

2004

International Notes for Students

Thousands of international students choose Canadian universities as a stepping-stone towards a promising career. Each year, Canadian universities welcome foreign students from around the world to a wide variety of educational settings.

Taken together, Canada's universities offer a tremendous range of choices – large and small, English, French or bilingual, in cities, small towns or reaching out through the Internet.

Large universities provide a full spectrum of undergraduate, graduate and professional degree programs. Canada also offers the intimacy and personal attention of small, undergraduate colleges. Still other universities offer specialized education in fields such as business, engineering, art and design or agriculture.

The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada represents Canadian public and private not-for-profit universities and university-degree level colleges, at home and abroad. This leaflet answers the commonly-asked questions regarding admission requirements, application procedures, tuition, other costs, financial assistance, degree recognition, housing and a variety of other subjects. More detailed information is published each year in the *Directory of Canadian Universities*. For more information on this publication, please see the section entitled "Where do I find information?"

AM I QUALIFIED TO STUDY IN CANADA?

Each university has its own entrance requirements and will assess you on an individual basis. The university will determine the equivalency of your academic credentials. There is no nationwide set of entrance exams. For more details about this or any other part of the application process, contact the registrar at the university you wish to attend.

Visit the AUCC's
Web site at
www.aucc.ca

While Canada has no formal system of institutional accreditation, membership in AUCC, coupled with a provincial charter, is deemed generally the equivalent. For specific details on degree recognition, please consult with your country's educational authorities or the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials. CICIC acts as a referral service to support the recognition and portability of Canadian and international educational and occupational qualifications. They assist individuals on how to have their credentials assessed and recognized in Canada by referring them to the appropriate institutions and organizations for specific assistance. Contact: CICIC, 95 St. Clair Ave. W., Suite 1106, Toronto ON M4V 1N6 Canada, Tel: 416-962-9725, Fax: 416-962-2800 or visit www.cicic.ca/evaluation/indexe.stm

HOW DO I APPLY?

To study at a Canadian university, you must first be accepted in a program of study by a recognized Canadian university. Secondly, you must apply for a study permit at your nearest Canadian diplomatic post. You may also need a visitor's visa, which will be issued to you at the same time as your study permit.

It is best to apply early, as processing of a study permit usually takes one or two months. There is a processing charge of \$125 Cdn (approximately \$85 US) for one person. If you plan to study in the province of Quebec you must pay another \$100 Cdn for a Certificat d'acceptation du Québec. There is no fee for a visa when it is issued with a study permit.

Generally, international students should apply to a Canadian university up to eight months in advance. Some universities have application deadlines as late as June for a September start date. Typical entry points for international students are the September and January semesters. However, many universities have adopted a procedure of "rolling-admissions" which means that they consider international students' applications as they come in throughout the year. However, for graduate programs in particular, it can take time to ensure you are matched with the right faculty adviser, and you should ensure that you apply early.



Calendars with course descriptions, admission requirements and procedures, costs and scholarships are available from the registrar at each university and are usually also accessible through the university's Web site.

Engineering, optometry, medicine, veterinary medicine, law, and dentistry are fields where the first professional degree is considered an undergraduate program. There is a great deal of academic competition for these spaces and most universities have limits or quotas on the number of qualified applicants admitted each year. A high level of academic achievement is required for admission. Often at least two years of undergraduate study in a related field are required before you can be admitted to the first professional degree program. Check the university calendar to identify tests such as LSAT (law) or DAT (dentistry) that may also be required. See the application process for undergraduate programs above.

**Visit
the *Directory of
Canadian Universities*
on line at
[www.aucc.ca/can_uni/
index_e.htm](http://www.aucc.ca/can_uni/index_e.htm)**

Distance education programming at Canadian universities includes courses – and in some cases complete programs – taught over the Internet or through other methods such as correspondence, teleconferencing, audio tapes, cable television broadcasts and computer conferencing. Three AUCC members – Athabasca University, British Columbia Open University and

Télé-université – offer all of their programs by distance education. Some universities restrict the acceptance to students residing in Canada for distance education. Verify with the continuing education office or registrar about restrictions for students not residing in Canada.

WHERE DO I FIND INFORMATION?

You may want to consult the *Directory of Canadian Universities* (DCU). Published by AUCC, the DCU is the official guide to Canada's universities. The directory provides institutional profiles and includes information about admission requirements, tuition fees, campus facilities and housing. The directory features an index to more than 10,000 undergraduate and graduate programs. The print version of the DCU can be purchased from AUCC. The online version of the directory can be accessed at no charge at www.aucc.ca/can_uni/index_e.htm

In addition to the DCU online, the AUCC Web site offers a host of other information about Canadian universities, including links to member Web sites. On university sites you will find lots of useful information such as the latest academic calendar, which provides detailed course descriptions, information regarding admission requirements and scholarships.

You can also write to the universities specifying your planned field of study. The registrar's office at each institution will be able to provide you with information about undergraduate degrees. If you anticipate pursuing postgraduate studies in Canada you may obtain more information by contacting the dean of graduate studies at the universities that interest you.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A UNIVERSITY AND A COLLEGE?

Universities are educational institutions attended after at least 12 years of school, or after secondary school, for studies leading to a degree and research. All 93 member universities of AUCC offer three or four year bachelor degree programs; most offer one to two year master's degrees and a number also offer doctoral or PhD programs. Some universities are called colleges, and a few are called institutes, university colleges, or schools.

**Visit the AUCC's
Web site at
www.aucc.ca**

Community colleges are two-year institutions that offer technical or vocational courses, or courses for transfer to a university, leading to a certificate or diploma. Community colleges do not generally offer degree programs. Contact: Association of Canadian Community Colleges, 1223 Michael St. N., Suite 200, Ottawa ON K1J 7T2 Canada. Tel: 613-746-2222, Fax: 613-746-6721, or visit www.accc.ca

IS FINANCIAL AID POSSIBLE?

There are a growing number of Canadian universities that offer entrance scholarships for international students. You can get scholarship information from the financial aid offices of the universities.

You should also contact the ministry of education in your home country for information on scholarships for study in Canada.

You may also order the free booklet *Awards for Study in Canada* from the Canadian Bureau for International Education, 220 Laurier Ave. W., Suite 1100, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1P 5Z9, Tel: 613-237-4820, Fax: 613-237-1073, or visit www.destineducation.ca/intstdnt/awards-1_e.htm

WHAT ARE THE ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS?

You do not have to speak both English and French to study at a Canadian university – however, you will have to show proficiency in one, depending on the university where you apply. Most English universities require a score of at least 550 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or a score of 60 on the Canadian Academic English Language (CAEL) assessment. Canadian French-language universities usually assess applicants on a case-by-case basis. To find out the language requirements of a specific university, check with its registrar's office.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO EARN A DEGREE?

Depending on the province, a bachelor's or undergraduate degree takes either three or four years to complete. In provinces that grant three-year bachelor degrees, students must complete an additional year to obtain an honours degree. In some provinces, the fourth year is not necessary, but all honours programs require a high level of achievement and concentration in the subject. An honours degree is generally a prerequisite for admission into graduate studies.

A master's degree usually requires at least one year of full-time study (after an honours degree) and includes a thesis, practicum or a research paper. A doctoral degree, or PhD, requires at least three years of additional full-time study, with at least one year on campus. In most cases, a master's degree is required before admission into a doctoral program, but some universities will accept students who have completed an honours degree.

WILL MY DEGREE BE RECOGNIZED?

A degree from a Canadian university is recognized around the world and is usually equivalent to an American degree or a degree from another Commonwealth country. Professional and specialized programs such as medicine, nursing and engineering are accredited by reliable and reputable agencies. Current and new academic programs are regularly reviewed by provincial, institutional or regional bodies to ensure quality standards.

WHAT HOUSING IS AVAILABLE?

Most universities offer the option to live on campus either in residences designated for international students or in residences generally available to all students on campus. However, acceptance at a Canadian school does not always automatically secure accommodation in a residence. Students need to apply separately for on-campus housing. Information on housing, both on- and off-campus, is available from the housing office or the international student adviser at most universities.

WHAT ARE THE TUITION FEES?

Tuition fees for international students vary from province to province and may vary based on your field of study. The table (below) shows the range of tuition fees for each province. Fees are in Canadian dollars.

Please remember that you must also budget for books, instruments, student activity fees, food, housing, travel/ transportation, health care, clothing, laundry and entertainment.

AM I QUALIFIED FOR WORK IN CANADA?

Full-time international students may work on campus without obtaining a work permit. For example, you may work at your university's library without a work permit. Graduate or research work completed at facilities associated with your institution (such as hospitals) meets the definition of "on-campus".

International students can apply for a work permit if a work placement is an essential and integral part of their program of study. Students have the opportunity to combine academic study with work experience by spending one term on campus followed by another term of full-time work at a job related to the field of study. Check with the university whether there are any restrictions for international students to participate in co-op programs.

Some graduating students may apply to work in Canada for up to one year after graduation. In order to be eligible, you must be engaged in full-time studies at a post-secondary institution authorized by provincial statute to confer degrees, have a job offer from

Tuition Fees * (\$CDN) for International Students

Province	Undergraduate	Graduate
British Columbia	\$4,462 - \$15,870	\$2,272 - \$17,499
Alberta	\$6,293 - \$11,078	\$5,298 - \$19,200
Saskatchewan	\$7,779 - \$10,890	\$5,313
Manitoba	\$4,940 - \$6,900	\$3,759 - \$9,685
Ontario	\$6,900 - \$16,204	\$5,432 - \$29,000
Quebec	\$9,168 - \$10,518	\$8,268 - \$20,000
New Brunswick	\$7,063 - \$10,720	\$5,610 - \$8,465
Nova Scotia	\$8,520 - \$12,480	\$4,329 - \$15,000
Prince Edward Island	\$7,510	\$6,100
Newfoundland	\$7,260	\$1,896 - \$3,459

* 2003-2004 fees in Canadian dollars for general arts programs. Source: Statistics Canada

an employer for a job that is related to your field of studies, and have a valid study permit when you apply for a work permit within 90 days of graduation. For more details, please consult the Post-Graduation Employment section of the *Foreign Worker Manual* prepared by *Citizenship and Immigration Canada* at www.cic.gc.ca/manuals-guides/english/fw/fwe.pdf.

The Canadian government is gradually introducing pilot projects allowing international students to work for an additional year after graduation, therefore gaining a total of two years of work experience in their field of study. The provinces of New Brunswick and Alberta are the first to implement this pilot project. For more information, please consult www.cic.gc.ca/english/press/03/0308-pre.html and www.cic.gc.ca/english/press/03/0341-pre.html.

Currently, most international students in Canada can not work off campus. However, also on a pilot-project basis, the government of Canada is allowing some international students in Manitoba to work off-campus while studying. Full-time international students who have completed one year of study at a publicly-funded post-secondary institution in Manitoba may apply for a work permit to work for a maximum of 20 hours a week while studying. Further details are available at www.cic.gc.ca/english/press/03/0346-pre.html.

WHAT ARE THE MEDICAL AND IMMIGRATION REQUIREMENTS?

You will have to arrange for medical coverage before you arrive in Canada. Medical coverage varies from province to province and sometimes from university to university within each province.

Please contact your closest Canadian diplomatic post for more detailed information about working in Canada, and medical and immigration requirements (www.cic.gc.ca).

The provinces of Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan cover international students under their provincial health care plans, while Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island and Quebec do not cover international students.

International students planning to study in one of these provinces must arrange for private medical coverage through private insurance companies.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

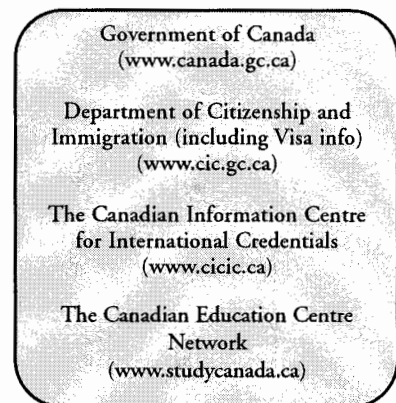
The AUCC Web site includes a database entitled, Canadian University International Exchanges Agreements, which contains information on international exchange agreements between Canadian universities and foreign institutions. AUCC's Canadian University Projects in International Development database (www.aucc.ca/publications/database/index_e.html) contains information on projects where Canadian universities work with counterparts in the developing world to strengthen faculties, laboratories, etc.

The Canadian Association for University Continuing Education maintains an online directory in collaboration with the Ontario Council for University Lifelong Learning (OCULL) called *The Online Canadian University Distance Education Directory* with information on its distance education program and courses. Contact: Elizabeth A. Clarke & Associates, 329 March Rd, Suite 232, PO Box 11, Kanata, ON K2K 2E1 Canada, Phone: 613-271-1095, Fax: 613-599-7027, or visit www.cauce-aeupuc.ca

The Canadian Virtual University (www.cvu-uvc.ca) is a partnership of 10 universities across Canada, committed to delivering 250 university-level programs that can be completed from anywhere in the country or beyond.

The Association of Canadian Medical Colleges sells a booklet entitled *Admission Requirements of Canadian Faculties of Medicine* which includes a section on admission for foreign students. Information: ACMC, 774 Echo Dr., Ottawa ON K1S 5P2 Canada, Tel: 613-730-0687, Fax: 613-730-1196 or visit www.acmc.ca

For more information on Canada and Canada's education system visit the following Web sites:



For information about short-term, intensive or immersion programs in English and French as a second language, contact The Council of Second Language Programs in Canada, P.O. Box 53063, Ottawa ON K1N 1C5 Canada, e-mail: info@cslp.com or visit www.cslp.com

The *Universities Telephone Directory* provides access to 8,000 university administrators and senior academics at all AUCC member universities. Updated and verified annually, each listing includes name and title, plus current telephone, fax and e-mail information searchable by institution or the alphabetical index of names.

University Affairs (www.universityaffairs.ca) is the most relied-upon source of higher education news and information in Canada. Timely and balanced, it provides informed opinions on the latest trends and issues shaping our campuses. Covering the university scene for nearly 45 years, *University Affairs* is also the country's largest source of career advertising aimed at the academic community.