

IEP Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- How long is the Intensive English Program?
IEP courses are for 7.5 weeks. Please see the IEP Academic Calendar at <https://www.sfbu.edu/iep/academic-calendar>. The IEP has four levels, from Elementary to Advanced. You will take a free online level placement test to find your level before you are admitted. The number of levels you will take depends on which level you start in, and how long you want to study.
- How much will the entire program cost?
International students must maintain full-time status by taking four IEP courses. Tuition for all four courses of a level costs \$2,000 per 7.5-week IEP session. Each course costs \$500. Please see <https://www.sfbu.edu/iep/fees> for the full list of fees and expenses, including health insurance and textbooks. How long you study depends on your score on the placement test, and how many levels you want to take.
- Does the IEP offer scholarships?
Unfortunately, our Intensive English Program does not offer scholarships, but SFBU offers scholarships for our Bachelor's and Master's degree programs.
- If I take IEP courses, will I meet the English language proficiency requirement for SFBU degree programs?
IEP students meet the English language proficiency requirement for SFBU degree programs after completing all four courses of Upper Intermediate B with a grade of B or A.
- Will the university give me an admission/acceptance letter before my visa interview?
You will receive an IEP acceptance package together with your Form I-20 for your visa interview, but this will be for the IEP only. You can choose to have SFBU's Admissions team decide if you qualify to enroll in a degree program. If Admissions finds that your academic records meet our requirements for degree programs, you will receive a letter from Admissions stating that you are eligible to enroll in a degree program after successfully completing all four courses of IEP Upper Intermediate B with a grade of B or better.
- Can I get dual admission to a degree program as well as to the IEP?
You can be admitted to only one program at a time. However, you can arrange to have your academic records evaluated, and send the evaluation report to SFBU's Admissions department. Then, Admissions can decide if you will be eligible to enroll in a degree program after you complete all four courses of Upper Intermediate B with a grade of B or better. If you are eligible, Admissions will send you a letter that says you may enroll in a degree program after successfully completing IEP level Upper Intermediate B. For more information, please see <https://www.sfbu.edu/sites/default/files/2023-03/Assessment-of-Eligibility-for-Degree-Programs.pdf>
- As an international student, what steps do I need to take?
Please see <https://www.sfbu.edu/sites/default/files/2023-03/Process-for-International-Students.pdf> for the process that international students must follow.

- How is housing arranged for students, and how much will it cost?
SFBU has limited, temporary student housing. Please check <https://www.sfbu.edu/student-life/housing> for more information.
- Will SFBU issue Form I-20s for my spouse and child(ren) as well?
You will receive an IEP acceptance package together with your Form I-20 for your visa interview. For the IEP, SFBU will issue a Form I-20 for the student only. After the student finishes the IEP and is formally admitted into a degree program, the student will work with our Designated School Official (DSO) to get I-20s for any dependents (spouse and children).
- I am on a B-1/B-2 visitor/tourist visa. Can I take IEP courses?
IEP students on B-1/B-2 visitor/tourist visas may take one, two, or three IEP courses at the same time, in only the Elementary and Lower Intermediate Levels of the IEP. They cannot take courses for more than 15 weeks (two IEP sessions).
- I am on a J-1 or M-1 visa. Can I take IEP courses?
Unfortunately, no. SFBU is not certified to accept J-1 or M-1 visa holders as students.
- I am on an H-4, H-4 EAD, H-1B, F-2, TN, or TD visa. Can I take IEP courses?
Yes. You can enroll in IEP courses part time or full time.
- Can I get a certificate?
You will earn a Certificate of Completion when you finish each IEP level. There are four levels in the IEP, from Elementary to Advanced.
- Are there opportunities for those with an English certificate, and what are those opportunities?
We advise you to do your own research related to your interests and goals. If you want a certificate that shows English proficiency, a standardized English language exam such as IELTS, TOEFL, PTE, Cambridge, or iTEP will give you an official score report which can help in getting admitted to universities, immigrating to certain countries, and in getting certain jobs. SFBU's IEP can help you to score higher on these exams.
- When do I need to pay all tuition and fees?
The confirmation ('Intent to Report') fee is due two weeks before the first class, but after you receive your visa. The registration fee is due when you register for courses. Textbooks must be purchased before classes begin. Tuition and health insurance fees are due on or before the first day of classes. There are fees that the U.S. government charges associated with getting your visa, as well.
- When do I need to submit all documents?
You must submit scans of documents when you apply to the program. You must bring your original passport and financial support documents with you when you come to SFBU for New Student Orientation, which is a few days before classes start.

- As an international student, why do I have to show that I have \$38,600?
The \$38,600 is related to F-1 international student visa requirements from the U.S. government. The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) requires visa applicants to prove to the university that they have the money to pay for their living expenses and study costs during the time period covered by the visa. The time period for an IEP visa is one year. The university must verify these funds before creating the Form I-20 that the applicant takes to the visa appointment at a U.S. embassy or consulate.

All universities in the United States must follow USCIS's F-1 international student visa requirement. The amount of money that universities require may be different, but it is still an estimate of the living expenses and study costs for the student during the time period covered by the visa. The cost of living in Silicon Valley, in the San Francisco Bay Area of California, is very high. For this reason, a large part of the \$38,600 is budgeted for living expenses. This is what SFBU requires in order to issue Form I-20s:

IEP

Tuition & Fees	\$ 12,000
Living Expenses	\$ 23,750
Insurance, Books	\$2,850
Total	\$ 38,600