

Dear Potential International Student,

Thank you for your interest in College of The Albemarle. There are a number of steps that are necessary in order to become an international student in the United States. Below is information on the process and the expectations we have for students interested in attending COA. **Please note that the information requested must be completed in its entirety before processing of your application can begin.** You can find more detailed information about each step by visiting our international student webpage at: www.albemarle.edu/international-students

Students who are currently in the United States who are interested in attending COA and applying for an F-1 visa from their home country or are interested in applying for a change of status while remaining in the United States should follow the steps listed on below. The steps listed below should be followed in the order listed.

How to become an International Student

Gather International Student

International Students currently in the United States are required to listen to

Interest Information --->

International Student Interest Session powerpoint. Information about the process, steps and requirements is shared with interested students via a voiceover powerpoint. Students must complete the included survey in order to take the placement test and have their application processed.

Apply to COA online ---->

To apply online visit our website (www.albemarle.edu) and select Apply and Register then select Apply Online. Students are required to complete the entire COA application which includes completing the Residency Determination Services part of the application. Once accepted students will be sent an acceptance letter via email. Students should save this letter for future reference. The application is required. International students may enroll in programs that have been approved by the Student Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP). The list of permitted programs is on page 3 of this document. COA also requires a \$50.00 application processing fee be paid prior to submission of your I-20 documentation.

Take the Placement Test ---->

Before COA can issue you an I-20 we have to determine that students meet the minimum English reading and writing requirements. International Students currently in the United States can complete the COA placement test. International students must earn 34 points on the English portion of the test in order to qualify for an I-20. Students are given 2 opportunities to earn the necessary score on the placement test. Students overseas must take the TOEFL or ILETS Academic exam and earn the minimum scores: TOEFL- Internet Based 40, Paper Based 425, Computer Based 120. The ILETS Academic score we accept is a 5 or higher. We only accept the TOEFL, ILETS or the RISE test (the RISE placement test can only be taken

in North Carolina). Once students have earned the required English score on the RISE placement test students will be required to complete RISE math placement test for enrollment purposes.

Complete the I-20 application---->

An I-20 is a certificate of eligibility and is required for all international students seeking to enroll at COA. Students can download the I-20 application from the COA international student webpage: www.albemarle.edu/international-students. The documents required for an I-20 are listed on the I-20 application along with the specific details of each requirement.

Submit your Documentation --->

Once the student has completed the I-20 application and has gathered all the required documentation, students should email their documentation (in 1 email) to a COA designated school official (DSO). Once all the required documentation has been submitted and approved, a college DSO will create the student's Form I-20. Students should allow 1-2 weeks for a Form I-20 to be processed and completed. Once a student's Form I-20 is processed and completed they will be contacted via email. Students can pick up their I-20 or it can be mailed. A Form I-20 cannot be emailed.

Make an appointment --->

Students interested in changing their status should work with their lawyer to submit the proper documentation to United States Customs and Immigration Services. Students seeking to return home should make an appointment with the US Embassy once they return to their home country.

Programs permitting F-1 International Student enrollment (as of January 2020)

Associate Degree Nursing
Associate in Arts
Associate in Engineering
Associate in Fine Arts (theatre)
Associate in Fine Arts (visual arts)
Associate in General Education
Associate in Science
Associate in Applied Sciences- Business Administration
Associate in Applied Sciences- Global Business
Associate in General Occupational Technology
Professional Crafts Jewelry
Agribusiness Technology
Health and Fitness Science
Aviation Systems Technology

Computer Aided Drafting technology
Healthcare Business Informatics
Medical Assisting
Medical Laboratory Technology
Medical Office Administration
Surgical Technology
Human Services Technology



International Student Information Packet

The Process to Become an International Student

Thank you for your interest in our College! We have over 60 international students on our campuses representing 26 different countries. Before we can assist you in creating the necessary immigration forms you must complete the steps below and gather the necessary documents. Students should consult the COA international student webpage for more information: www.albemarle.edu/international-students or contact international_students@albemarle.edu

<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>International Student Interest Session</u> Find out what we have to offer, the program options that exist for international students, the options and steps to obtain an F-1 student visa and the documents required. Students should listen to the PowerPoint presentation for more information and complete the survey at the end.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Apply for Admission</u> Our application is located on our website: www.albemarle.edu/students/admissions . For more information on the application see page 3 of this form. Students who have not attended COA for one year prior to the semester they plan to enroll in must re-apply for admission. Student's must submit a \$50.00 application processing fee. More information is included in this document. Contact international_students@albemarle.edu with questions.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Create your Placement Testing Account & Take the Placement Test</u> International students must show English Language competencies in order to qualify for a Form I-20. Students currently outside the United States should take the TOEFL or IELTS Academic Test and earn the required scores. Students currently in North Carolina, USA can take the College placement test in lieu of the TOEFL or IELTS. The college placement test is free and international students have 2 opportunities to earn the necessary score. Placement test scores for international students are good for 10 years. For more information see page 2 of this document. Contact international_students@albemarle.edu to set up placement testing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Gather Necessary Documents</u> The required documents are listed on the next page. Students should submit all their documents via email at one time. More information on required documentation is included in this packet of information.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Submit your documentation</u> Students can email their documentation to an Admissions DSO at international_students@albemarle.edu . Once all the proper documentation has been submitted a Form I-20 will be created within 1-2 weeks. Students should submit all their documentation via email at one time. Once created, the student's Form I-20 will be emailed to the student.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Return home for an F-1 visa or Complete the Change of Status Paperwork</u> Students seeking to return home for an F-1 visa will return home with their I-20 and will be required to make an appointment with the US Embassy. Students seeking a change of status should contact a licensed immigration attorney to complete the change of status paperwork a change of status. All students must pay their SEVIS (I-901) fee once their I-20 has been created. To pay a SEVIS fee visit: https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.html

Detailed Application Information

International Students interested in attending COA must first complete a college admissions application.

To apply:

- ⇒ go to www.albemarle.edu and select Apply & Register
- ⇒ Click Online Application listed towards the bottom of the page
- ⇒ Select New User and create a log in account
- ⇒ Once you have created an account, complete the COA Application
- ⇒ Be sure to complete the RDS part of the application
- ⇒ Click Submit when finished

After completing their application students will be sent an email with their acceptance letter, student identification number and user name. Students should save this information.

More about RDS

RDS stands for Residency Determination Service and is how the state of North Carolina (NC) determines if a student is a resident of the state. International students are not able to be North Carolina residents but still must complete the RDS part of the application.

To get an RDS/Residency Number

When filling out the COA application there will be a page of the application that asks for an RDS or Residency Number. To get a number please click the RDS link in the text. Students will be taken to a different page and will be asked to verify their information and answer a number of questions. Students should answer that they are not US citizen and an RDS number will be provided. Student will then return to the COA application to complete and submit their application.

Processing Fee

International students are required to pay a \$50.00 admissions application processing fee. Students can pay the fee in person at any campus location using cash or credit card. Students can also pay via mail using a money order or over the phone using a credit card. Students currently overseas should submit a money order via mail to the address provided on page 4 of this document. Students should not mail cash or credit card information.

International Student Applications will not be processed until the \$50.00 admissions application processing fee is submitted. Students may submit the payment when they submit their I-20 application. Students who paid prior should submit a copy of their receipt showing payment of the fee. A student's application must be completely processed in order to be issued a Form I-20.

Placement Testing Information

International Students are required to demonstrate English Language skills in order to qualify for a Form I-20. Students currently outside the US can take the TOEFL or the IELTS Academic test and earn the necessary score. Students currently in the US can take the College English Placement test to demonstrate their Language skills.

TEST OPTIONS AND REQUIRED SCORES

TOEFL Scores– Computer Based (120), or Internet Based (40) or Paper based (425)
IELTS Academic– 5 or Above

College Placement Test– 34 points or above.

The College English placement test is not timed and is free to students. All students are given 2 opportunities in a 10 year period to earn the required score. Students unable to earn the required score should return home and take the TOEFL or IELTS Academic test.

To Create a Placement Testing Account

- ⇒ Complete the Information Session Survey and apply to COA.
- ⇒ Contact international_students@albemarle.edu to request a testing Form. Please share the campus where you want to take the placement test. Forms are valid for 1 month,
- ⇒ Access the form sent to you via email, create and activate placement test account. This should be completed prior to arrival at the College.
- ⇒ Remember the log in name & password you created To see the placement testing locations and times;
<https://www.albemarle.edu/wp-content/uploads/testing-center-hours.pdf>

☑ Checklist For F-1 Visa**Documentation**

- ☐ A completed COA I-20 application, students must apply to COA by completing an online application.
- ☐ Proof of English Language Competencies. Please review page 2 of this document for more information on the options that exist for the requirement,
- ☐ International Student Application processing fee of \$50.00 must be submitted before your COA application will be completely processed. Students can pay using credit card or pay in cash (at COA). Students currently overseas should submit a money order via the mail.
- ☐ Copy of student's passport ~ students passport must be valid for 6 months beyond the date of submission of documents. Students should update their passport if necessary
- ☐ Letter from a student's sponsor which states they are "willing to help the student financially" for their ENTIRE length of studies. Sample letter can be found on the bottom of this page. If student is self-sponsoring, he/she should write a letter indicating this. A US business can not serve as an F-1 visa sponsor as it may give the impression that the student would work for that business while an F-1 student.
- ☐ Sponsor Bank statements consisting of the three most recent months of bank statements on official bank stationery showing that the sponsor has an ending balance of at least \$23,000 for each month. If the documentation is from a bank overseas the money must be "translated" to the US dollar. The money does not need to be officially converted to the dollar but the statements and the information must be translated to English and shown in the US dollar. More details on the financials can be found on our website.
- ☐ High School transcripts in your native language and officially translated to English. If you have attended University those transcripts are also required. We must have proof that you have graduated from High School and must have a transcript of the classes you have taken at your University.
- ☐ Copy of I-94 card ~ For Students Currently in the United States) An I-94 can be printed by visiting the following website: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/consent.html>
- ☐ Copy of student's valid visa ~ Students seeking a change of status should apply while they still have a valid J-1 or B Visa or are within their valid travel period.
- ☐ Completed COA Form I-20 application
- ☐ Students seeking a change of status should submit a signed F-1 Status Agreement Form with their packet

College of The Albemarle Designated School Officials (DSO's)**Admissions DSO's**

Admissions DSO's provide information about the process, evaluate documentation and create the initial Form I-20 for potential international students.

- ♦ Margie Holley * margie_holley14@albemarle.edu
(252) 335-2011 (ext. 2290) *COA-Elizabeth City*
- ♦ John Hunting * john_hunting07@albemarle.edu
(252) 335-2011 (ext. 2220) *COA-Elizabeth City*
- ♦ Have questions? International_students@albemarle.edu

Academic and International Student Advisors (DSO'S)

Advising DSO's will work with students after their initial I-20 has been created and is responsible for maintaining student records in SEVIS and enrolling students in COA courses.

- ♦ Brie Barclift * brianna_barclift49@albemarle.edu
(252) 335-2011 (ext. 2281) *COA-Elizabeth City*
- ♦ Judith Aiello * judith_aiello42@albemarle.edu
(252) 473-2264 (ext. 7012) *COA-Dare*
- ♦ Have questions? Contact a DSO!

Transcript Translations and Transferring Credits

COA requires your high school and university transcripts in your native language as well as an English translation of each. The transcripts are used for admitting you to the College, and for that purpose, we will accept your own English translation of your high school documents. All university transcript should be translated to English by an official translation service. We recommend you use translation services in your home country as it is generally quicker and more time efficient. Evaluation services typically cost \$70-\$200 depending on the company and the type of evaluation requested.

If you would like for any of your University courses to be considered for transfer credit to COA, then you must hire an agency to translate and evaluate your transcript.

All evaluations must be received by COA directly from the evaluating agency at the following address:

College of The Albemarle,
Attention: Registrar's Office
P.O. Box 2327
Elizabeth City, NC 27906-2327.

Translation/ Evaluation Agencies

- ◆ Please contact a n Admissions DSO for a list of Translation and Evaluation Agencies.
- ◆ Evaluations are only required for students seeking to be awarded credit for courses taken internationally. COA requires an evaluation by an outside agency for international courses.
- ◆ Students are required to have University transcripts translated, students are able to use a translation agency.

What exactly is a Sponsor?

The term sponsor can be confusing because it has 2 different meanings for international students taking classes at a community college in North Carolina. All international students must have an **F1 visa sponsor**. These sponsors are individuals that assisted a student in becoming an F-1 student by writing a letter of sponsorship to the US Government. These sponsors also

Provide bank statements to show they have the cost of attendance in a bank account for each of the last 3 months (cost of attendance is \$23,000).

A **North Carolina Non Profit sponsor** is a sponsor available to international students studying at COA that allows the student to qualify for in-state tuition. A nonprofit

sponsor is different from an F1 sponsor & can change from semester to semester. Once a non profit sponsor letter is received the students balance is transferred from their account to the account of the listed sponsor. Sponsors must be approved by the college and must provide documentation. More information will be shared with students prior to registering for classes at COA.

Sample Sponsor Letter

Date

Dear Immigration Official :

This letter verifies that I will sponsor (name of student) while s/he studies at the College of the Albemarle for their entire length of studies. (In the next 1-2 sentences explain you know this student & why you want to sponsor them). Attached please find my most recent bank statements (last three consecutive months) which show that I have in excess of \$23,000 in my bank account. (If these funds replenish please note that).

Sincerely,

Sponsor signature

Sponsor Name

Tips for Students Seeking a Change of Status

Students interested in seeking a change of status are encouraged to write a letter to USCIS to submit with their COS request. We recommend you share the reasons why you would like to stay in the United States to study and how this educational opportunity will assist you when you return home. Since an F-1 visa is a non immigrant visa USCIS officials will want to know of your plans to return home. Be prepared to explain how a US education will benefit you in your home country. If you have attended a university at home you will want to let officials know how it benefits you to study in the US verses continuing your studies at home.

Students with multiple J-1 jobs will need to provide proof that their additional jobs were approved by their J-1 sponsor organization.

Tips for students going Home

Students who return home for an F-1 visa will have a limited time to share valuable information with the State Department official. Generally students are asked only 2-3 question and should be prepared to share their ties to their home country during the interview process. Students should be able to demonstrate a tie to home via property ownership, a future job, etc. Students will also want to know how the program they are planning on completing and how it fits their career plans. Since F-1 visa holders are not permitted to work students will want to be able to clearly explain their plans to return home at the end of their studies.

Please notify the DSO at COA if approved or denied. Students who are denied can ask COA to defer their acceptance for a future date.



Tips for Paying the Application Processing Fee

International Students are required to pay a \$50.00 Admissions Application Processing Fee in order to have their admissions application processed. This fee can be paid 3 different ways. Students should review the options below and select the option that best suite their situation.

Pay In Person

Students currently in the US/North Carolina can pay in person at our Elizabeth City or Dare Campus sites. To pay in person, students should bring their completed Admissions Application Processing form and their method of payment to their campus of choice.

Students will go to the Business Office at their respective campus to complete payment. Students should ask for a receipt for their records.

Please check the hours of operation to determine when COA-Elizabeth City and COA-Dare are open.

Pay over the Phone

Students wishing to pay over the phone should:

1. Complete the form and return it via email to the DSO assisting you. Your DSO will email this to an available Business Office representative.
2. The DSO will notify the student who to call and will provide you with a phone number. Students should call the number provided and have your payment method (credit or debt) available.
3. The Business office will process the student's payment and will email the student a receipt upon payment. Please allow 1 business day for a receipt to be emailed.

4. The student will submit a copy of the receipt with their I-20 application and documentation.

Pay by Mail

Student's currently outside of the US can pay by phone or by mail. Students wishing to mail in their payment may do so. Students should send a money order to the address on the Application Processing Fee Form and include payment and the form. Upon its arrival, a DSO will notify you that payment has been received.

Students with questions about the Application Process Fee should review the included Application Processing Form and instruction sheet. Students can also contact an Admissions DSO with questions.