

# Admission Requirements for International Students



This pamphlet describes opportunities and requirements at College of San Mateo for international students (F-1 visa) planning a temporary stay in the United States for the purpose of college study. Detailed information about the educational programs, services, and facilities of the College is contained in the *CSM Catalog*, available on campus, by mail, and for viewing on the Web at [collegeofsanmateo.edu/catalog](http://collegeofsanmateo.edu/catalog). The web site ([collegeofsanmateo.edu/international](http://collegeofsanmateo.edu/international)) contains additional information of interest to potential international students.

Mail order cost of the *CSM Catalog*, including international mail postage: US \$20.00. Cost of the catalog, including domestic postage within the United States: US \$5.00. To order the *CSM Catalog* by mail, send a letter with payment by check, domestic or international money order (no cash or stamps) to:

College of San Mateo Bookstore  
1700 West Hillsdale Boulevard  
San Mateo, CA 94402 USA

## International Student Admission

Applicants must file complete applications and academic credentials before April 15 to be considered for priority admission to the Fall Semester, which begins in mid-August, and before October 15 to be considered for priority admission to the Spring Semester, which begins in mid-January. Applications received after these dates will be considered individually. Early deadlines are necessary to ensure time for processing and for the admitted applicant to make arrangements to arrive in time for the required New Student Orientation Program.

## Required Application Documents

**No application fee required.**

- **Application for Admission:** Government regulations require that each student personally complete the application.
- **Financial Data Form:** This important document must be submitted with verification of funds.
- **Personal Essay:** An essay about yourself that will give the selection committee a more complete picture of you. (Refer to the application form.)
- **English Proficiency:** Proof of English proficiency is required of all applicants for whom English is a second language. The following proofs are acceptable:
  1. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) - A minimum qualifying score on the iBT TOEFL is 56 (iBT is Internate-based TOEFL). The minimum qualifying score on the paper-based TOEFL is 480, with no sectional scores below 48.
  2. International English Language Testing System (IELTS)- The minimum qualifying level is Band 5.
  3. Students who have completed four years at a U.S. high school or who have completed the highest levels at selected intensive English institutes may not be required to present test results. (See Application Instructions for details.)
- **Official Documents:** These include all academic records and marks sheets. A copy of secondary school records and records of all post-secondary study are required. Applicants should have their documents translated into English and certified by an authorized official before submitting them.

Applicants should note that their application **will not be processed** until **all** required documents have been received in the International Student Center.

## Financial Requirements

The Financial Data Form must certify that financial obligations will be assumed by the student, a parent, or a reputable sponsor or organization while the student is attending College of San Mateo. In addition, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and College of San Mateo require each applicant to submit a *bank verification of funds*.

## Scholarships and Financial Aid

College of San Mateo offers scholarships that will be granted on student's financial need and academic achievements. International students may apply for the scholarships at the start of their second semester. **Financial aid is not available for international students.**

## Evaluation

Applicants must be able to prove completion of at least the United States equivalency of secondary school. Because of the significant handicaps which must be faced by international students (nostalgia, dietary changes, use of non-native language, cultural differences), grades of "B" or higher in academic subjects are normally required for admission.

## Expenses

International students need at least US \$17,000 per academic year to cover school and living expenses. Excluding all travel expenses, around US \$8,600 per semester is required. Additional funds must be available for those who plan to remain in the United States during the summer.

For newly accepted international students, College of San Mateo will issue a SEVIS *Certificate of Eligibility* after a deposit of US \$500 is received. This deposit is credited toward the first semester tuition. All other College fees are due and payable at the time of registration.

Expenses are *estimated* as follows:

	<u>Semester</u>	<u>Year</u>
Tuition (12 units @ \$200 per unit)	\$ 2,400	\$ 4,800
Medical Insurance	325	650
Enrollment Fee (12 units @ \$26 per unit)	312	624
Books and Supplies	300	600
Local Public Transportation	200	400
Room/Food (minimum)	5,000	10,000
Miscellaneous	250	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 8,787</b>	<b>\$ 17,574</b>

Fees are subject to change. College of San Mateo will not accept personal checks or bank drafts for amounts which exceed tuition expenses and other normal fees payable to the College. Under no circumstances will College of San Mateo accept or disburse funds to a student for personal expenses.

## International Student Health Insurance

All F-1 visa international students are required to have accident and health insurance each year in order to be eligible to register for classes. International students must be prepared to pay for the International Student Health Insurance Plan (\$325 per semester) or present proof of a personal health insurance plan valid in California with at least US \$50,000.00 of coverage. An optional dental insurance plan is also available.

## Housing

College of San Mateo has no on-campus housing. Students usually rent apartments (either singly or with other persons), or rent a room in the home of an American family.

**Apartment:** Cost ranges from \$950 (studio) to \$1,400 (two bedrooms) per month, unfurnished. The cost of gas, electricity, and telephone is additional. A security (damage) deposit of one month's rent is usually required as well as a cleaning fee (about \$100) which may not be refunded.

**Room:** Cost ranges from \$600 to \$750 per month. This usually includes all utilities and kitchen privileges. Telephone expenses are extra. Students must cook their own meals.

The International Student Center maintains a file of off-campus, privately owned living accommodations, and will provide access to the housing list after students arrive in San Mateo.

## Work Regulations

**Off-Campus Employment:** An F-1 visa international student is **not permitted to work off-campus for a wage or salary** or to engage in a business while in the U.S. unless permission has first been granted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. This permission is given only under very restricted conditions.

**On-Campus Employment:** International students are eligible to work on campus with special permission for a maximum of 20 hours per week if they maintain satisfactory progress in their college work and are enrolled as a full-time student (12 units each semester). This is only if work on-campus is available.

**Important Note:** Any F-1 visa international student who works *off-campus* without permission risks the loss of student status and **may be deported** by the U.S. government.

## To Apply for Admission

Be sure to **read this entire pamphlet** very carefully. Note the deadline dates for receipt of applications. Then, if you wish to apply for admission as an international student, you can fill out the application form and return it, together with all required supporting documents, to:

International Student Center  
College of San Mateo  
1700 West Hillsdale Boulevard  
San Mateo, CA 94402 USA  
Telephone: (650) 574-6525  
Telecopier (FAX): (650) 574-6166

## Passport and Visa

After an application and other necessary documents are submitted and an applicant is officially notified of acceptance by College of San Mateo, a SEVIS Certificate of Eligibility will be issued by the College upon receipt of a US \$500 deposit which will be applied to the first semester's tuition. The deposit is refundable if the student cannot attend the College.

The SEVIS Certificate of Eligibility (pages 1 & 3) will be scanned and reviewed by the Bureau of Immigrations & Customs Enforcement (BICE) upon the student's arrival at the first U.S. port of entry and returned to the student.

The SEVIS Certificate of Eligibility (pages 1 & 3) must be kept by the student.

A Form I-94 will be attached to your passport; the number on your Form I-94 is known as the "INS Admission Number." All immigration papers are of prime importance; keep them in a safe place.

## Arrival at College of San Mateo

Each new international student must plan to arrive at College of San Mateo in time to attend the Orientation Program. Orientation generally occurs in July for the Fall Semester and December for the Spring Semester. Early arrival is necessary to provide adequate time to locate housing, become familiar with the area, and take the English and mathematics placement tests.

The International Student Center staff is available to assist you in areas of immigration regulations, personal and academic counseling, local living conditions, and housing needs. Please feel welcome to contact the Center as soon as you arrive in the area. The Center is located in the Administration Building (Bldg. 1), Room 263. Office hours are Monday through Friday from 8 am to 12 pm, and from 1 pm to 4:30 pm. Email: skaff@smccd.edu. Telephone: (650) 574-6525.

## The College

College of San Mateo, a public community college founded in 1922, is the oldest of the three colleges in the San Mateo County Community College District. It is located on a 153-acre site with a panoramic view of the northern San Francisco Bay Area. Completed at a cost of almost US\$ 19.5 million, the campus opened in 1963 and currently serves over 10,000 day and evening students. The International Student Program was established in 1955.

## Educational Offerings

The programs offered by College of San Mateo include two major types:

**Lower Division College Education:** Courses which enable students to complete the first two years of four-year college work. These courses satisfy the lower division requirements in the liberal arts and in scientific, engineering, business and other professional and semi-professional fields. Upon completion of 60 transfer units of credit, a student may apply for third-year standing at the senior university level. The College awards the Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degrees.

**Career Programs:** Designed to develop personal and technical skills necessary for successful employment in specific careers. Such programs are normally completed in two years.

## Accreditation

College of San Mateo is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, a recognized agency of the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education.

## Location

College of San Mateo is located in the city of San Mateo, a suburban community on the San Francisco Peninsula, about 40 kilometers south of San Francisco. It is within easy driving distance of the University of California at Berkeley (65 km), Stanford University (25 km), and the California State Universities at San Francisco (40 km), Hayward (25 km), and San José (55 km).

## Climate

San Mateo has a temperate year-round climate with summer temperatures ranging from 22°C to 35°C and winter temperatures ranging from 10°C to 18°C. Night-time temperatures in the winter may drop as low as 0°C.