

# Intensive English Program Agent Partner Handbook



**AGENT PARTNER HANDBOOK**

**Intensive English Program**  
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## Message from the Director of the IEP: Jill Cargile

Dear Advisor:

Thank you for your interest in the Intensive English Program at Western Carolina University. We are dedicated to providing a smooth admissions process and excellent programs.

Managing the processes of enrolling in university programs can be challenging, but we aim to provide the information you need to help students get to our campus and have a positive experience in their study of English language and US academic culture and skills.

We in the Intensive English Program and Western Carolina University look forward to working with you and your students!



Jill Cargile  
Director of the Intensive English Program

**About the IEP:** The Intensive English Program (IEP) at Western Carolina University (WCU) provides programming to facilitate English language, cross-cultural and academic skills that prepare international students to attend US universities, primarily undergraduate and graduate study at WCU. The IEP supports the educational mission of Western Carolina University through international outreach to the university and local community, commitment to international student success, faculty development, and positive teaching and learning environments. The IEP contributes to the integration of international students into all aspects of campus life, and collaborates with faculty, staff and students across campus toward creating a successful academic experience for all international students.

### Why the WCU Intensive English Program is Unique

1. **Application Assistance:** Caring staff walk students and agents through every step of the application process. All questions and communication is handled by the Intensive English Program, and staff provide personal communication all the way through the student's arrival on campus.
2. **Curriculum includes three levels of English study:** low intermediate, high intermediate and advanced. Students are in class 18 hours per week and study speaking, listening, grammar, writing, reading. Many social activities are organized for students to interact in the campus and local communities and practice their language skills.
3. **Conditional Admission:** Applicants who do not initially have the English language skills for direct admission, can be conditionally admitted to undergraduate, and some graduate, programs. *Completion of the WCU Intensive English Program waives WCU's TOEFL and IELTS test score admission requirements.*
4. **Student Focused:** The average IEP class size is 9 students. With three levels of full-time, language instruction the program provides individual attention to student academic needs.
5. **Education Jumpstart:** The IEP features 18+ hours of instruction per week of non-credit courses. WCU IEP students have full access to Western Carolina's academic library, free tutoring, and other

services that promote student success. Immersion in campus culture familiarizes IEP students with academic life in the United States before they enter degree programs.

6. Excellent Faculty: Our experienced faculty hold graduate degrees in language teaching and are native English speakers.
7. Community Involvement: The IEP encourages students to become involved in the local community. Educational classroom excursions, and activities led by the international programs office, introduce IEP students to members of the community. Free cultural activities hosted by WCU's campus encourage IEP students to form lasting friendships with American students.

### Why Western Carolina University is Unique

1. Very Affordable: Intensive English Program and university costs are competitive when compared to other regional universities and larger institutions. See upcoming [NC Promise](#) beginning Fall 2018 for significant tuition reduction: <http://www.wcu.edu/apply/undergraduate-admissions/ncpromise-faq.aspx>
2. Safe Location: Western Carolina University has a safe, friendly campus that is surrounded by the beautiful Great Smoky Mountains <https://www.nps.gov/grsm/index.htm>
3. Outdoor Adventure: WCU was voted Top Adventure College in the Southeast and Mid-Atlantic by *Outdoor Magazine* 2014- 2016! Join rafting and hiking trips led by the university's adventure center, or rent equipment for excursions of your own.

### Academic Calendar

The WCU IEP offers 16 week sessions in the Fall and Spring semesters. An 8-week session is offered during the summer.

*Fall: mid-August – early December*

*Spring: early January – early May*

*Summer: early June – early August*

The Intensive English Program follows Western Carolina University's academic calendar, which means that students receiving conditional admission do not miss semesters in between completion of the IEP and commencement of their bachelor's or master's degree program.

### Application Process

Admission is available for one or more semesters. Applicants must be at least 18 years old by date of attendance. For information about this process, including how to pay the application fee, please direct questions to [iep@wcu.edu](mailto:iep@wcu.edu).

### Applying for the Intensive English Program + Conditional Admission to an Undergraduate Degree

To begin the application process follow our simple 6 step application process at "[Apply Now](#)" at [iep.wcu.edu](http://iep.wcu.edu). E-mail scans of all following documents to [iep@wcu.edu](mailto:iep@wcu.edu):

1. [Completed IEP Online Application](#)  
*Note for Advisors: The applicant's personal e-mail is required by WCU for admission. A separate space is provided for the Agent's correspondence e-mail address and other contact information.*
2. Biographical information/picture page of the applicant's passport
3. Visa page from passport (if currently in the United States)
4. High School or University Transcript (not needed for IEP only)
5. Bank letter for at least \$26,000 USD. Letter must be no more than 90 days old. It should be in English and list amounts in USD.

## Next Steps

Newly accepted students are required to visit “[Next Steps](#)” at [iep.wcu.edu](http://iep.wcu.edu). This page lists important steps that must be completed before students arrive in the United States to begin their studies with the IEP.

An information packet with some of this information will be mailed with each I-20. Students will also receive an additional information letter from the IEP Office one month prior to their arrival in the United States.

## Obtaining the Visa

### Requirements for admissions to a degree program

If you have been accepted to a degree program at Western Carolina University (WCU), and have met all requirements to obtain your Form I-20, then you will be issued the appropriate form. F-1 students may be completely supported from personal or family funds.

### Apply for a Visa

With your I-20 in hand, contact the nearest U.S. consulate or embassy to find out about application requirements, procedures, hours, fees and processing times, since the procedures differ between different countries. Visit the [U.S. State Department](#) for a list of U.S. embassies and consulates.

### You will present the following documents to the Consular Officer

- Valid Passport
- Form I-20
- Letter of admission from Western Carolina University and the Intensive English Program
- Proof of financial support (i.e. bank statement, scholarship award letter, and/or affidavit of support, to match the amount indicated on the Form I-20)
- Two (2) photographs (The passport-style photos must be 2” by 2”. The photos must be in color with full face, frontal view on a white to off-white background. Head height should measure 1” to 1

3/8” from top to bottom of chin, and eye height is between 1 1/8” to 1 3/8” from bottom of photo. Your head must be bare unless you are wearing a headdress as required by a religious order of which you are a member.)

- Visa application form (available at the U.S. consulate)
- Evidence of your intent to return to your home country upon completion of your studies
- Visa application fee (find out from the consulate what amount is and what forms of payment are accepted)

### Entering the United States

Make plans to arrive in Cullowhee at least two weeks before the start of the semester if you plan to live off campus, to give yourself time to find a place to stay. If you have made arrangements to live on campus, you should plan to arrive in time (2-3 days prior) for the mandatory international student orientation, usually held a few days before the first day of class.

On the airplane, before entering the United States, you will be given a white card to fill out, called Form I-94. At the port of the entry, you will be asked to present your passport, containing a valid F-1 visa, and your I-20, and the I-94 to an officer of the US Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS). The officer should then return the following documents to you:

### F-1 students

- Form I-94 with a USCIS stamp and a notation for "F-1, D/S"
- Top Page (student copy) of the I-20 with a USCIS stamp

These are your immigration documents. Make sure that you have these documents before leaving the USCIS desk. The form I-94 (a white card) is usually stapled into the passport opposite the visa. Keep them in a safe place. The "D/S" notation stands for "Duration of Status," which means that you are authorized to stay in the United States, as long as you are maintaining student status.

## Health:

North Carolina state law requires anyone entering college to present a certificate of immunization that shows all required immunizations.

**Students with Translated Immunization Records** - These forms must be officially translated into English. You can use the blank immunization form attached to this e-mail. You can e-mail your records to [iep@wcu.edu](mailto:iep@wcu.edu) or bring them with you to the airport. WCU Student Health Services will review your records and let you know if they meet the requirements. [All requirements are listed here.](#)

**Students without Translated Immunization Records** - You will be required to receive immunizations from WCU Health Services after you arrive. The cost of these shots will be billed to your student account.

[Students attending Western Carolina University are required to have medical insurance.](#)

If you already have international insurance that is valid in the United States, you can e-mail proof of insurance to [iep@wcu.edu](mailto:iep@wcu.edu) or bring it with you on the plane.

**If you do not have international health insurance**, you will be required to buy insurance. You can buy HTH insurance through the WCU IEP Office after you arrive. For information about cost, [please check the information for your IEP program](#). For questions about HTH insurance, or for information about student + family health insurance options, please e-mail us at [iep@wcu.edu](mailto:iep@wcu.edu).

## Housing

**If you want to live on campus** - You need to notify our office right away! Please complete and return the appropriate housing contract to [iep@wcu.edu](mailto:iep@wcu.edu). Dormitory rooms are equipped with furniture, utilities, and high speed internet. Meals are served in the new campus dining hall and offer a range of food choices.

**If you want to live off campus** - You need to find an apartment that you can walk to from campus, because there is no public transportation in Cullowhee. Visit [offcampushousing.wcu.edu](http://offcampushousing.wcu.edu) to find an apartment near to the campus. You want to do this before you come to campus.

**Students under 21 years old** - While a student in the IEP, you may choose to live off campus. *If you are under 21 when you complete the IEP, however, you must follow WCU policy.* WCU requires students under 21 years of age to live in residence halls on campus.

**If you are accompanied by family members** - There is no on-campus housing available for families or married couples. Housing is available only in off-campus residences.

**Costs:** please see website for the most up-to-date cost information at:  
[iep.wcu.edu](http://iep.wcu.edu)

Estimated Cost for Summer 2017 (8 weeks):

IEP Academic Program Fee	\$2647
University and Orientation Fees	\$1170
On-Campus Housing (single room) + Meals	\$1716 - \$1970
Health insurance + 1st immunizations (student only) *	\$305
Books (estimated):	\$250
<b>Total estimated cost per 8-week semester (subject to change)</b>	<b>\$6088-\$6342</b>

Estimated Costs for Fall 2016 (per semester):

IEP Academic Program Fee	\$3950
University Fees	\$1702
On-Campus Housing + Meals	\$3601 - \$5588
Health Insurance	\$438
Books (estimated)	\$250
<b>Total estimated cost per 15-week semester (subject to change)</b>	<b>\$9941-\$11928</b>

Estimated Costs Spring 2017 (per semester):

IEP Academic Program Fee	\$3950
University Fees	\$1702
On-Campus Housing + Meals	\$3601 - \$5588
Health Insurance	\$438

Books (estimated)	\$250
<b>Total estimated cost per 15-week semester (subject to change)</b>	<b>\$9941 - 11928</b>

### Payment Options

The WCU IEP accepts the following payment options:

- Cash in United States Dollars
- Cashier's check drawn on an American bank, made payable to Western Carolina University.
- All major credit cards (Visa, Mastercard, American Express, Discover, JCB). 2.75% processing fee will be charged, no prepaid cards accepted.
- The semester must be covered in its entirety.
- International money transfer. Contact [iep@wcu.edu](mailto:iep@wcu.edu) for transaction instructions.

### Commission Structure:

The IEP will reduce the cost by **10 percent on the IEP Academic Program Fee** each session students are enrolled in the Intensive English Program. When students are admitted to study at Western Carolina University, this cost reduction will no longer be in effect. Note, however, that beginning Fall 2018, the [NC Promise](#) will take effect, providing tuition that competes with the best international scholarships in the US!

### Tuition Reduction:

Beginning in fall semester 2018, the [NC Promise Tuition Plan](#) will mean that out-of-state and international undergraduate tuition will drop from more than \$7,000 to \$2,500 per semester.