

Policy Number	132.000
Policy Title	GRADUATE AND ONLINE ADMISSION POLICY
Responsible Officer	Director of Graduate and Online Recruitment
Responsible Office	Admissions Office
Summary	The following policy outlines an online undergraduate or graduate student's requirements for admission to the University.
Definitions	<p>Official Transcripts – A comprehensive record of academic progress, including transfer courses, credit earned by exam, and all earned degrees. College transcripts must list the following: Dates the student attended the institution, titles of courses and examinations completed, grades received, credit, hours or units earned, any degree or diploma received. Transcripts must be received directly from the institution in a sealed envelope or in an electronic format by the prior school sending the transcript through an approved third-party vendor.</p> <p>Unofficial Transcripts – Generally contain the same information as an official. Unofficial transcripts must show academic progress, including transfer courses, credit earned by exam, and all earned degrees. College transcripts must list the following: Dates the student attended the institution, titles of courses and examinations completed, grades received, credit hours or units earned, any degree or diploma received, and the seal and signature of the issuing institution. However, unofficial transcripts may be received directly from the student rather than from the institution or approved third party vendor, and do not have to contain the seal and signature from the issuing institution. Diplomas and letters of completion are not considered an unofficial transcript.</p> <p>Applicants for the PhD in Organizational Leadership and the Doctor of Business Administration program are only required to submit official transcripts for the institution that awarded them their Master's degree since there is no transferrable credit into the program.</p> <p>Official Test Score - Test score results that are sent directly from the testing agency.</p> <p>Unaccredited Institutions - US institutions which are not accredited by an agency officially recognized by the US Department of Education (USDE) or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or non-US institutions not acknowledged by WES as accredited (typically based on the institution's recognition by the home country's ministry of education).</p> <p>Kepha Institute – Special program allowing Chinese students to take online courses in Mandarin to earn Columbia Biblical Seminary degrees or Master of Education.</p> <p>Benke Certificate of Graduation – Diploma or Graduation Certificate of a 4- or 5-year undergraduate course.</p> <p>Zhuanke Certificate of Graduation – Diploma of a 2- or 3-year junior college course. https://www.chsi.com.cn/en/news/201312/20131202/663878204.html</p>
Approving Body	Academic Council; Administrative Council
Initial Approval Date	May 8, 2017 (119.000); November 6, 2024 (120.000)
Last Revision	April 2026
Latest Approval	<p><i>Graduate Admission Policy</i></p> <p>119.000 – Aca C (05.01.2017); Admin C (05.08.2017)</p> <p>119.01 – Aca C (12.11.2017); Admin C (11.13.2017)</p> <p>119.02 – Aca C (12.07.2018); Admin C (11.16.2018)</p> <p>119.03 – Aca C (03.08.2019); Admin C (02.15.2019)</p> <p>119.04 – Aca C (03.28.2019 by e-Vote); Admin C (03.28.2019 by e-Vote)</p>

	119.05 – Aca C (10.11.2019); Admin C (11.15.2019) 119.06 – Aca C (02.10.2020); Admin C (01.17.2019) 119.07 – Aca C (02.12.2021); Admin C (02.19.2021) 119.08 – Aca C (11.22.2021); Admin C (10.22.2021) 119.09 – Aca C (04.14.2023); Admin C (04.19.2023) 119.10 – Aca C (06.12.2023); Admin C (05.31.2023) 119.11 – Aca C (07.17.2023); Admin C (07.26.2023 by e-Vote) 119.12 – Aca C (01.12.2024); Admin C (12.13.2023) 119.13 – Aca C (03.08.2024); Admin C (02.21.2024) 119.14 – Aca C (11.02.2024); Admin C (11.06.2024) <i>Online Admission Policy</i> 120.000 – Aca C (11.06.2017); Admin C (09.11.2017) 120.001 – Aca C (02.10.2020); Admin C (01.17.2020) 120.002 – Aca C (11.22.2021); Admin C (10.22.2021) 120.003 – Aca C (04.14.2023); Admin C (04.19.2023) 120.004 – Aca C (06.12.2023); Admin C (05.31.2023) 120.005 – Aca C (07.17.2023); Admin C (07.26.2023 by e-Vote) 120.006 – Aca C (01.12.2024); Admin C (12.13.2023) 120.007 – Aca C (03.02.2024); Admin C (02.21.2024) 120.008 – Aca C (11.08.2024); Admin C (11.06.2024) <i>Graduate and Online Admission Policy</i> 132.000 – Aca C (05.11.2026); Admin C (04.15.2026)
Re-evaluation Date	Fall 2029
Departmental Impact	All CIU

Failure to follow the following policy may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

Policy Statement

Consistent with its mission, Columbia International University seeks to admit students who affirm personal faith in Jesus Christ, align with a biblical worldview, and have the capacity for academic success in their chosen field of study. CIU exists to educate students from a biblical worldview to impact the nations with the message of Christ, and admission is extended to those who desire to participate in and contribute to this Christ-centered learning community.

Certain programs, particularly within the Seminary and School of Counseling, may require additional evidence of ministry experience, spiritual maturity, or character references. Specific admission requirements are published on individual program catalog pages.

All applicants must also demonstrate adequate academic preparation for graduate-level study, including the completion of an earned bachelor’s or master’s degree from an accredited institution, as applicable, and evidence of English proficiency for international students.

Admission decisions are made without regard to race, ethnic origin, nationality, gender, or disability. CIU reserves the right to deny or revoke admission for applicants whose conduct or stated beliefs are inconsistent with the University’s biblical principles, doctrinal commitments, or community standards. Additionally, no applicant will be considered for admission if they or an immediate family member are involved in an ongoing investigation or legal action against the University.

Rationale

This policy provides clear and consistent guidance for graduate and online admissions at Columbia International University. It ensures that students entering CIU are aligned with the University’s mission, values, and expectations, supporting a Christ-centered academic environment marked by spiritual formation, academic excellence, and community integrity.

By clearly articulating expectations for profession of faith, doctrinal alignment, and community standards, this policy supports the development of students who are prepared to serve Christ faithfully in their professions and ministries.

Policy Procedures

General Undergraduate Application Requirements Freshman Students

Applicants applying for admission as a full or part-time degree seeking or non-degree seeking student must provide the following to the Admissions Office:

- Online application
- Official high school transcript is required. Successful completion of General Educational Development (GED) Test may be submitted in lieu of a high school transcript.
 - Minimum high school grade point average (GPA):
 - 2.0 on a 4.0 scale (those with a GPA under 2.0 may be admitted on a provisional basis)
- Official college transcripts of all coursework completed if the student seeks to transfer credits from previously attended institutions.
- Additional specific degree requirements
- Final official transcripts are required prior to registering for courses

Transfer Students

Applicants applying for admission as a full or part-time degree seeking or non-degree seeking student must provide the following to the Admissions Office:

- Online application
- Official college transcript from institution where 12 or more post-high school college credits were attempted is required. Official transcripts for all additional work completed or in progress if the student seeks to transfer credits from those institutions.
 - Minimum college grade point average (GPA):
 - 2.0 on a 4.0 scale (those with a GPA under 2.0 may be admitted on a provisional basis)
- Additional specific degree requirements
- Final official transcripts are required prior to registering for courses.

General Application Requirements

Applicants applying for admission as a full or part-time degree seeking or non-degree seeking student must provide the following to the Admissions Office:

- Online application
- Additional specific degree requirements
- Final official transcripts are required prior to registering for courses.

International Students

Applicants who are not United States citizens applying for admission as full or part-time degree seeking or non-degree seeking student must provide the following to the Admissions Office:

- Online application
- Additional specific program requirements
- Official Transcript(s)
 - For schools attended outside the United States, an applicant must validate the international equivalence required for admission into the applicant's desired program by providing one of the following:
 - An Official International Credential Advancement Package (ICAP) evaluation transcripts by World Education Services (WES),
 - An InCred evaluation, or
 - An evaluation completed by a member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES).

Note: An applicant seeking transfer credit from an international institution, WES or InCred must be used to indicate appropriate transfer equivalency. Academic records not written in English must be accompanied by a certified translation.

- Special Considerations:
 - Applicants having studied at an institution accredited by the Asia Theological Association (ATA) may be considered as having received the equivalent of a U.S. Bachelor or Master degree from an accredited institution, as long as the school's accreditation with ATA is current at the time of the student's graduation.
 - Applicants having studied in China and not seeking transfer credit: Applicant may submit official transcripts in Chinese, official graduation certificate and degree certificate in Chinese to CSSD (Center for Student Services and Development). CSSD will provide CIU with the official academic transcript and English verification report to determine highest post-secondary degree earned.
 - Applicants having studied in China and seeking transfer credit: Applicants submit their Chinese documents to CSSD (Center for Student Services and Development) and have CSSD provide WES with the official academic transcript and English verification report and obtain a course-by-course evaluation.

- Final official transcript evaluation is required prior to registering for courses.
- Official test score from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or Duolingo English Test if English is not the applicant's first language or if they earned a degree from an institution where all work and instruction was completed in English.
 - TOEFL score minimum: 4
 - Duolingo English Test score minimum: 115
 - IELTS Online Test minimum:
 - Undergraduate score: 6
 - Graduate score: 6.5

 - International students from the following countries do not need to submit an English proficiency exam: (UK) Virgin Islands, (US) Virgin Islands, Anguilla, Antigua, Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Barbuda, Belize, Bermuda, Botswana, Canada, Cayman Islands, Dominica, England, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Grenadines, Guyana, Ireland, Jamaica, Kenya, Liberia, Nevis, New Zealand, Nigeria, Saint Kitts, Scotland, Sierra Leone, South Africa, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Tobago, Trinidad, United Kingdom, Wales, Zambia, Zimbabwe.
 - International students from the following countries may be required to submit an essay or go through an interview process in lieu of an English proficiency exam: Caicos Islands, Cameroon, Cook Islands, Falkland Islands, Fiji, Gibraltar, Jersey, Lesotho, Malawi, Malta, Marshall Island, Micronesia, Montserrat, Namibia, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Rwanda, Samoa, Seychelles, Singapore, Solomon Island, St. Helena, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Tonga, Turks Islands, Vanuatu.

- International Citizens Certification of Funds form as well as a bank statement certifying the funds listed must be provided in order to validate proof of funds.

- Following admission to the University, international students are required to submit an enrollment deposit and all necessary documentation for issuance of the student visa.

Kepha Institute Students

See the Kepha Admission Policy (Policy 127.000 at www.ciu.edu/policies).

Non-Baccalaureate Students

Students without an earned baccalaureate degree may be considered for special admission to certain graduate and seminary programs at Columbia International University. Requirements and availability for non-baccalaureate students is available in the Non-Baccalaureate Admissions Policy.

Previously Enrolled Students

Students that previously attended as a degree-seeking student and have either graduated or been away for a full calendar year must:

- Re-apply for admission
- Submit official transcripts from any school(s) attended since leaving CIU as well as any degree-specific registration forms (pre-registration, manual registration, or degree-change forms). All other previously submitted admissions documents will remain valid for five years from the date that the document was received.

- Connect with the online admissions department about any potential account holds and Satisfactory Academic Progress. Any account holds or campus safety concerns need to be cleared prior to re-enrollment

Students who have been withdrawn for less than one year do not need to submit a new application and should contact their advisor and the Financial Aid Office about next steps.

Note that admissions reserves the right to request any updated documents.

Non-Degree Seeking Students (NDSS)

Students not applying for a specific degree program may apply to be accepted as a non-degree seeking student (NDSS). Examples include transient students, consortium students, and students seeking prerequisites for licensures and certificates must provide the following to the admissions office:

- Online application
- Unofficial or official transcripts, or a transient letter demonstrating earned baccalaureate degree
 - Minimum grade point average (GPA):
 - 2.0 on a 4.0 scale

A maximum of 12 graduate hours may be taken as a non-degree seeking student.

Readmission After Military Service

In accordance with federal regulations, 34 C.F.R. 668.18 and the Department of Defense (DoD) Voluntary Partnership Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the university will readmit service members who seek readmission to a program that was interrupted due to a uniformed service obligation.

Students who withdraw from the university in order to perform active military service will be readmitted after the student's release from active service. Students who have missed only one regular semester of study contact the Registrar and Financial Aid Offices for readmittance. Students who have been out of attendance for two consecutive regular semesters or more will reapply. Students may be readmitted in the same academic program prior to the military service or request admission to a different program.

Non-Accredited Degrees

Students graduating with a bachelor's degree from an unaccredited institution are generally ineligible for admission to graduate programs at CIU. However, it may be determined that the academic rigor required in the bachelor's program is sufficient to merit admission. Applicants who have earned a degree in this category must provide the following to the Admissions Office:

- All general application requirements and degree-specific admission requirements
- Unaccredited Institution Review
 - Unaccredited Institutions - US institutions which are not accredited by an agency officially recognized by the US Department of Education (USDE) or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or non-US institutions not acknowledged by WES or InCred as accredited (typically based on the institution's recognition by the home country's ministry of education).

Notification to Applicants

Once all application materials have been received, the completed application will be reviewed and the applicant notified of the admission decision.

Applications remain active for one year after the initial intended year and term of the application. Students wanting to attend after one year from their original desired year and start term must reapply.

Provisional Acceptance

Entering students that do not meet the minimum requirements for their desired degree program may be admitted on a provisional basis. The Admission Review Committee will review the candidate's performance in previous education, work, or military training and determine if provisional admission is appropriate.

Students with a Criminal Background

Students with a criminal background may be expected to provide a detailed explanation of their infraction to the Admissions department. In some instances, this explanation may need to be reviewed by Administration in order for the

student to be considered for admission to the university. The Director of Admissions will notify the applicant of the final admission decision.

Students with a Title IX Complaint

Students who have previously withdrawn, been expelled, or are under pending investigation from another higher education institution due to a Title IX complaint will be required to disclose that information on their admissions application. Students may be required to provide a detailed explanation of the complaint to the Admissions department, which will be reviewed in conjunction with the Title IX Coordinator and other members of Administration.

Auditors

Persons desiring to audit classes may do so by contacting and obtaining the approval of the Registrar Office and the instructor of the course. The University reserves the right to refuse to allow an individual to register as an auditor in any course. Auditors do not take examinations or receive credit and may participate in class discussions with the approval of the instructor.

Auditors must register as an auditor and pay the audit fee (see [Graduate Residential Tuition & Fees](#)).

Hyperlinks

www.ciu.edu/policy