip in the United States.**
- Any additional year 3 trips are self-funded and not included in the above amounts.

***Please ensure that all sponsor(s) are aware of these requirements.**

STEP 7: Entering the United States

You may arrive in the United States **no more than 30 days prior** to the start of the semester. The earliest arrival date will be shown on your newly issued I20.

When you enter the United States, you must present the following documents to the officer at the port of entry for yourself and each family member:

1. Form I-20 filled out and signed by the DSO and the student.
2. Admittance Letter from Charis Bible College.
3. Passport with M-1 visa (unless you are a Canadian citizen).
4. Valid passport and M-2 visa for all accompanying family members (if applicable).
5. Financial Assurance Form with attached bank statements.
6. International Student Sponsorship Form with attached bank statements (if applicable).
7. SEVIS I-901 receipt of payment.

When you go through U.S. customs, the inspecting officer will verify and electronically clear your paperwork, stamp the form I-20 and should designate M-1 in writing. The officer will also issue an I-94 form (Department of Homeland Security Departure Record) that is usually electronically filed by the officer. You must always have the I-20 form with you.

STEP 8: Arriving at Charis

The following items must be turned in to the DSO during or prior to registration:

1. Copy of signed I-20 document with student signature.
2. Copy of Passport with M-1 visa and stamp from port of entry.
3. Copy of I-901 payment receipt from SEVIS.
4. Copy of I-94 which is electronically filed **here** and click on "Get most recent I-94". Please print a copy of the form from the website for your DSO.
5. US Address and phone number.

Once these documents have been received, the DSO will enroll the student with SEVIS to confirm their status as an active student.

Note: Students are required to **leave the U.S. within 30 days following the last day of classes**.