# WELCOME TO UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY in the CITY OF NEW YORK



## GETTING YOUR FORM I-20

## Certificate of Eligibility for F-1 Student Status

*IMPORTANT*: The information on the following pages carefully explains how to get your Form I-20. Please read it and follow the directions in their entirety to avoid delays in getting your I-20. This packet is information and reference ONLY, NOT the application itself, so be sure to follow the links to the application pages.



## NOW THAT YOU ARE PLANNING TO BE A UNION STUDENT, THERE ARE TWO THINGS THAT YOU CANNOT DO!

#### 1. DO NOT ENTER THE U.S. with a B-1, B-2, or B-1/2 Visa

If you use a B visa to enter the U.S., you are saying, "I'm here as a visitor" *only*. Since you contacted our school about study, this could be viewed as misrepresenting your purpose for entering the U.S., and you might be refused permission to extend or change your status. Do <u>not</u> listen to people who say it is easy to enter the country as a visitor and change your status to F-1 Student. It is not true. U.S. federal regulations prohibit B visitors from pursuing a course of study before obtaining a change of status to F-1 Student.

**If your study plans are not certain** and you want to enter the U.S. to visit schools, you must explain this on your visa application and ask the visa officer for a B-2 visa with the words "Prospective Student" noted on it or have the words added to your B visa if you already have one.



#### 2. DO NOT ENTER THE U.S. on the Visa Waiver Program (WT or WB)

If you are from a country where you can enter the U.S. as a visitor by showing a round-trip airline ticket, do not do this. You will be permitted to stay for only 90 days. You will not be given more time or allowed to change to F-1 Student status.

## WHAT IS A FORM I-20, AND WHY DO YOU NEED ONE?

A Form I-20 is a government form that certifies that you are eligible for F-1 Student Status. That means that (1) you are or expect to be a full-time student; (2) you meet our admissions requirements; (3) you will pursue a full course of study; (4) you have proven that you have enough money to study and live in the U.S. without working illegally or suffering from poverty.

You need a Form I-20 to obtain an F-1 Student visa or status or to keep lawful F-1 status when transferring or changing schools within the U.S.

## **DOES EVERYBODY NEED A FORM I-20?**

**No**. J-1 students need a Form DS-2019; contact us for that application. B Visitors and F-2 dependents must obtain an I-20 and apply for a change of status to F-1 Student to pursue a course of study that is not avocational or recreational in nature. If you are maintaining another nonimmigrant status in the U.S., you do not have to have an I-20 and may attend school full or part-time. Dependent children in E, H, I, J, L, M, N, O, P, R, or S status need to change status after their 21st birthday or if they marry. If you have no legal status, you may attend school but you are not eligible to change status and do not need an I-20.



## **RULES FOR GETTING A FORM I-20**

- 1. YOU MUST BE A "BONA FIDE" (REAL) STUDENT, ACCEPTED TO A FULL-TIME PROGRAM OF STUDY.
- 2. YOU MUST <u>PROVE</u> THAT YOU CAN SUPPORT THE COSTS OF LIVING AND STUDYING IN THE U.S. FOR <u>EVERY YEAR</u> OF YOUR PROGRAM OF STUDY AT UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY. THIS IS REQUIRED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO ISSUE THE FORM I-20.
- 3. DO NOT EXPECT THAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO WORK IN THE U.S. TO HELP MEET YOUR ANNUAL COSTS. On-campus employment is limited and competitive; the U.S. Department of Homeland Security strictly controls off-campus employment.
- 4. CAREFULLY REVIEW OUR SCHOOL'S "ESTIMATED ANNUAL COSTS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS" ON PAGE 5 AND ENTER YOUR TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS ON THE LINE PROVIDED. THIS IS THE AMOUNT THAT YOU MUST PROVE THAT YOU CAN SUPPORT FOR EVERY YEAR IN YOUR PROGRAM OF STUDY. (Estimate that it will take 1 year for a Master of Sacred Theology; 2 years for a Master of Arts; 3 years for a Master of Divinity; 4 years for the combined Master of Divinity and Master of Social Work in conjunction with Columbia University; and 5 for a Doctor of Philosophy).
- 5. **THESE REQUIREMENTS ARE NOT NEGOTIABLE.** They represent a <u>modest average budget</u> that does not include luxuries of any kind. We strongly recommend that you budget at least 10% more if possible. Students and their families should look closely at the costs of studying at Union and the costs of living in New York City. Make careful plans to be sure your needs will be met.
- 6. **EXPECT** <u>ANNUAL</u> **INCREASES** in tuition and living costs of approximately 10%.
- YOU MAY BE ASKED TO PROVIDE MORE PROOF OF YOUR FUNDING perhaps more than once. The U.S. government requires us to be certain, to the best of our ability, that you will have enough financial support during your stay.
- 8. COMPLETE THE APPLICATION FOR A FORM I-20 https://utsnyc.formstack.com/forms/app\_form\_i20.
- 9. HAVE YOUR SPONSOR(S) COMPLETE THE <u>SPONSOR'S AFFIDAVIT OF</u> <u>CASH SUPPORT</u> AND/OR <u>SPONSOR'S AFFIDAVIT OF FREE ROOM AND</u> <u>BOARD</u> (available on pages 8 and 10 of this handbook) AND ATTACH THE REQUIRED EVIDENCE.
- 10. SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION FOR A FORM I-20, SPONSOR'S AFFIDAVIT AND EVIDENCE TO US ELECTRONICALLY WITH THE LINKS PROVIDED. PRINT A HARD COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS AND TO TAKE TO YOUR VISA INTERVIEW.

SEVIS ID: N0004705512	>			
SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME	-	GIVEN NAME	CLASS	
Dos Smith PREFERRED NAME		John PASSPORT NAME		
John Doe-Smith				1
COUNTRY OF BIRTH UNITED KINSDOM		COUNTRY OF CITIZENS UNITED KINGDOM		
DATE OF BIRTH 01 JANUARY 1980		ADMISSION NUMBER	ACAL	EMIC AND
FORM ISSUE REASON INITIAL ATTENDANCE		LEGACY NAME John Doe-Smith	LA	NGUAGE
SCHOOL INFORMATION				
SCHOOL NAME SEVP School for Advanced SEVIS : SEVP School for Advanced SEVIS :	Studies	SCHOOL ADDRESS 9002 Nanoy Lane, Pt.	Washington,ND 20744	
SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPO Belene Robertson PDSO	N ARRIVAL	SCHOOL CODE AND AP BAL214F44444000 03 APRIL 2015	PROVAL DATE	
PROGRAM OF STUDY				
EDUCATION LEVEL	MAJOR 1 Economics, Genera	1 45 0601	JOR 2	
NORMAL PROGRAM LENGTH	PROGRAM ENGLISH	PROFICIENCY EN	GLISH PROFICIENCY NOT	ES
PROGRAM START DATE 01 SEPTEMBER 2015	PROGRAM END DAT		-	
FINANCIALS				
ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FOR: 9		STUDENT'S FUNDING F		
Tuition and Fees Living Expenses	\$ 23,000 \$ 6,000	Personal Funds	o ching Assistantship 8	3,000
Expenses of Dependents (1)	2 3,000	Funda From Another		
Other		💧 On-Campus Employmen	ic 9	
TOTAL	5 32,020	TOTAL	0	32,000
REMARKS				
Orientation begins 8/25/2015, F	AND PROVE TO THE	an avelual		
orientation begins 0/13/1013. 1.	terre apport to 1515 ap			
SCHOOL ATTESTATION				
I certify under penalty of perjury that all inform	ution omvided above was entered	before I signed this form and is t	me and correct. I executed this fi	orm in the United
States after review and evaluation in the United	States by me or other officials of	'the school of the stadest's applica	ation, transcripts, or other record	s of courses taken
and proof of financial responsibility, which we qualifications meet all standards for admission	re received at the school prior to t	he execution of this form. The sch	ool has determined that the abov	e named student's
designated school official of the above named a	school and am authorized to issue	this form.		
x		DATE ISSUED	PLACE ISSUE	
SIGNATURE OF: Helene Robertson,	PD80	21 April 2015	Pt. Washing	ton,MD
STUDENT ATTESTATION				
I have read and agreed to comply with the term refers specifically to me and is true and correct	s and conditions of my admission	and those of any extension of stay	y. I certify that all information pr	ovided on this form
purpose of pursuing a full program of study at 1	to the best of my knowledge. I de	there is a seek to enter or remain	e any information from my record	is needed by DHS
pursuant to 8 CFR 214.3(g) to determine my no	minmigrant status. Parent or ga	ardian, and student, must sign if	f student is under 18.	
x				
SIGNATURE OF: John Doe Smith	x	DATE		
NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN	SIGNATURE	ADDRESS (	city/state or province/country)	DATE

11. WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT YOU SUBMIT YOUR I-20 APPLICATION, SPONSOR'S AFFIDAVIT, AND EVIDENCE AT THE SAME TIME OF APPLICATION TO THE SEMINARY. ONCE YOU ARE ADMITTED, YOUR FORM I-20 CAN THEN BE ISSUED MORE PROMPTLY.



### **FUNDING SOURCES**

#### YOUR FUNDING CAN COME FROM ANY COMBINATION OF SOURCES IN THE U.S. OR ABROAD:

1. <u>FUNDS FROM SPONSORS</u> (parents, relatives, friends, organizations). You may have as many sponsors as you need. Sponsors may provide you with support in the form of money and/or room and board. Free room and board is when you live with someone and don't have to pay for your room or food.

#### WARNING #1

It is highly recommended that **at least part of your financial support come from your country of residence**. This helps when you apply for your student visa.

#### WARNING #2

A sponsor should promise only as much money as he or she is <u>capable</u> of giving you. Some sponsors believe that the more money they promise the easier it will be to get your I-20. THE MOST COMMON REASON WE REJECT FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS IS THAT WE CANNOT REASONABLY BELIEVE THE SPONSOR CAN AFFORD TO GIVE AS MUCH MONEY AS PROMISED.

- 2. <u>PERSONAL FUNDS</u> come from <u>your own</u> resources, not those of anyone else. If your parents put money in your account, we will ask you to submit the evidence required of sponsors. Unless you have enough cash to support yourself for your entire program of study or can prove other sources of personal income, you will need a sponsor with sufficient income to support you.
- 3. **FUNDS FROM THIS SCHOOL** such as scholarship, assistantship, or fellowship. Not all Seminary support covers the entire program of study or all expenses, so you may need additional support to meet your minimum annual costs.

## **EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS**

COMPLETE THE APPLICATION FOR THE FORM I-20 <u>https://utsnyc.formstack.com/forms/app\_form\_i20</u> AND SUBMIT IT WITH ALL THE REQUIRED EVIDENCE OF FUNDING DIRECTLY TO THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES OFFICE ELECTRONICALLY, USING THE LINKS PROVIDED. PRINT COPIES FOR YOUR RECORDS AND KEEP THEM FOR YOUR VISA INTERVIEW.

ALL DOCUMENTS YOU PROVIDE MUST BE:

- 1. Less than three months old
- 2. In English (We cannot review documents that are not in English!)



International Student Affairs 3041 Broadway, New York, NY 10027 Phone: 212-280-1396; 212-280-1555

#### SPONSORS OF CASH SUPPORT:

#### 1. SPONSOR'S AFFIDAVIT AND PROOF OF ANNUAL CASH SUPPORT (page 8 of this handbook)

#### 2. PROOF OF INCOME

Individual Sponsor (any of the following), with most recent pay stub:

- Income tax returns or receipts, or
- Pay stubs for the last three months, or
- Bank/investment statements for the last six months

Company Sponsor

- Submit tax returns, AND

- Business registration and licenses

3. **BANK STATEMENT in the name of the sponsor only.** A monthly statement of balances and deposits. Letters are not accepted.

#### WARNING #3

If there is no proof of income provided with a bank statement, the statement balance will be totaled and divided by the number of years in your program of study to determine the amount available to you for each year.

#### WARNING #4

The income of a company <u>is not</u> the personal income of the owner of the business. It won't be accepted as proof of income. The sponsor must still provide proof of personal income as well as business registration and licenses.

#### WARNING #5

If a bank statement is in the name of more than one person, each individual must submit an affidavit of support.

#### WARNING #6

We cannot accept bank statements that do not specify monthly balances and deposits.

#### **SPONSORS OF FREE ROOM AND BOARD:**

#### 1. SPONSOR'S AFFIDAVIT AND PROOF OF FREE ROOM AND BOARD (page 10 of this handbook)

2. PROOF OF INCOME (any of the following), with most recent pay stub:

- Income tax returns or receipts, or
- Pay stubs for the last three months, or
- Bank/investment statements for the last three months
- 3. COPY OF PROPERTY LEASE, DEED, RENT RECEIPTS, OR UTILITY BILL

#### WARNING #7

If you are presently in the U.S., you must be living with the sponsor at the time of filing this application for this to be counted towards your means of support.

#### PERSONAL FUNDS:

#### 1. BANK/ASSET STATEMENT in your name

- monthly statement of balances and deposits

#### SCHOOL FUNDS:

#### **1. COPY OF YOUR AWARD LETTER OR CONTRACT**

It must give itemized details of what you will be receiving and for how long.



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## ESTIMATED ANNUAL COSTS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS 2024-2025

TUITION	\$24,500 for first-degree and Master of Sacred Theology
	\$35,136 for PhD

#### HEALTH AND WELLNESS FEES

Health Program Fee	\$1,530
Medical Insurance	\$5 <i>,</i> 820
Student Activity Fee	\$200

#### **LIVING EXPENSES**

Housing (Rent and Fees)	\$14,270
Meals	\$7 <i>,</i> 000
Books and Supplies	\$1,600
Personal Expenses	\$4,000
Local Transportation	\$1,200

TOTAL ESTIMATED	
ANNUAL COSTS:	<u> MASTER DEGREE: \$60,120</u>

PhD: \$72,136

#### **DEPENDENT COSTS**

If you will be accompanied by a spouse or child(ren), you must show additional evidence of financial capability to cover their annual expenses in the following amounts:

Spouse	\$16,380
Child	\$5,232 for each child

These costs do not include medical insurance, estimated at an additional cost as follows:

Spouse	\$5,820
Child	\$5,820 for each child

#### ENTER YOUR TOTAL ESTIMATED ANNUAL COSTS WITH DEPENDENTS: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Note: Expect annual increases of approximately 10% in expenses.



## **APPLICATION FOR A FORM I-20**

The online application is found at https://utsnyc.formstack.com/forms/app\_form\_i20.

**Sponsor Affidavit and Evidence of Annual Cash Support** forms must be completed by your sponsor(s) and turned in as an attached file with your application for the Form I-20. There is a copy of this form below on pages 7-8 of this handbook.

**Sponsor Affidavit and Proof of Free Room and Board** forms must be completed by your sponsor and turned in as an attached file with your application if you will be receiving free room and board. There is a copy of this form below on pages 9-10 of this handbook.

**NOTE:** This handbook is not the application. Please find it here: <u>https://utsnyc.formstack.com/forms/app\_form\_i20</u> Additionally, the application is NOT your Form I-20. The Form will be mailed to you or can be picked up by a designated person as indicated in the application.



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## SPONSOR'S AFFIDAVIT AND EVIDENCE OF ANNUAL CASH SUPPORT

#### WHAT DOES THIS AFFIDAVIT MEAN?

By completing this affidavit, you are swearing to the U.S. government that you will provide this student with a specific amount of money from your financial resources for every year the student is attending Union Theological Seminary in the U.S. You are also proving that you can afford the support you are promising with the documentary evidence you have attached.

Before signing it, it is important to understand that you are making a financial commitment to the student that should not be broken. Sponsors who fail to provide the promised support force students to drop out of school, be forced to leave the U.S., and cause pain and suffering. Do not expect that the student will be able to support the costs through employment. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security strictly controls employment and is very limited.

#### HOW TO COMPLETE THIS FORM

1. Fill this form out in English (or have it officially translated). **Promise only the amount of money you are able to give.** The most common reason we reject affidavits is that there is not enough proof that a sponsor can afford to give as much as promised.

2. Sign and date the affidavit.

3. Attach the supporting evidence listed below. The affidavit will NOT be accepted without the required supporting evidence.

4. Give the student the original printed documents and have him or her submit them electronically to us with the application for a Form I-20. The student will need to retain the originals to present to the consul at the visa interview.

#### SUPPORTING EVIDENCE REQUIRED

- 1. Proof of income (any of the following) with most recent pay stub
  - Income tax returns or receipts or
  - Pay stubs for the last three months or
  - Bank/investment statements for the last three months

2. **Bank statement** -- a monthly statement of balances and deposits -- in your name **only**. If another person's name appears on your bank statement, that person must also complete a separate affidavit. A letter from a bank officer will NOT be accepted.



## SWORN PROMISE OF CASH SUPPORT

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		Tuir Haine	no less	than U.S. \$			in cash
	student's full na	ame			US dollar a	mount	
	for EVERY YEAR o	of the student's	program of	f study at Union <sup>-</sup>	Theological Ser	ninary.	
elationship to stu	dent:					_	
	Parent, spo	use, brother,	sister, frier	nd, etc.			
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#### SPONSOR'S AFFIDAVIT AND PROOF OF FREE ROOM AND BOARD

#### WHAT DOES THIS AFFIDAVIT MEAN?

By completing this affidavit, you are swearing to the U.S. government that this student will live with you free of any charge for room and food for **every year** he or she is attending Union Theological Seminary in the U.S. The student cannot be required to provide you with any services, such as babysitting, cleaning, etc. in exchange for the room and board since that constitutes employment. You are also proving that you are the person who owns or rents the property and can afford the support you are promising with the documentary evidence you have attached.

Before signing the affidavit, it is important to understand that you are making a financial commitment to the student that should not be broken. Sponsors who fail to provide the promised support force students to drop out of school, be forced to leave the U.S., and cause pain and suffering. Do not expect that the student will be able to support the costs through employment. Employment is strictly controlled by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and is very limited.

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- 1. Proof of income (any of the following) with most recent pay stub
  - Income tax returns or receipts or
  - Pay stubs for the last six months or
  - Bank/investment statements for the last six months

2. **Bank statement** -- a monthly statement of balances and deposits -- in your name **only**. If another person's name appears on your bank statement, that person must also complete a separate affidavit. A letter from a bank officer will NOT be accepted.

3. Copy of your deed, lease, current rent receipts, or current utility bill to prove that you are the person who owns or rents the property.



### SWORN PROMISE OF FREE ROOM AND BOARD

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l,	, promise that
full name	student's full name
v	vill live free of charge with me in my home at:
Street Address	City, State, Zip Code

Please check one:

□ I own this property □ I rent this property

If the student is presently in the U.S., does s/he currently live with you? 
Q Yes 
No

I will not require any type of service to be performed in exchange for this benefit.

My relationship to the student is: \_\_\_\_\_

(Parent, spouse, brother, sister, friend, etc.)

Proof of income, bank statements, and proof of residence must be attached.

I swear that the information I have provided is true and correct.

Signature of Sponsor

Date