



International Applicants

AIMC Berkeley is authorized by United States federal law to enroll non-immigrant alien students. Final authority to grant entry into the United States rests solely with the U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS).

Foreign Transcripts & Evaluation Process

Students who are applying to the program based on undergraduate classes taken at educational institutions outside the United States are required to submit all official non-U.S. transcripts to an approved transcript evaluation service to determine whether they meet AIMC Berkeley's minimum admissions requirements.

Students will need to request a course-by-course evaluation and have the evaluation agency send it directly to AIMC Berkeley for approval. (Note: we recommend that students request two copies of the evaluation because another one will be needed when students graduate and apply to take the California Acupuncture Licensing Exam). AIMC Berkeley recommends Educational Records Evaluation Service at www.eres.com, or a list of approved agencies can be found on the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services website: www.naces.org.

International applicants who have studied Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine at international institutions may be eligible to receive up to 50% transfer credit for prior work in Acupuncture and Oriental medicine principles, theories, treatment procedures, and clinical practice. For details, contact the AIMC Berkeley Admissions department (admissions@aimc.edu).

I-901 Fee

A separate fee must be paid for processing by the US government in accordance with the published policy of the United States BCIS.

See www.fmjfee.com to pay the I-901 Fee. Payment of this fee is generally required prior to the issuance of a visa by a State Department office.

English Language Proficiency Requirements

Instruction at AIMC Berkeley will not occur in any languages other than English. Non-native speakers must provide proof of language proficiency in the form of TOEFL internet-based test results OR a transcript or diploma documenting 60.0 units at a regionally accredited college or the equivalent from an international English language based program.

This may be satisfied by scoring at least 61 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) internet based test (iBT) which also requires a minimum speaking exam score of 26 and a minimum listening exam score of 22, or a level 6 on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) exam; or by submitting transcripts documenting 60.0 semester units completed at an accredited English language college.

Applicants who do not satisfy this requirement may be considered for admission with English as a second language, but they must satisfy the proficiency requirement in English before beginning the clinical experience.



AIMC Berkeley's TOEFL institutional code is 8482. For details on TOEFL, visit www.ets.org/toefl.

I-20 Form

Locate the appropriate I-20 form on AIMC's [How to Apply page](#) & return it to the school with the required documentation.

Entering the US to Attend School

Non-residents entering the US specifically to attend school will most frequently request F-class student status while in the US. Upon acceptance to AIMC Berkeley, international applicants need to complete the Request for I-20 form from Admissions to begin the process of obtaining student immigrant status.

Applicants Already Present in the US

New Students

Before enrolling, non-citizens already in the US should confirm that their current immigration status permits them to attend school. If it does not, they must change their status before enrolling.

Transfer Students

Students currently present in the US as F-class students at another school must contact their current international student officer and arrange to have their SEVIS record released for transfer to AIMC Berkeley. Once the record is transferred, AIMC Berkeley will issue the student a new I-20 document.

Visas

A visa is a document issued by the US Department of State that permits non-US citizens to enter the United States.

Canadian and Mexican citizens may enter the United States without a visa. Students from other countries should contact the nearest United States Consulate or the AIMC Berkeley Registrar to determine if a visa will be required. If a visa is required, it is generally best to obtain it in your home country.

Visas are purpose-specific. This means that if you currently hold tourist visa to enter the US as a B-class tourist, you would need to obtain a new visa to enter as an F-class student. Contact the US consulate in your country of origin to determine if you will require a visa to study in the US.

AIMC Berkeley does not provide visa services, but will vouch for student status.

Proof of Financial Support

Federal regulations require incoming students to provide proof of financial support for one academic year prior to issuance of the paperwork for entry into the United States. Before an I-20 form can be issued by AIMC, international students must submit documentation that demonstrates sufficient financial resources to pay for tuition and living expenses for one academic year (two



trimesters) with the Request for I-20 form. All financial proof documentation must be official and issued directly from the student's bank or another suitable financial institution. Captured screenshots, printouts from online banking, or any unofficial documents would not be accepted. It is highly recommended that you request for two copies of each of your financial proof documents from the bank(s) because you may also need to show these documents to the U.S. Immigration and Customs Officer at the time of entry into the United States.

The Registrar, who serves as the Designated School Official, will send a properly executed I-20 document upon receipt of all required information.

Your Legal Name

It is very important that you list your name consistently on all official documents. It is best to use your name exactly as it appears on your passport when completing paperwork for any government agency or for legal documents, such as a lease or driver's license. Check your passport to ensure it matches the name on your I-20.

Family name is also known in the U.S. as "last name," however, in many cultures, particularly in Asia, the family name is used first. For instance, in the U.S. an example of a common name is *John Doe* or *Jane Doe* (*Doe* is the family name). In Japan, this pair might be known as *Yamada Taro* or *Yamada Hanako* (*Yamada* is the family name).

Of course, in informal settings such as classes, you may use whatever name you prefer.

Spouses and Dependents

A student's spouse and dependent children are allowed to enter the United States with F-2 status while the student is enrolled as a full time student. Please notify the school in writing if you will bring dependents into the United States with you. You must complete a supplemental Request for I-20 so that each person entering the U.S. may be issued a document.

Initial Entry

International students should have the following documentation with them at the time of initial entry into the United States:

- Valid Passport
- Visa (if required)
- Form I-20
- Acceptance Letter
- Proof of English Proficiency
- Evidence of Financial Support

Students may enter the United States not more than 30 days prior to the start of the school session.

Entering the U.S. Before Receiving an I-20

If you visit the school and do not have your entry documents, be sure to indicate at the port of entry that you are a potential student. Failure to do so may result in your being admitted under a status that is not eligible for change at a later time.

Warning on Visa Waivers

If you are admitted to the United States under a visa waiver, you will be required to return to your country of origin within 90 days. No exception is possible.



Maintaining Your Immigration Status

You are solely responsible for maintaining your immigration status while present in the United States.

United States federal regulations require international students residing in the US as an F-1 class student must remain enrolled full time (minimum 12.0 units per term). It is also the student's responsibility to notify the school within 15 days of any changes in name, address, phone number, as well as enrollment or employment status and school transferring.

International students are allowed to stay in the United States for up to 60 days upon completion of the program. However, should an international student decide to withdraw from the program, the student must leave the country within 15 days from the withdrawal date.

Failure to abide by the requirements of maintaining the F class student status may result in deportation and permanent exclusion from the United States. Contact the Registrar's Office with any questions concerning your status. Always check in with the Registrar before exiting the United States or changing enrollment status.

Extension of Stay

Students are admitted to the United States for a specific period known as the duration of status or D/S. If a student encounters difficulties which prevent timely completion, contact the Registrar's Office prior to the expiration of the current D/S and request an extension of stay. It is extremely important to request the extension before the D/S date has passed.

Leave of Absence

International students are not allowed to take leave of absence during their first academic year except under a very unusual circumstance. However, you may take a leave of absence after your first academic year (two trimesters). You must notify the school and complete all necessary paperwork and documents with the Registrar's Office.

Employment for International Students

It is important to remember that you must obtain authorization in order to work in the US. Working without authorization is a serious violation of your immigration status and may result in deportation. It is not possible to earn money to pay for school while in the United States on a student visa.

Employment opportunities for students present as F-class students are extremely limited. If authorized, International students may not work more than 20 hours per week while classes are in session. Prior to graduation, students must obtain approval for Optional Practical Training (OPT).

Work authorization is not possible under any circumstances for dependents present in F-2 status.

Upon completion of the program at AIMC Berkeley, international students may apply for Post-Completion Optional Practical Training. Post-Completion OPT allows international students to



remain and work in the United States after finishing their program of study for an authorized period of up to 12 months.

To request Post-Completion OPT, see the Registrar to begin the process. Your SEVIS record will be updated and a new I-20 with your eligibility for Post-Completion OPT noted will be issued to you. You will submit a copy of this document along with the USCIS Form I-765 Application for Employment Authorization and other required documents to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. You may begin the process up to 90 days prior to your last day of class, and you must apply before the last day of class. Your eligibility to apply for Post-Completion OPT ends on the last day of your enrollment. For more details, please visit the website www.uscis.gov under Immigration Forms.

Post-Completion OPT is granted by USCIS at their sole discretion after adjudication of the submitted documentation. Apart from certifying your eligibility, the school has no role in the process and cannot challenge the decision by USCIS.

For any OPT requests, concerns, or inquiries, please contact the Registrar's Office for more details.