International Student Guide

This guide is designed to provide international students with guidelines, requirements, and recommendations to make your time at Heartland Christian College (also known as HCC) a success.

At HCC our mission is to equip and prepare students to be servants of Jesus Christ, lifelong learners, and effective workers in local churches and communities around the world. We desire to prepare students for their next step in life through discipleship, biblical higher education, and service-oriented living.

At HCC we strive to provide our students with a quality education as well as training for life. In this guide, you will find information specific to international students, including the application process, requirements to enter the U.S. and requirements while on campus. This is not an extensive guide on general college policies and student living. For general information including student life and academic information, see the HCC College Catalog.

As you read through this information, please do not hesitate to contact our offices if you have any questions.

Heartland Christian College
Phone: 573-633-5610
1-866-422-2340

Email: admissions@heartlandcollege.edu

www.heartlandcollege.edu

How to Apply to HCC

1. **Request a link to the international application one of two ways:**

    a. **Call 1-866-422-2340 and ask for the admissions office.**
    b. **Email a request to admissions@heartlandcollege.edu**

The International Student Application consists of two parts:

Step One Application Portion:

- ☐ Online Application
- ☐ Reference Questionnaire
- ☐ Reference Letter
- ☐ Personal Testimony
- ☐ Tenants of Faith Agreement
- ☐ HCC Pre Admission Interview

Step Two Application Portion:

- ☐ Official High School/College Transcripts Translated and Evaluated
- ☐ Official TOEFL or IELTS results (if English is not your native language)
- ☐ Copy of passport with photo ID (must be valid for up to six months beyond possible graduation date)
- ☐ Health Form and supporting documents
- ☐ Student Character Agreement
- ☐ Personal Finance Form
- ☐ Official SAT/ACT score (if taken)
- ☐ Affidavit of Support

Students should begin the application process 8-10 months prior to the semester in which they desire to enroll at HCC in order to get all forms, tests, and visas completed in a timely manner.

Step 1

General Admission Requirements for International Students

International students are eligible to apply for the Associate Degree in Biblical Studies only. HCC cannot grant the I-20 document to students wishing to complete the Certificate in Biblical Studies.

Explanation of the Online Step One Application:

1. **Step One Application Form:** This form is online. Contact HCC Admissions for the link
2. **Reference Questionnaire:** This online reference questionnaire can be found in the Step One portion of the online application. This questionnaire should be emailed to be completed by a pastor or leader not related to the student. You will be prompted to enter the email address of that leader as well as a greeting to the receiver.
3. **Reference Letter:** Additionally, we ask that you have your pastor/leader or HCC country representative send us a "signed" letter informing us of:
    a. Why the Applicant would possibly be a good candidate for HCC?
    b. What the Applicant currently does within their country related to ministry or service?
    c. What the leader sees as the outcome of the Applicant's educational pursuits to be?
    d. Any information on the Applicant that is relevant to the application.

* This letter can be included in an email and sent to admissions@heartlandcollege.edu but it must come to HCC directly from the pastor/leader providing the reference.

5. Personal Testimony: Contained within the online application, this testimony should be 400+ words in length and include both your personal testimony and why you think Heartland Christian College would be a good school for you to attend.

6. Tenets of Faith Agreement-(printable from the application) Heartland Christian College expects the student body to affirm the Tenets of Faith that are central to the beliefs we teach and live. This document contains those tenants and applicants desiring to enroll as students are asked to review them and confirm their agreement with these.

7. Personal Interview: Once all of the above documents have been received, we will then conduct a personal interview with the Applicant. This interview will be arranged at the discretion of the HCC offices and will be conducted through a video conference call. The applicant will need to have access to a computer and a reliable internet connection.

Explanation of Step One Completion Process:

Once all requirements are met within the Step One portion of the application process as previously described, the Heartland Christian College Executive Council will review all material from this section of the admission process. This is done in order to make an informed decision on whether the international student meets the character requirements for Heartland Christian College, as well as to make sure that HCC is the "best" fit for the student and the student for the institution. Once the Executive Council makes its decision, the admissions office will be notified of the outcome and will then notify the applicant by email. If the decision is favorable, the applicant may then move on to the second step of the admission process.

Please note that character review and decision by the Executive Council, ***does not*** *confer full acceptance to the Applicant. The applicant will only be fully accepted into Heartland Christian College after the Applicant completes all the requirements of "Step Two" in the application process and then through an additional process of decision, receives acceptance from the Administrative Team. Once that happens, the Applicant will receive an acceptance letter from HCC and will then be connected with the DSO for International Students. The DSO (designated school official) will handle all processing of government documents and travel concerns with the new student.*

Step 2

Academic Admission Requirements for International Students

The following are the requirements of all International Students wanting to attend Heartland Christian College. These are written in accordance with Federal Mandates as well as Heartland Christian College policy and procedure. Acceptance will not be determined until all documents have been received by HCC. Any documents needing to be sent to HCC can be scanned to admissions@heartlandcollege.edu in PDF or JPEG format, however, full admission will not be completed until all needed original documents have been received in the mail/email. Please refer to the admissions department for details.

1. **High School/College Transcripts:** An official transcript of **all** High School/College work completed to date is required. Transcripts must have the issuing school seal and be sent directly from the attended school. If the original transcript is not in English, the student *must* have the original transcript translated/evaluated. If the original transcripts are in English, these documents will still need to be evaluated. Recommended translation and evaluation services can be found at www.aes-edu.org. HCC will not pay the cost for transcripts to be evaluated; however, we can assist you with this process if you have questions.

2. **TOEFL iBs (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or IELTS score:** If English is not the first or native language of the applicant, a TOEFL iBs score is required. HCC's minimum score requirements for any TOEFL iBs test taken before January 26, 2026, are are 450 for paper test, 173 for computerized test, and 45 for internet test. For tests taken after January 26th, 2026, is 3.5. The institution number for Heartland Christian College is **6313**. Please use this code to have the official transcripts sent from TOEFL to HCC. For more information on the TOEFL visit https://www.ets.org/toefl..html . For the IELTS score the requirements are 5.5.

   Option 2: Prior Study in an English-Speaking Country

   You may meet the English requirement if you've completed at least two years of full-time study (at the secondary or higher education level) in an official English-speaking country, where English was the primary language of instruction.

   Option 3: U.S. College-Level English Course

   If you've successfully completed a college-level English course in the U.S. with a grade of C or higher, this may also satisfy the requirement.

3. **Official ACT/SAT score:** International students are not required to take the ACT or SAT, however, if a student has taken one of these tests, a copy of the results should be sent to the college. If students plan to continue in higher education once they have completed their program at HCC, they might consider taking one of these tests while in attendance at HCC.

4. **Passport and photo:** For security purposes each International Student who applies to HCC must submit a copy of his/her passport ID page. The passport should be valid at least 6 months past the applicants projected graduation date if accepted. Also, the U.S. Embassy requires students to have their passports 6 months prior to applying for the F-1 Student Visa

5. **Student Health Form:** This is a record of the student's immunizations and any health conditions that require medication and/or Doctor's supervision. A copy of the student's original immunization record or high school immunization record is required along with this form. HCC requires that all students have a full series of the Hep B vaccination, the MMR series and a meningococcal vaccine before an acceptance decision will be made. An applicant must also have a negative TB test record submitted from the health facility administering said test in order to have a decision on acceptance. While traveling, some airports may require beyond those required by HCC. Please discuss this with your DSO as your travel arrangements are being made.

6. **Student Character Agreement- (printable from the application)** This agreement reflects Heartland Christian College's expectation that students live in a way that aligns with the Bible, the College's Tenets of Faith, and its Christian mission. Students are encouraged to develop personal character marked by spiritual maturity and to support and encourage one another in living lives that honor God. This document contains those expectations and applicants are asked to affirm their agreement to live and strive for these as an HCC student.

7. **Affidavit of Support:** International students are required to provide documentation that reflects student's ability for financial security during schooling. The charts below show a breakdown of what each applicant should consider as they begin the Step Two Portion of the application process.

Initial Cost of Application and Acceptance

Transcript Translation and Evaluation Fee	$200-$450
I-901 SEVIS Processing Fee (shipping included)	$350
F-1 Visa Application	$185
Passport (expiration needs to be no less than 6 months after projected graduation date)	$110-$145
TOEFL Exam	$270
Total Initial Costs	**$1,055-$1,400**

Round Trip Airfare

Transportation to HCC if accepted (Round Trip Airfare and Campus travel)	$**1,115-$3,250**

**this cost is an estimate and could fluctuate depending on region*

One Year Cost for Attending HCC

Room and Board	$2,200
Tuition	$1,080
Student Fees	$530
Books and Supplies Estimated	$600
Miscellaneous Expenses Estimated	$700
Total Cost of Attendance for Fall and Spring	**$5,110**
Additional Cost for Summer (all inclusive)	**$1,060**
Total Cost for Full Academic Year all inclusive	**$6,170**

Total cost is an estimate. Actual cost is dependent on cost of books, supplies, and any miscellaneous expenses needed throughout the year such as food, clothing, etc

International Transfer Students

Students transferring from another college or university will be admitted according to the same General Admissions Requirements listed above.

A student may request an Application for Transfer Credit from the Registrar, as well as requesting transcripts from the institution(s) to be sent to HCC. Credits which are earned at accredited institutions and apply to a program at HCC are accepted, provided that the grade for the course is a C or above. Transcripts are reviewed by the Academic Team to determine courses that apply to the HCC program, and the student is informed by the Registrar once a decision regarding transfer of credits is reached.

Please Note: After receiving your approval with Heartland Christian College, the Applicant must still receive acceptance from the United States government through SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System). See Step 3 for further instructions on how to apply for this.

Step 3

Government Documents and SEVIS Procedure

SEVIS

After all application documents have been submitted, a personal interview completed, and all requirements met, a final decision is made regarding admission to HCC and a student is then notified in writing regarding acceptance into the college, and the student pays the I-20 fee, the student will then be entered into the US Government's database called SEVIS. The SEVIS system is the database the government uses to keep track of all international students that are attending school in the USA. The PDSO creates a document called the I-20 once the student is entered and approved in SEVIS.

I-134

Students receiving any sponsorship from a U.S. citizen are required to fill out and submit the I-134 Form, Affidavit of Support. This form and instructions can be found at http://www.uscis.gov/i-134. Sponsorship from someone other than a U.S. citizen does not require the submission of an Affidavit of Support.

I-901 Form (Student/Exchange Visitor Processing Fee)

Once an I-20 has been issued from HCC to the student, the I-901 form must be filled out and the fee paid. As a service to our students, HCC assists students with this form by filling it out for them. Once the SEVIS processing fee of $300 has been submitted to HCC, the DSO will complete this form and pay the processing fee to the government, then the I-20 and I-901 receipt will be mailed to the student.

I-20 Document

The I-20 form is an extremely important document, and in most countries, the original must be taken to the US Embassy when applying for the F-1 Student Visa. Each student that is admitted to HCC will receive an I-20 document in the mail. This document is typically sent by FedEx after the SEVIS processing fee is paid and all requirements are met by the international student that has applied. The I-20 is needed for traveling into the U.S. Any student that does not have an I-20 upon arrival in the U.S. will be denied entry.

F-1 Student Visa

Once the international student receives the I-20 form, they can immediately apply for the F-1 Visa. This is required in order to travel to the U.S. and attend school. The F-1 Visa can be obtained from the nearest US Embassy or Consulate in the applicant's home country. Remember to make an appointment if necessary and take all application and acceptance materials with you. It is important to be prepared for this meeting.

Note: Some US Embassies have slower processing times than others. Depending on your country of origin, this may cause some delays in processing your Visa.

COVID Travel Guidelines

It is the responsibility of the student to understand and prepare for the current travel mandates for leaving your country and entering the United States. You can find that information at https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/ea/requirements-for-air-travelers-to-the-us.html

Currency, Fees, and Payment Options

Currency Information

Paper money for amounts over $100 is not usually seen in public circulation. It is wise to keep the amounts of money/cash that is carried down to a minimum. Many students are able to open their own bank account once they have arrived and settled. This enables students to open a checking account for transactions with businesses and helps to cut down on carrying large amounts of money. International Students should contact the PDSO upon arrival for more information on banking near the college.

Fees

Fees paid to Heartland Christian College:

- I-901 Processing Fee - $350, paid after student has been notified of acceptance to HCC
- Tuition, Room/Board, Institutional Fees – see the International Student Finance Form

Fees paid to other entities:

- Transcript Evaluation/Translation Fee – Recommended services through NACES
- TOEFL Exam – varies by country
- F-1 Visa Application - $185
- Passport – varies by country
- Travel Expenses – varies by country
- Books and Supplies – varies

Payment Options

For payments made to Heartland Christian College, students may use any of the following options:

1. Money order or cashier's check in US dollars made payable to Heartland Christian College
2. Visit our website at www.heartlandcollege.edu and click on the International Students link under the Admissions tab. Scroll down to the Payments link. Clicking on this link will take you to a secure site, and you can make a payment using a credit card or ACH (EFT).

Please Note: Once the student receives approval from the US government through their receipt of a Visa, they are now ready to plan for their trip to HCC and their stay.

Step 4

International Student Travel Information

Arrival at Heartland Christian College
Once a student arrives in the United States there are several travel options available to reach the campus of Heartland Christian College in Newark, Missouri. Listed below are travel options. These resources are made available for your convenience. Please do not hesitate to contact the DSO, Nathan Mayes, at 660-284-4800 or nathan.mayes@heartlandcollege.edu with any questions or concerns.

Once a student arrives on campus (if they have not arrived with HCC personnel) they MUST contact the DSO for a brief orientation and welcome to campus. All international students are REQUIRED to visit with the DSO at the beginning and ending of each semester. Students should be prepared to report their plans for travel over breaks during the school year, the break at the end of the fall semester, and summer plans at the end of the spring semester.

Students are expected to arrive on campus on the scheduled day for moving into residential housing and attending Boot Camp or Orientation. These dates are published in the Catalog and on the website calendar.

If an international student needs to arrive early, they must contact the DSO for prior permission. According to BCIS regulations, students are allowed to come to the US and be on campus up to 30 days prior to the start of the particular program in which the student is involved. Students will be responsible for any extra charges pertaining to early arrival in campus housing.

Travel Options
As a courtesy to our international students, HCC offers pick up and drop off at some airports and train stations free of charge. Transportation must be arranged in advance with the DSO to ensure availability of HCC staff.

Airports:
Lambert St. Louis International Airport - http://www.flystl.com/

Kansas City International Airport - http://www.flykci.com/

Quincy Regional Airport - http://www.quincyil.gov/government/CityDepartments/Airport or https://www.capeair.com/ (from St. Louis to Quincy, IL)

Kirksville Regional Airport - http://www.kirksvillecity.com/kirksville-regional-airport or https://www.capeair.com/ (from St. Louis to Kirksville, MO)

Trains:
Provide through Amtrak - http://www.amtrak.com

Amtrak Station in Quincy, IL – daily trains to/from Chicago
Amtrak Station in LaPlata, MO – daily trains to/from Kansas City

Arriving At a U.S. Port of Entry – What A Student Can Expect

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) is committed to facilitating your stay in the United States while you take advantage of our nation's academic, educational, and cultural offerings. To enhance security without slowing legitimate travel, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has instituted some changes in U.S. entry and exit procedures. Careful planning and preparation by international students can ensure that any delay based on these procedures is minimal.

Plan Your Arrival:
You may be refused entry into the United States if you attempt to arrive more than 30 days before the program start date listed on your SEVIS I-20 form.

Always Hand-carry Your Documents:
Do not put the following documents into your baggage. If your baggage is lost or delayed, you will be unable to present the documents at your port of entry. As a result, you may not be able to enter the United States:

1. Your passport, valid for at least six months beyond the date of your expected stay;
2. SEVIS Form I-20.

In addition, it is strongly recommended that you also hand carry the following documentation:

1. Evidence of financial resources;
2. Evidence of student status, such as recent tuition receipts and transcripts;
3. Paper receipt for the SEVIS fee, Form I-797, and
4. Name and contact information for your "Designated School Official", including a 24-hour emergency contact number at the school.

For comprehensive information on procedures for traveling and arriving in the United States, visit: http://educationusa.state.gov/predeparture/travel/customs.htm

Complete Your Entry Paperwork:
If Arriving By Air: Flight attendants will distribute Customs Declaration Forms (CF-6059) and Arrival Departure Record Forms (I-94). These must be completed prior to landing.

If Arriving By Land or Sea: The CBP Officer at the port of entry will provide the necessary Customs Declaration Forms (CF-6059) and Arrival-Departure Record Forms (I-94) to be filled out upon your arrival.

As You Arrive At The Port Of Entry:
Proceed to the terminal area for arriving passengers. Have the following documents available for presentation: your passport; SEVIS Form (I-20); Arrival-Departure Record Form (I-94); and

Customs Declaration Form (CF-6059). The Form I-94 should reflect the address where you will reside, not the address of the school or program.

All visitors entering the United States must state their reason for wishing to enter the country. You will also be asked to provide information about your final destination. It is important that you tell the CBP Officer that you will be a student. Be prepared to include the name and address of the school program where you will enroll/participate.

Once your inspection is successfully completed, the inspecting officer will:

- Stamp your SEVIS Form for duration of status ("D/S") for F visa holders
- Stamp your SEVIS Form for 30 days beyond program end date for M visa holders
- Stamp the Arrival-Departure Record Form (I-94) and staple it in the passport

Following Admission Into The United States:
Students should report to their school within 30 days of the date that appears on the SEVIS I-20 form to register for courses or to validate their intended participation. Failure to do so may result in serious consequences.

Additional Information

Secondary Inspection Requirements
If the CBP officer at the port of entry cannot initially verify your information or you do not have all of the required documentation, you may be directed to an interview area known as "secondary inspection." Secondary inspection allows inspectors to conduct additional research in order to verify information without causing delays for other arriving passengers.

The inspector will first attempt to verify your status by using the Student and Exchange and Visitor Information System (SEVIS). In the event that the CBP Officer needs to verify information with your school or program, **we strongly recommend** that you have the **name and telephone number of the foreign student advisor (DSO) at your school**. In the event you arrive during non-business hours (evening, weekends, holidays), you should also have an emergency or non-business hour phone number available for this official.

Failure to comply with U.S. government entry-exit procedures may result in your being denied entry to the United States. Under certain circumstances, the CBP officer may issue a "Notice to Student or Exchange Visitor" Form (I-515A), which authorizes temporary admission into the United States. Work with your school to submit the proper documentation without delay.

US-visit: All nonimmigrant visitors holding visas -- regardless of race, national origin, or religion -- participate in the US-VISIT program, a comprehensive registration system tracking entries to and exits from the United States. For more information:
http://www.dhs.gov/xtrvlsec/programs/content_multi_image_0006.shtm

National Security Entry-exit Registration System (Nseers): Some individuals may be asked to provide additional information under the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System

(NSEERS). A packet of information will be available at the port of entry explaining the registration procedure. For more information:
http://www.dhs.gov/xnews/releases/press_release_0305.shtm

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.

This data from: http://www.ice.gov/sevis/students/index.htm

General Information

For all information regarding general college policies, academics and residential living, please see the college Catalog and Residential Living Handbook available on the website at www.heartlandcollege.edu. The Catalog can be found under the Admissions tab and the Residential Handbook under the Student Life tab.

*HCC reserves the right to change any statement in this Guide concerning, but not limited to, rules, policies, procedures, tuition, fees, and all other international student issues without notice or obligation. Failure to read this Guide does not excuse students from the instructions, regulations and requirements described herein.