

The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey

International Student Application Instructions

Thank you for your interest in the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey. There are several forms that must be completed and returned to the Office of Admissions along with your application. In order to be considered for admission and to comply with the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (formerly INS- Immigration and Naturalization Services) rules and regulations, all forms must be received by the application deadline. Incomplete files will not be considered under any circumstances.

Generally speaking, international students follow the same application procedures as domestic students. However, some procedures are different. This booklet is a supplement to the information provided in the application for admission and outlines information specifically for international students. You should carefully review this information as well as the instructions contained in the application for admission in order to be certain that you complete your application correctly and provide all academic and financial credentials required of international students. United States citizens and permanent residents (valid green card holders) who attended secondary school and/or college abroad should follow the directions for international students concerning required academic credentials.

PLEASE NOTE: Students who want a “change of status” (see below) should not apply. Stockton will only consider freshman, transfer and graduate school applicants who currently reside in their home country of citizenship, or are already in the United States with valid F-1 student or H-1, 2 or 4 work visas. Individuals on B visitor, J or M visas WILL NOT be considered under any circumstances unless plans are made to travel to back to your country of origin/citizenship to apply for the F-1 student visa at the United States Embassy. Evidence of such travel plans, such as a copy of a return plane ticket, must be supplied before an I-20 will be issued. No exceptions will be made.

EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT TERMS

Listed below are phrases and terms that you should be familiar with before you read the application instructions or fill out the application and supplemental paperwork:

BCIS- Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services. BCIS is the government agency that is responsible for regulating international visitors of all visa types to the United States, as well as those in permanent resident status.

I-20 – The I-20 is the document issued by colleges and universities indicating that an international applicant has submitted all required credentials and has been approved for admission. The I-20 tells BCIS or the U.S. Embassy who you are, where you are from, what you intend to study, where your financial resources are coming from, when you are scheduled to arrive, and when you are scheduled to finish your studies. The I-20 is filed electronically with BCIS through the SEVIS system (see below). For students applying from outside the U.S., a paper copy is sent to take to the Embassy or Consulate when applying for the F-1 student visa. Students transferring from another college or university within the U.S. receive a copy to send to BCIS for validation. All I-20s receive a validation stamp either at the border or from BCIS when a student transfers from one college to another in the U.S.

SEVIS – SEVIS is the electronic reporting system used by BCIS to track international students as they move through their studies. Colleges and universities must register all international applications on the SEVIS system before an I-20 can be approved or issued. All international students will be checked by BCIS at the point of entry to the United States through the SEVIS system, and will be tracked on a monthly basis thereafter by the college or university.

VISA TYPE – Visa type indicates what type of “status” (see below) an individual enters the United States under. International students are usually classified under the F-1 (student) visa classification, although some people in an H-1, H-2, and H-4 categories are allowed to study at a college or university. Stockton only accepts students in the F and H categories. The actual visa is a stamp in your passport, which serves as an application to enter the United States. Visa stamps can only be obtained at United States Consulates and Embassies abroad by presenting a valid I-20. The visa only indicates “status”; it does not indicate how long a person may stay in the U.S.

STATUS – When students enter the United States they are classified according to type, or put in “status”. The BCIS officer at the border will examine your passport, note your visa type, and issue a document known as an I-94. This document is both your arrival and departure card and is as important as a passport. It is typically stapled to a page in the passport. On the I-94 the BCIS official will indicate what purpose a person has in entering the U.S., and will also note how long the visit can last. Most of the time international students’ I-94s will read D/S, which means “duration of status”. D/S indicates that the student is in status until they have completed their academic program. The completion date is noted on the I-20. Once that date has passed, the student is no longer in status and must return home or apply for an extension. Extensions are rare, so they must not be counted on. It is the student’s responsibility to make sure that their studies are completed by the end date indicated on the I-20.

CHANGE OF STATUS – Stockton will not assist in attempts by individuals to change from a non-student visa status to the F-1 student visa. As mentioned above, under certain circumstances individuals who enter the country under tourist or other types of status may decide they want to stay and study. They may petition a college or university to issue an I-20 so they may apply to BCIS for a “change of status”. Stockton will not honor this type of request under any circumstances.

ADMISSIONS APPLICATION – This is the document you must complete and submit to the Stockton Admissions Office in order to be considered for admission. There are instructions about how to complete it with the application form.

TRANSCRIPTS – Transcripts are your secondary, college or university records. They should be sent directly from each school you attended and should be translated into English.

SPONSOR – A sponsor is the person(s) who will be providing you with the funds to study in the U.S. The sponsor(s) should be able to prove through bank statements (see below) that they can provide you with enough money to sustain you for at least one calendar year. We will only be able to accept you and issue the I-20 if proof of ability to pay is provided. You may use any combination of your own funds and funds from sponsors to reach the total amount required. If a sponsor in the U.S. will be providing free room and meals while you study at Stockton you may count that toward the total amount. In that instance, the sponsor should just sign a statement declaring that they will provide you with free room and board. See the tuition and fees page for details on the necessary amounts for tuition, room, meal plan, and living expenses.

AFFIDAVIT OF SUPPORT – (enclosed) This document shows the source(s) of the funds you intend to use to pay for your education. Each sponsor should fill out an affidavit completely, sign, and date it. If you are using your own money, you should still fill out the affidavit and indicate that you will be sponsoring yourself. An official seal of some type from a bank or a notary public, or even a consular official must be affixed in order for it to be valid. **Any sponsor should be sure to fill out Item 11 on the affidavit completely- they must indicate in writing in Item 11 that they DO intend to sponsor you, for how long, and in what amount. Affidavits that do not have a completed item 11 will NOT be considered valid.** All affidavits must be in English, and funds must be indicated in U.S. currency. Any person who intends to sponsor you for room and board must fill out the enclosed “Sponsor’s Affidavit for Free Room and Board.”

BANK STATEMENTS – Any person providing you with financial support must submit bank statements proving ability to pay. The official bank statement (or letter on official letterhead) must be in the sponsor’s name (or your own), must be in English, and must show amounts converted to U.S. currency. It must be less than six months old. If more than six months pass between the time you apply and the time you are accepted, you will be required to provide new bank statements and affidavits. We can also accept letters from employers verifying annual income in U.S. dollars and copies of income tax forms. We CANNOT accept proof of property ownership, funds from property ownership, or income from investments. Letters from the bank must give exact U.S. dollar amounts, NOT statements such as, “The sponsor has sufficient funds”, or “It is our opinion the our client can support the student”.

IMPORTANT THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

Port of Entry – It is important that you do not enter the United States without a visa. It is also important that you only enter the U.S. with a valid F-1 student visa. Anyone who enters without or with a B, J, or the W/T visa will not be considered for admission. In the rare circumstance that a B-2 visa has been marked at the border, “Prospective Student”, the College will consider accepting an application only if the length of stay allowed on the B-2 visa corresponds with required application deadlines.

Health Insurance – The Richard Stockton College requires ALL students to have health insurance. As part of our health plan, students must provide documentation of certain immunizations prior to registration. International students must purchase health insurance through the College. **Spouses/dependents** – If you plan to bring your wife, husband, or children with you while you study at Stockton you must show an additional \$8,000.00 for a spouse and \$6,000.00 per dependent in financial support.

Employment – You should not count on employment as part of your experience as an international student. It is extremely difficult to gain approval from BCIS for off-campus employment; the International Student Advisor **WILL NOT** assist you if you try to petition BCIS for employment authorization. There are a limited number of jobs available on campus; these are open to all students. As an international student you are restricted to twenty (20) hours per week of on campus employment. It is important to note that if you choose to work illegally while you are in the United States on a student visa you risk deportation by BCIS.

Living expenses – If you plan to live off campus, but not with a sponsor, it is necessary for you to correctly estimate the cost per month for rent, meals, and personal expenses. The budget indicated on a Stockton-issued I-20 estimates the cost to live on campus; it can be very different off campus. Rent for a one bedroom apartment averages about \$950.00 per month, not including utilities. Car insurance can exceed \$2,000.00 per year. As mentioned above, employment authorization from BCIS is very difficult to obtain, so please plan your budget wisely.

Valid home address – As required by BCIS, we must have a valid home address, in your country of citizenship, at all times, as well as a current local address and telephone number.

Financial Aid – Financial Aid is not available to international students.

HOW TO APPLY FOR ADMISSION

If after reviewing the terms and conditions above you have decided to apply, it is important to read the application instructions carefully. In addition to the Application for Admission, you will find additional forms that must be completed. These include a Supplemental Form, Affidavit of Support, and a Foreign Student Advisor's Report (for students currently attending another U.S. college or university). Remember, you must supply all requested material or consideration of your application will be delayed or stopped.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND CREDENTIALS

Secondary School Records Required- Freshman and Transfer Applicants

****Documents not in English must be accompanied by a translation verified by a language professor or professional translator. We recommend Educational Credential Evaluators (www.ece.org) or on a course-by-course basis. Also required are all official transcripts from colleges or universities attended in the United States.**

1. Students from British-patterned systems (United Kingdom, East and West Africa, Hong Kong, Commonwealth Caribbean, Guyana, Malaysia, Etc.): In addition to school mark records and testimonials, applicants should supply certified copies of all school certificates, diplomas, and GCE 'O' and 'A' levels, if taken, or local equivalent such as the West African School Certificate, Hong Kong Certificate of Education, etc. If you sat for examinations within the past year and the results are not yet available, a certified copy of your individual results notice should be submitted. NOTE: A statement of these results from your secondary school is NOT acceptable.

2. Students from other internationally patterned schools: Applicants must submit an evaluation and US equivalency report of all secondary school grade reports mark sheets, diplomas, certificates, or examination results which indicate completion of present studies, specific subjects studied, and the marks or results received. We recommend using either AACRAO (www.aacrao.org) or ECE (www.ece.org).

If your credentials do not specify exactly which subjects you studied and for how long, you must supply this information with your application. Since we cannot guarantee return of any credentials submitted in support of your application, we suggest that you supply certified true copies of any document that is irreplaceable. A certified true copy of a document is a photocopy made from an original document, upon which an educational or consular official has affixed his/her signature and official seal, and has indicated that it is an attested true copy of the original document.

Undergraduate Tests Results Required

1. Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or American College Testing (ACT) Assessment: For students in the United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Republic of South Africa, Commonwealth Caribbean, Guyana and Canada whose primary language is English and students who have passed the GCE 'O' level examination in English language

(or equivalent, such as West or East African School Certificate, Hong Kong Certificate of Education) the SAT or ACT is required. Since the verbal portion of the tests is geared to native speakers of United States English, such applicants may also want to submit the Test Of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) in order to enhance the possibility of admission.

2. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL): Students from countries not listed above must submit results of the TOEFL. Students from non-English-speaking countries who have passed a course in regular English Composition (not English as a Second Language, not English for Foreign Students, etc.) at a U.S. or Canadian college or university with at least a “B” are not required to submit TOEFL results. The January test administration is the last recommended date to have the results available for consideration for entry in any September semester. There are currently three test types available; internet-based, computer-based, and paper-based. The minimum acceptable scores are as follows:

Internet-based: 80
Computer-based: 213
Paper-based: 550

Test Registration

- TOEFL: Contact TOEFL Order Service Section, P.O. Box 6154, Princeton, New Jersey 08541-6154 USA **www.toefl.org**
- SAT: Contact College Board ATP, P.O. Box 6200, Princeton, New Jersey 08541-6200 USA **www.collegeboard.com**
- ACT: Contact ACT registration, P.O. Box 414, Iowa City, Iowa 52243 USA **www.act.org**

Transfer Information

In addition to the above credentials, students transferring from other colleges or universities into either the undergraduate or the graduate program must submit official copies of all transcripts from all institutions attended. In the case of students transferring from institutions outside of the U.S., an evaluation of all college-or university-level work must be completed by ECE (Educational Credentials Evaluators- WWW.ECE.ORG) or AACRAO (WWW.AACRAO.ORG). The amount of advanced standing granted to transfer students is determined through an official evaluation of all courses taken. Students admitted with advanced standing, in general, are given credit for college-level courses completed with a grade of “C” or above and as long as such courses correspond to an existing Stockton course in content and quality and are requirements for the degree at Stockton. No credit evaluation will be made until the student has been granted admission.

Please note: Graduate programs may require undergraduate prerequisite courses in order to be considered for admission.

DOCUMENTATION OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES

In order to comply with government regulations you must satisfy the College that you will be supported for the entire period of your studies. (**reminder-** financial aid is NOT available to student visa holders.) For the purpose of documenting financial resources, you must submit the enclosed International Student Financial Statement. You must be sure to complete Part II in its entirety and show assured support for as long as you plan to attend The Richard Stockton College of NJ. This form must be signed and dated no more than six months prior to your application to Stockton. Photocopies or faxes are NOT acceptable. Please refer to the instructions provided with that form.

- If you are using your own personal funds for your education, you must supply bank statements on original bank letterhead paper.
- If you are using sponsors, you must have them follow the instructions listed previously under the “Sponsor” and “Bank Statements” headings.
- If you will be living with a friend or relative off campus, remember to have them complete the Affidavit For Free Room and Board.

VISAS

Applicants currently studying in the U.S. on any type of non-immigrant visa must provide a copy of either their Form I-94 or their valid I-20, and must be “in status”. Applications will not be considered without this information.

Immigration regulations mandate that student visa holders must follow a full-time course of study leading to a degree. If, in any given semester, a student does not attend full-time they are subject to deportation.

Legal Residence

Persons on non-immigrant visas who are required by the United States Department of State and the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Service to maintain a residence abroad as a condition of entering and remaining in the United States are NOT eligible to establish residence in New Jersey and are thus charged the out-of-state tuition rate. Under no circumstances will exceptions be made.

NOTIFICATION OF ADMISSIONS DECISION

In general, candidates who complete their applications by the appropriate deadline date of **MARCH 15, 2009** for the Fall 2009 semester will receive their admission decision in approximately 10-12 weeks.

Students Residing Outside the United States

If the Admissions Committee approves you for admission, you will be sent a letter of admission and an I-20 that you must take to your local U.S Embassy or Consulate when you apply for a visa. You must also submit a non-refundable \$100.00 acceptance deposit by the date specified in your letter of acceptance to reserve a place in the class. This deposit will be applied to your tuition and fees once you are enrolled at Stockton. If you intend to reside on campus you must fill out the housing application (included in the acceptance packet) and send an additional \$150.00 housing deposit. The fees are separate from any fees required by BCIS when applying for your visa at the embassy.

Students Transferring from an institution within the United States who already hold an F-1 visa.

After you have been accepted, you will receive a letter of admission. In order for Stockton to issue your new I-20, however, you must first be “released” in the SEVIS system. In order to do that, you must take your letter of admission to your International Student Advisor at your current institution. They will release you in SEVIS, and we will then issue your I-20. Please let us know when you have been released. You must also follow the acceptance and housing deposit instructions in the previous paragraph.

Please write to the Stockton Admissions Office if you have any questions. If you write AFTER you have submitted your application, be sure to state that in your letter.

All forms, documents, and correspondence should be sent to:

**The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey
Office of Enrollment Management
PO Box 195
Pomona, New Jersey 08240-1095, USA
Attn: International Undergraduate Admissions**

E-mail address: ADMISSIONS@stockton.edu