

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADMISSIONS POLICIES

While the admissions process at Bethlehem College & Seminary is rigorous and deliberate, we see it most fundamentally as subject to the wise and sovereign hand of God. As such, your application should begin where our deliberations must: in earnest and dependent prayer for God's will to be done in our lives. Our aim is to see Christ exalted in your life, whether you come to Bethlehem College & Seminary or go somewhere else. Pray with us that this process would be a means to that glorious end.

International Students

Bethlehem College & Seminary is authorized under Federal law to enroll nonimmigrant alien students.

Vision

A key part of our mission at Bethlehem College & Seminary is to spread a passion for the supremacy of God in all things for the joy of all peoples through Jesus Christ. This mission is rooted in the biblical vision of the people of God, ransomed by the blood of Christ from every tribe, tongue, people, and language. Therefore, we aim to admit international students from among those peoples in order to train and equip them to return and spread this passion in their home countries.

UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE

Bethlehem College & Seminary accepts applications from international students to both our undergraduate and graduate level programs. Many of the requirements for international students are the same for both programs, but there are some differences. Unless otherwise stated, applicants should assume that all of the policies listed below apply to either program.

Timeline

Undergraduate: Admissions into the undergraduate program are made on a rolling basis by the Bethlehem College Admissions Committee. The application deadline for international applicants is January 10 for freshmen.

Undergraduate—Transfer: Junior transfer applicants who have not fulfilled the prerequisite of two semesters of Greek should plan to apply 12–18 months before they plan to enroll so as to complete Greek as well as the Old Testament and New Testament Survey exams. The deadline for applications is July 15th, thirteen (13) months before desired matriculation. Interviews will then be conducted, and an admissions decision will be given August 15th. Students who are approved will then begin Bethlehem’s Accelerated Greek course in the Fall, and complete it in early Spring. After this Greek prerequisite has been successfully completed, applicants qualify for full acceptance, and may proceed with the F-1 Visa application process. Students enrolling in Accelerated Greek are required to pay the tuition costs for this course.

Graduate—Master of Divinity: International applicants who have already completed 2 semesters of college level Greek have a December 1 deadline.

Applicants who have not fulfilled the Greek requirement should plan to apply 12–18 months before they plan to enroll. The deadline for applications is July 15th, thirteen (13) months before desired matriculation. Interviews will then be conducted, and an admissions decision will be given August 15th. Students who are approved will then begin Bethlehem’s Accelerated Greek course in the Fall, and complete it in early Spring. After this Greek prerequisite has been successfully completed, applicants qualify for full acceptance, and may proceed with the F-1 Visa application process. Students enrolling in Accelerated Greek are required to pay the tuition costs for this course.

Admissions Requirements

In addition to the standard admissions requirements, there are additional requirements for international students.

1. **Statement of Understanding:** International applicants are required to read and sign the “Statement of Understanding.”
2. **Transcript Evaluation:** Official transcripts are required from all post-secondary level schools attended from which academic credit was received. Transcripts from schools attended outside the U.S. must be translated into English and professionally evaluated. Bethlehem accepts evaluations from the following organizations: World Education Services (www.wes.org); AACRAO International Educational Services (<http://ies.aacrao.org>); Educational Credential Evaluators (<https://www.ece.org>). The report must include general equivalency, course by course evaluation, and grade point average (GPA). The applicant is responsible for any evaluation fees.

Undergraduate: applicants must have their high school transcripts translated and evaluated in the same way.

Graduate: applicants must have obtained the equivalent to a U.S. bachelor’s degree as determined by one of the above agencies.

3. **TOEFL:** All students for whom English is not their first language are also required to take either the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). For students taking the TOEFL, Bethlehem requires that they take the internet based text (TOEFL iBT®). A score of at least 90 is required for the TOEFL iBT®; a score of 7 is required for the IELTS. Because the test is normally administered four times a year, the candidate is advised to make inquiry well in advance of the date of anticipated study in the United States. We must receive official score reports directly from the testing service. Bethlehem’s code is: B646. Scores must be no more than three years old. Students who do not meet the minimum English proficiency requirements will not be admitted. To register for the TOEFL test, applicants may contact: <https://www.ets.org/toefl>

An applicant who is a native speaker of English and is a citizen of the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, or the British West Indies is not required to take the TOEFL exam. Applicants from all other countries are required to submit a TOEFL score.

Undergraduate applicants from these English speaking countries are not required to take the TOEFL, but are required to submit SAT or ACT scores instead.

No admissions decision will be made until all required forms and documents are received, at which point the admissions file will be reviewed by the committee.

Undergraduate Transfers

Transferring F-1 students already living in the U.S. should phone the registrar (612-455-3420 extension 402) to discuss the process of SEVIS F-1 Transfer. Bethlehem can issue a new I-20 only after the previous school has “transferred out” the SEVIS record to us. If the previous school requires an F-1 transfer form, our registrar can send it via email. Transfer students will be required to show evidence of acceptance to Bethlehem College & Seminary to their previous school. All F-1 transfer students are required to demonstrate sufficient annual support as per the Financial Affidavit (below).

Deposit

Once the applicant has been approved, a deposit of \$2,000USD is required. This amount is fully refundable in the event that the Visa application is denied. Payment may be made by credit card, wire transfer or other forms of certified payment. This deposit will be applied to the student’s tuition once they arrive at Bethlehem.

Financial Affidavit

Along with the deposit, international applicants are required to submit a financial affidavit. To apply for an F-1 student visa, students must be able to demonstrate sufficient financial support to cover expenses while attending Bethlehem College & Seminary for both billed and personal costs, as well as the cost of living for a family (if applicable). All international applicants (including citizens of Canada) must complete the Affidavit of Financial Support and submit it along with required financial documentation. The student must also provide signed certification from the bank or sponsor(s) verifying the accessibility of funds. Strict government regulations require Bethlehem to verify the financial resources of international applicants. Canadian citizens are not required to obtain an F-1 visa. Canadian citizens must, however, receive an I-20 and pay the SEVIS fee. Canadians are also required to abide by all other provisions and restrictions for lawfully maintaining F-1 status, including provisions for employment and full time enrollment each semester.

Families

Bethlehem requires international students who are married and/or have children to bring their family with them. We believe that the well-being of marriage and family is of greater importance than theological study. These family members must apply for an F-2 Visa as part of their spouse’s F-1 Student Visa application.

Health History Forms

All applicants are required to submit the Medical Information & Health History form. Additionally, applicants must submit the Immunization Record for Students Attending Post-Secondary Schools in Minnesota. The state of Minnesota requires all students to provide immunization records for the following immunizations: tetanus/diphtheria (Td or Tdap), at least one dose required within past 10 years; measles/mumps/rubella (MMR), at least one dose required at or after 12 months of age.

Additionally, international students may be required to complete a Tuberculosis (TB) screening the first week they arrive at Bethlehem. If students have ever been diagnosed or treated for TB, they should bring copies of all associated medical records.

Visa Application

After the deposit has been received, an I-20 will be issued. The applicant then is required to pay a one-time fee of \$200.00 to the Dept. of Homeland Security for the operational costs of the Student Visa and Exchange Visitor Information Systems (SEVIS). Payment should be done prior to admittance at www.fmjfee.com after the I-20 is received.

Tuition

Bethlehem requires full payment of each semester's tuition before the semester begins. International students do not have the "four-payment" option, and should plan accordingly. Bethlehem does not offer any additional financial aid or scholarships to international students beyond the Serious Joy Scholarship. An international student will not be allowed to enroll for the next semester and continue study if the student's tuition is not paid by the first day of class. Failure to make payment will result in immediate withdrawal from Bethlehem College & Seminary.

Course Load

Undergraduate: International students admitted to the United States are required by law to be registered as full time students carrying a minimum of 12 credit hours of academic work per semester in the undergraduate program.

Graduate: International students admitted to the United States are required by law to be registered as full time students carrying a minimum of 9 credit hours of academic work per semester in the graduate program.

Employment

International students on an F-1 student Visa can work only on campus (if a job is available). Students cannot work off campus until the second year and then only with permission from the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

Health Insurance

International students must purchase and maintain health insurance while enrolled at Bethlehem College & Seminary. Married couples planning to have children should maintain comprehensive medical insurance, since the cost of having a baby in the U.S. can exceed \$10,000USD. Single students in good general health are recommended to maintain so-called “major medical” or “catastrophic” insurance, the least expensive kind. Students must submit proof of their policy to the registrar prior to the beginning of classes.

Graduation

Upon graduation, international students are required to return to their home country. The F-1 (Full-time student) Visa is granted to a student whose sole purpose is to pursue full-time education in the U.S. and who intends to return to his/her home country after the completion of studies, unless accepted to another program to pursue continued education in the United States.