



CANADA

Brief Background: Canada launched an international education strategy in 2014 that aims to increase the number of international students in Canada to 450,000 by 2022. Attracting international students, creating bilateral research agreements, and enriching learning opportunities in the classroom remain the cornerstone of Canada's international education goals.

Canada's 125 public and private nonprofit universities offer more than 15,000 undergraduate and post-graduate programs, as well as professional designations, certificate and diploma courses, and short career-focused programs. Canadian institutions, known for their cutting-edge technology and research labs, provide opportunities for cooperative education, known as co-ops, and internships. Many of the well-known universities in Canada are located in large metropolitan areas, but there are many excellent universities that do not have urban campuses and are similar to US liberal arts colleges.

Three Canadian universities—McGill University, University of Toronto, and University of British Columbia—rank among the top 50 in the 2015–16 *QS World University Rankings*, with many other universities ranking high on QS program-specific rankings.

Canada's higher education options also include more than 150 public colleges, similar to US community colleges, and polytechnic institutes of

technology. Colleges and polytechnics provide a variety of credentials including certificates, diplomas, and academic and applied degrees. Together, they offer more than 8,000 programs. Some colleges have transfer agreements with universities and can provide an alternate pathway to a top-ranking Canadian university.

Education is under the legislative jurisdiction of provinces and territories but the basic structures are similar across the country.

Good to Know: A degree from a Canadian university can typically be completed in four years and is considered equivalent to an American qualification. A Canadian degree can lead to work opportunities in Canada, the US, and around the world.

Co-op experiences are a hallmark of many Canadian degree programs. Co-ops involve alternating periods of academic study with periods of work. Through 59 Canadian universities, polytechnics, and colleges, more than 1,000 co-op programs are offered in fields as diverse as business, government, and social services. In many arrangements, students are paid for their work. Upon completion, a student can expect to receive a university degree/polytechnic diploma and have gained a year or more of work experience in their field of study. It is important to note, however, that co-op

Photo courtesy of Sophia

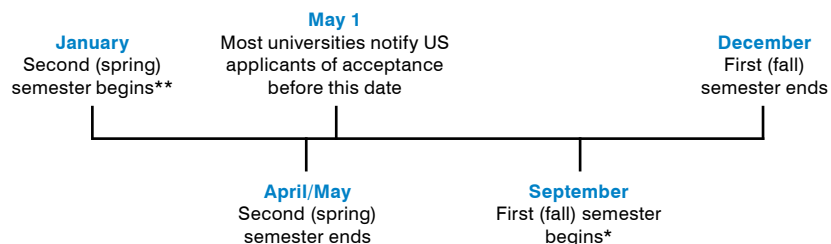


Canada

programs increase the length of a degree/diploma program to five years. Many Canadian universities and colleges have offices dedicated solely to finding and preparing students for co-op placements. Relevant internships may also be available and can be completed for pay or academic credit.

A large number of Canadian universities are located within 100 miles of the US border, offering a convenient option for US students who want an international degree that is not too far away.

Academic Calendar: Most universities and colleges run from early September until the end of April or early May, but there is no national standard. The academic year is typically split into two terms running September to December and January to April. Some universities utilize a trimester system, providing full courses in the summer.



*Students planning to enroll in the first (fall) semester are encouraged to apply in the fall or winter of the previous year.
**Students planning to enroll in the second (spring) semester are encouraged to apply several months in advance.

Search: The official study in Canada portal, www.educanada.ca, includes a program finder, cost calculator, information about visas, and links to institutional websites. The Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials, www.cicic.ca, provides an online directory of universities, colleges, and schools that are recognized and authorized by Canada's provinces and territories. It also includes information on foreign credential evaluations and qualification recognition. Another resource is the website of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada: www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/index.asp. It offers information on study permits, visas, and work permits.

Apply: Students interested in applying to a Canadian institution are advised to visit the admission website at their institution(s) of choice to find detailed information about program options, the application process, and application forms.

Some provinces have established a centralized, electronic application process for admission to their institutions:

Alberta—ApplyAlberta: Alberta Post-Secondary Application System (www.applyalberta.ca)

“My decision to earn my degree abroad was partially a matter of cost, and partially wanting to discover what else was out there. . . I was very grateful for the amount of diversity present in Montreal. [And, there are] many inexpensive ways to be a student in Montreal—rent is cheap, food is reasonable, health care is free. There’s a lot to love.”

—Sophia Metcalf, New Jersey (McGill University, third-year student studying Music and English, Drama and Theatre)

British Columbia—ApplyBC: BC Post-Secondary Application Service (www.applybc.ca)

Ontario—Ontario Universities' Application Centre (www.ouac.on.ca) and Ontario Colleges Application Services (www.ontariocolleges.ca)

Nova Scotia—MyNSFuture (<https://www.mynsfuture.ca>)

And, for general information about studying in **Quebec**: <http://www.international.gouv.qc.ca/en/general/etudier>

Depending on the university, students may apply either directly to their intended program or to the larger *faculty* (i.e. school) with the expectation that they will declare their major in their second or third year. Most Canadian universities allow students to apply to two programs or faculties and students can be accepted by more than one program or faculty.

After a student has applied to a university or college, he or she will receive an email acknowledging receipt of the application and requesting any additional documents. The email will also usually contain a personal student number that should be affixed to all documents submitted to the institution thereafter.

QUEBEC SYSTEM

Quebec follows a different educational system than the other provinces. Secondary students in Quebec finish their education at grade 11, not 12. As such, students have the option to pursue a CEGEP program that prepares them for university admission (similar to grade 12 elsewhere in Canada). This is also why Quebec university programs for local students are three years instead of four, relative to other provinces in Canada.

High performing international students with AP or IB credits may be eligible to enter the university system in Quebec in sophomore standing, whereas students from outside Quebec who haven't completed such coursework may have to enroll in a full four-year program. Each university has its own policies governing international admission and recognition of credits.

Deadlines: Application deadlines vary by institution. Students planning to enroll in the fall semester are encouraged to apply in the fall or winter of the previous year. Students planning to enroll in the semester that begins in January are encouraged to apply several months in advance.

Application fees: Fees range from 100 to 250 Canadian dollars.

Admission Requirements: For many schools and programs, admission is based almost entirely on academic grades earned in high school, generally grade 12. Some institutions, however, consider grade 10 and 11 marks as well. If course prerequisites have not been fulfilled, a student may not be accepted. Applicants should keep in mind that high school curricula in Canada and the United States are similar but not identical, which can potentially create confusion about whether a student has satisfied certain requirements. An example of this is how core science classes are taught.

Some Canadian universities require SAT or ACT test scores in addition to a US high school diploma. Some may require SAT Subject tests, depending on the program. Scores can be sent directly to the Canadian institution.

IB students can apply with their transcript and IB predicted scores without having to take the SAT or the ACT.

Many Canadian universities accept AP and IB exam scores for academic credit or placement. Information about specific policies should be obtained from the institution's admission office.

An increasing number of highly selective programs (often business, engineering, fine arts, and other majors with limited enrollment) require additional application components, such as a personal profile or a short essay. Personal profiles give the student a chance to reflect on their background, share non-academic leadership experience and other qualities, and demonstrate interest and understanding of the program they hope to enter. This information may play an important role in admission decisions. In some cases, students might be asked to upload a video response to a randomly generated question as part of the application process.

Ethnicity/race, legacy, and advancement potential are not permitted as factors in admission decisions.

Upon Acceptance: Institutions typically operate on a rolling admission basis. Once the university or college receives a student's application form and all supporting documents, they will evaluate the application and may issue an offer of admission or an early conditional offer of admission, which is often contingent on forthcoming grades or exam results. There is no specific date by which applicants will be notified of their admission decision, though most institutions work to notify US applicants before May 1.

Tuition and Fees: International student tuition at Canadian universities ranges from CA\$7,000 to CA\$29,000 per year, depending on the program. Tuition at Canadian colleges range from CA\$5,000 to CA\$15,000 per year.

Factoring in tuition, fees, books, housing, groceries, public transportation, and miscellaneous expenses, estimated costs for a school year in Canada range between CA\$15,000 and CA\$40,000. The EduCanada website enables students to determine a rough estimate of tuition, food, and housing based on the program and institution, where they are coming from, and whether any dependents will be staying with them (<http://educanada.ca/study-etudes/step-etape.aspx?lang=eng>).

Nearly 70 higher education institutions in Canada accept US federal student loans.

Some information about scholarship programs for international students in Canada can be found at www.scholarships.gc.ca. Another resource <http://www.killamfellowships.com/>, is a program managed by Fulbright Canada. Scholarship and award options for international undergraduates vary greatly by institution. Some relatively small athletic scholarships (CA\$3,000 to CA\$4,000) are also available. Generally student-athletes must meet certain academic expectations, in addition to possessing athletic talent, to qualify for these scholarships.

Housing: Most colleges and universities offer housing near or on campus. Dormitories vary but generally feature a shared kitchen, bathroom,

and laundry facilities. Most university housing also provides required or optional meal plans. Many international students in Canada choose to stay on campus during their first and second year before moving to private accommodations. Some university student service offices maintain lists of recommended house or apartment rentals nearby; however, rental agreements are transacted solely between the student and the property owner.

Students can expect to pay CA\$400 to CA\$1,500 per month for rent depending on the city, neighborhood, and number of roommates.

Visas and Other Permits: American citizens travelling with US passports are eligible to apply for a study permit at a port of entry to Canada. Ports of entry are located at major airports and border crossings. Alternatively, students can apply for a study permit while still outside Canada, either online or in person, at the visa offices responsible for the US. More details are available at www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/offices/vac.asp.

Note that students enrolling in Quebec institutions for programs of six months or more must obtain the Certificate of Acceptance from Quebec (CAQ). For more information, visit: <http://www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/immigrate-settle/students/index.html>.

The application fee for a study permit is CA\$235. Three key documents are required: an acceptance letter from the Canadian institution, proof of identity (such as a passport), and proof of financial support.

A valid study permit also allows international students to work on- or off-campus up to 20 hours per week while classes are in session and full-time during regularly scheduled academic breaks, such as spring break and winter and summer holidays.

The Post-Graduation Work Permit Program allows students who have graduated from a participating Canadian institution to work in Canada for up to three years. Skilled Canadian work experience gained through this program helps graduates who wish to stay in Canada longer qualify for permanent residence through the Canadian Experience Class (CEC).

More information on study permits and immigration procedures can be found at www.cic.gc.ca.

Advice from the Field: General inquiries on study opportunities in Canada should be directed to contacts available at www.educanada.ca.

Rankings such as those compiled by Maclean's (<http://www.macleans.ca/education/best-of-the-best-introducing-the-2016-macleans-university-rankings/>) and The Globe and Mail's Canadian University Report (<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/featured-reports/read-the-latest-canadian-university->

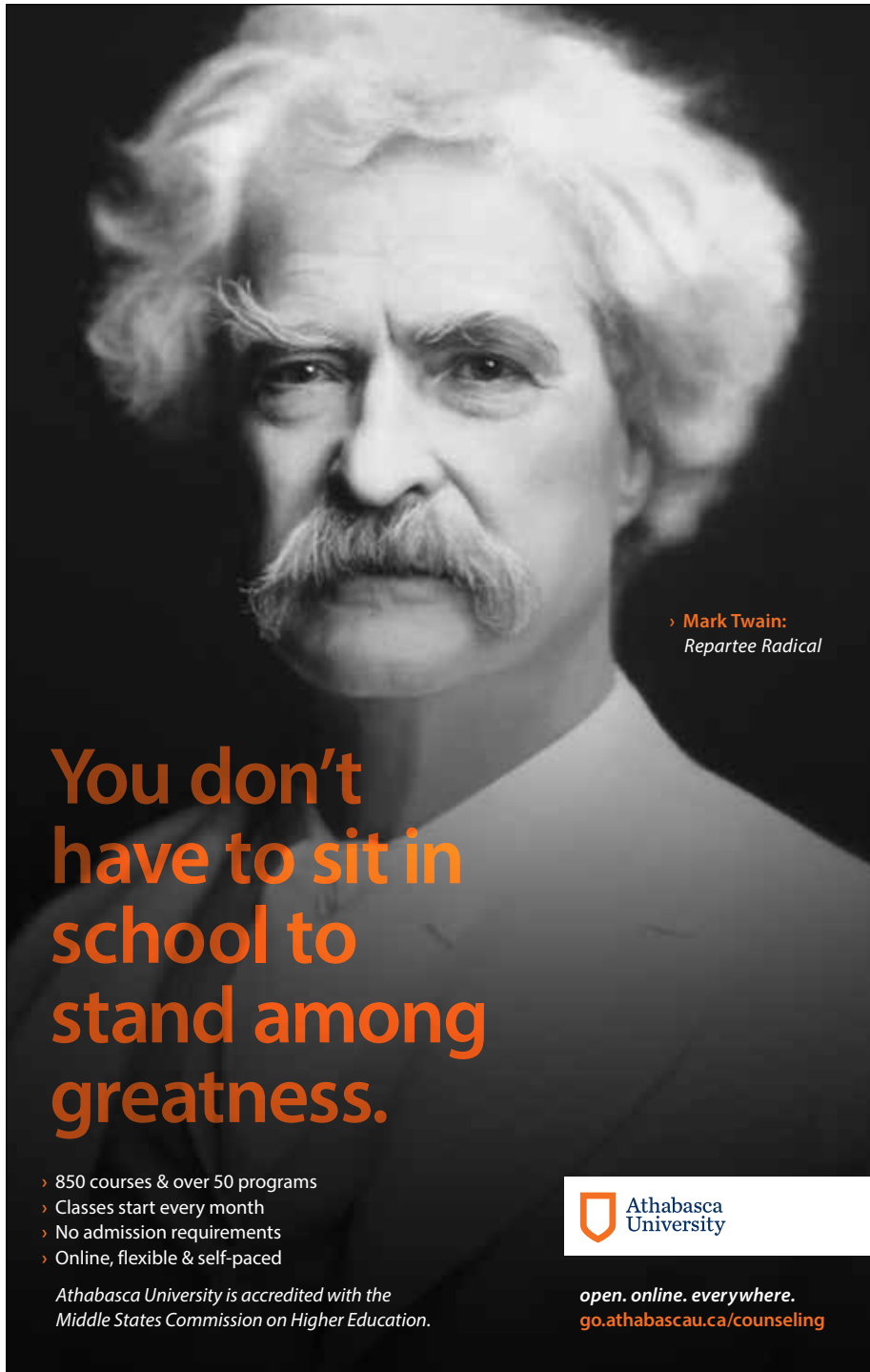


“It’s a bit confusing when you begin the [application] process, simply because it’s hard to understand what things are needed when studying in a different country (Do I need a study permit? Do I need a work permit? etc.). Prepare early. Study permits, work permits, health insurance, flights, etc—these all take time, and it’s important to think carefully about each step, know what you have to do, and how much it will cost you.”

—Sophia Metcalf, New Jersey (McGill University, third-year student studying Music and English, Drama and Theatre)

[report/article26924086/](#)) can be helpful as students begin the process of choosing where to apply. Keep in mind that not all Canadian universities participate in such ventures. As is true of US universities, rankings only tell part of the story.

High school grades are often used to determine admissibility to particular programs of study. Many institutions set a minimum standard of academic achievement or publish the cut-off from the prior admission cycle. This gives students more clarity on their chances of admission and can be very helpful in alleviating student anxiety.




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