

**Southeast Missouri State University  
Guidelines for Agents (Academic Year 2019)**

The following document contains the guidelines which govern the collaborative relationship between Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO) and all recruitment agencies who represent the institution. All agencies that wish to represent SEMO are required to complete an online application. The application will require either proof of professional certification (for example AIRC, ICEF, etc.) or a list of references from U.S. based institutions. Once an agency is approved to represent SEMO, they will be asked to renew their application on a bi-annual basis, and approval will be granted as long as there is no proof that any of the guidelines have been violated. SEMO will only pay Service Fees to agencies who have applied and been approved.

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**SEMO International Admissions staff**

Dr. Kevin Timlin ([kjtimlin@semo.edu](mailto:kjtimlin@semo.edu)) – Executive Director, International Education and Services: Kevin is your primary contact for all matters pertaining to recruitment and business matters pertaining to the agency relationship.

Ms. Priya Cramer ([pcramer@semo.edu](mailto:pcramer@semo.edu)) – Assistant Director, International Admissions: Priya processes all applications, and handles some recruitment responsibilities. Priya is your primary contact for all inquiries regarding application and admissions.

Ms. Ef Sidiropoulos ([emsidiroloulos@semo.edu](mailto:emsidiroloulos@semo.edu)) - Senior Administrative Assistant: Ef is the person responsible for agency invoices and payment of Service Fees.

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The following guidelines must be followed by all recruitment agencies representing Southeast Missouri State University. These guidelines apply equally to all approved agents. With very few exceptions, agents cannot negotiate changes to these guidelines, nor will special exceptions be made for agents.

**1. Expectations of SEMO**

**1.1. Code of conduct:** SEMO will treat all approved agents as professional colleagues, and promises to work collaboratively with them to ensure the enrollment of quality students who are ultimately successful at SEMO. Approved agents can expect the following from SEMO:

- a) SEMO promises to respond to agents' questions and requests in a timely manner. SEMO recognizes that agents have demanding jobs and need accurate, timely information in order to do their job effectively.
- b) SEMO will provide all approved agents with up-to-date and relevant promotional materials on an annual basis. The materials may be either print or electronic, and they will include information on cost of attendance, application information, degree programs, university life, etc.

- c) Each approved agency will receive an annual report with information about the students they have represented with information pertaining to their applications and students.
- d) SEMO will commit to a number of agency visits, recruitment fair participation, and/or webinar presentations each year. The degree to which SEMO will collaborate with agencies in this regard will depend the factors like strategic regional recruitment priorities and volume of students from agencies.
- e) SEMO will offer all approved agencies access to an online portal allowing them to check the real-time application status of their students. The portal can be found at [https://app.semo.edu/adm/int\\_recruiters/IntRecruiter\\_Login.asp](https://app.semo.edu/adm/int_recruiters/IntRecruiter_Login.asp). Agencies will receive portal login information once their application to represent SEMO is approved.

## **2. Expectations for agents**

2.1. Code of conduct: SEMO expects all approved agencies to conduct themselves in a professional manner, treat students fairly, and represent the institution honestly and accurately. SEMO will terminate its relationship with any agency that repeatedly violates any aspect of this Code of Conduct. Any of the following may be used as sufficient reason for terminating a relationship with agents:

- a) Complaints from students about agent's dishonest business practices.
- b) Complaints from students about agents who are not transparent about fees the student may be responsible for paying the agent. SEMO requires all agents to disclose to their students any and all fees that are due to them.
- c) Agents who habitually submit applications for students who use a SEMO I-20 to enter the U.S. but immediately transfer to another institution or fail to enroll.
- d) Agents who submit applications with fraudulent transcripts or falsified bank statements.
- e) Agents who regularly send students who cannot afford to pay their educational and living expenses.
- f) Agents who tell students that they can guarantee admission, employment, or exemption from university policies on behalf of SEMO.

## **3. Communication**

3.1. Communication regarding an agency's relationship with SEMO and payment for services will be conducted between agent and Kevin Timlin, SEMO's Executive Director of International Education and Services. His email address is [kjtimlin@semo.edu](mailto:kjtimlin@semo.edu).

3.2. All communication regarding admissions and students' applications will be conducted between the agent and SEMO's International Admissions team. Such emails should be sent to [international@semo.edu](mailto:international@semo.edu) and they will be answered by international admissions staff on a daily basis.

## **4. International admissions process**

4.1. Undergraduate and Intensive English Program (IEP) application processing:

Undergraduate and IEP applications are processed by the International Education and Services office. SEMO accepts undergraduate or IEP application materials per the instructions at <http://semo.edu/international/how-to-apply.html>. Online applications are preferred.

The application consists of 4 steps, which are:

1. Submit online application at <http://www.semo.edu/international/apply.html>
2. Pay the \$40 application fee
3. Email scanned copies of all necessary application documents to [international@semo.edu](mailto:international@semo.edu). To ensure efficiency and timely processing, please try to include all required documents in one email. Application documents are required to demonstrate:
  - o Passport
  - o Academic Transcripts
  - o Affidavit of Support and Proof of finances
  - o Proof of English proficiency (not required for IEP applicants)
  - o Standardized test scores (ACT, SAT, etc.) for scholarship consideration (Optional)
4. Arrange to have official documents and test scores (if applicable) mailed to us

Please note the following:

- a) Admission decisions for all student types except transfers will be made based on our review of the scanned documents submitted as part of the application. However, we do require official copies of transcripts and test scores to be sent to us before the student can enroll in classes. For transfer applicants, we do require all official documents before they can be admitted and have their transfer credits evaluated.
- b) Once application materials are received, they will be reviewed and entered into our university's database within 2 business days.
- c) Once reviewed, the student record in our university's database will be updated and an electronic notification of the application status (admitted, pending or denied) will be sent to the primary email address listed on the application form. If the application is incomplete, the notification is sent three times: first when the application is received and student record created, and then fifteen and thirty days after.
- d) As an authorized agent, you have exclusive access to an agency portal that will allow you to see application process for your students. Please note that we have made a major change in the way we process applications, and now the portal information will be updated in real-time. The portal can be accessed at [https://app.semo.edu/adm/int\\_recruiters/IntRecruiter\\_Login.asp](https://app.semo.edu/adm/int_recruiters/IntRecruiter_Login.asp)
- e) To check if a physical mail shipment was received by the International Admissions staff, you can enter the shipment tracking number on our mail tracker system <http://app.semo.edu/ies/mailtracker/>.
- f) Application processing times for undergraduate and IEP applicants vary depending on various factors like staff recruiting trips and application volume. But our stated goal is to provide an applicant with an admission decision within 3 business days of an application being complete.
- g) Shipment of I-20: As of now, you will have the option of receiving an acceptance packet by regular mail from us, or ordering express shipping at your expense. For detailed information on our I-20 shipping process, please click on "Mailing Process" at <http://www.semo.edu/international/future/policy.html>. Please note:
  - If a student applies through an agent, we will mail the acceptance packet to the agent's office, unless otherwise notified

- If an agent want multiple students' packets in one express shipment, the agent must send an email to [international@semo.edu](mailto:international@semo.edu) within 3 days of admission, with the names of all students whose packets they want included in the shipment. We can include up to 5 packets per shipment.
  - If the agent wishes to receive the original acceptance notification email, they should enter their email address as the primary email on the application. Another option for the agent is to check the admission status on the recruiter database to know when a student is admitted (or what items are pending).
- h) We are now implementing application deadlines for non-IEP applications. The deadline for Fall admits is July 1, and the deadline for Spring admits is November 1. We will waive the application deadline for students who are transferring from U.S. institutions and already have a visa.

#### 4.2. Graduate application processing:

Graduate applications are processed by the International Education and Services office. SEMO accepts graduate application materials per the instructions at <http://semo.edu/international/how-to-apply.html>. Online applications are preferred.

The application consists of 4 steps, which are:

1. Submit online application at <http://www.semo.edu/international/apply.html>
2. Pay the \$40 application fee
3. Email scanned copies of all necessary application documents to [international@semo.edu](mailto:international@semo.edu). To ensure efficiency and timely processing, please try to include all required documents in one email. Application documents are required to demonstrate:
  - o Passport
  - o Academic Transcripts
  - o Affidavit of Support and Proof of finances
  - o Proof of English proficiency (not required for IEP applicants)
  - o Additional [required documents](#) for the graduate program
4. Arrange to have official documents and test scores (if applicable) mailed to us

Please note the following:

- a) Admission decisions for graduate students will be based on our review of the scanned documents submitted as part of the application. However, we do require official copies of transcripts and test scores to be sent to us before the student can enroll in classes.
- b) Once application materials are received, they will be reviewed and entered into our university's database within 2 business days.
- c) Once all application materials have been received and reviewed by the International Admissions office, the application will be forwarded to the graduate department for their admission decision. Once a decision is made, an electronic notification will be sent to the primary email address listed on the application form.
- d) As an authorized agent, you have exclusive access to an agency portal that will allow you to see application process for your students. Please note that we have made a major change in the way we process applications, and now the portal information will be updated in real-time. The portal can be accessed at [https://app.semo.edu/adm/int\\_recruiters/IntRecruiter\\_Login.asp](https://app.semo.edu/adm/int_recruiters/IntRecruiter_Login.asp)

- e) To check if a physical mail shipment was received by the International Admissions staff, you can enter the shipment tracking number on our mail tracker system <http://app.semo.edu/ies/mailtracker/>.
- f) Application processing times for graduate applications vary by program. The process can take 2-3 weeks, although some programs may take longer. Some programs have a single application deadline, after which all files are reviewed.
- g) Shipment of I-20: As of now, you will have the option of receiving an acceptance packet by regular mail from us, or ordering express shipping at your expense. For detailed information on our I-20 shipping process, please click on "Mailing Process" at <http://www.semo.edu/international/future/policy.html>. Please note:
  - If a student applies through an agent, we will mail the acceptance packet to the agent's office, unless otherwise notified
  - If an agent want multiple students' packets in one express shipment, the agent must send an email to [international@semo.edu](mailto:international@semo.edu) within 3 days of admission, with the names of all students whose packets they want included in the shipment. We can include up to 5 packets per shipment.
  - If the agent wishes to receive the original acceptance notification email, they should enter their email address as the primary email on the application. Another option for the agent is to check the admission status on the recruiter database to know when a student is admitted (or what items are pending).
- h) We are now implementing application deadlines for non-IEP applications. The deadline for Fall admits is July 1, and the deadline for Spring admits is November 1. We will waive the application deadline for students who are transferring from U.S. institutions and already have a visa.

4.3. Conditional admission: Conditional admission is available for students who meet all academic admission requirements except English language proficiency. Conditionally admitted students are issued an I-20 for SEMO's Intensive English Program (IEP), not the student's academic major. A statement confirming conditional admission will be included in the "Remarks" section of the student's I-20.

4.4. Preliminary evaluations: SEMO cannot provide preliminary evaluations of transcripts sent to us by email. Students must formally apply for admission and submit all required application materials in order for us to make a determination of their admissibility.

## **5. Service Fee information**

5.1. Service Fee: SEMO will pay approved agents a Service Fee for each represented student who enrolls at Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO) as a new student. More detailed information about the Service Fee can be found at the end of this document. In exchange for the Service Fee, the agent is expected to assist the student with all aspects of the application process, visa interviews, and preparation to matriculate to SEMO.

5.2. Service Fee amount: The Service Fee SEMO will pay for each student is \$2,200 per student.

5.3. Academic year: The "academic year" at SEMO begins in mid-August with the Fall Semester and ends in late July of the following year. For example, Fall Semester 2018, Spring Semester 2019, and Summer Session 2019 are the terms in the 2019 academic year.

5.4. Payment method: Overseas agents will receive Service Fee payment through wire transfer to their bank account. Agents in the U.S. or those with a bank account in the U.S. will receive the payment by check sent by post.

5.5. Payment process: The Service Fee payment process is as follows:

- 1) SEMO will send an email to each agency's point of contact requesting for them to submit an invoice for all recruited students in the current term.
- 2) Agency will email invoice printed on company letterhead to [emsidiropoulos@semo.edu](mailto:emsidiropoulos@semo.edu) with the following information:
  - date of invoice
  - invoice number
  - a list of all represented students who enrolled in that semester (including students' Southeast ID number)
  - the total amount of Service Fees requested
- 3) Once SEMO receives the invoice, they will verify the enrollment status of all listed students. See Conditions for Service Fee below for information on verification. If any discrepancies are found, SEMO will contact the agent as soon as possible asking them to correct the invoice and submit a new one. Failure to rectify any discrepancies within one year of SEMO's request for a corrected invoice may forfeit any claim to the Service Fee in question.
- 4) Once all documents are received and enrollment is verified, SEMO will process your Service Fee payment according to the Payment Schedule below. Please note that the payment process may take 2-4 weeks depending on the agency's location.

5.6. Payment schedule: For students who enroll at SEMO, the agency Service Fee will be processed according to the following schedule:

<b>Semester or Session of Enrollment</b>	<b>Service Fee Payment Initiated</b>
Fall Semester and October Session	October 1
Spring Semester and March Session	March 1
Summer Session	July 1

5.7. Service Fee expiration: Agents have up to one calendar year from the start date of the enrolled student's first semester to submit an invoice (and any required supporting documents). After one year, any claims for a Service Fee will be forfeited.

5.8. Service Fee conditions: In order to be paid a Service Fee, the following conditions must be met:

- a) Student must have full-time enrollment at SEMO on the date listed in the Payment Schedule. Full-time enrollment is defined as 12 credit hours for undergraduate students, and 9 hours for graduate students.
- b) Service Fee payments will be paid for only NEW students during the first semester they enroll at Southeast Missouri State University. No Service Fee will be paid for any subsequent semesters the students enroll at the University (except for Nepalese undergraduates – please see “NOTE ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS FROM NEPAL” above for more information), nor for any subsequent degree programs a student enrolls in.

- c) Only an agent who assisted the student during the application process may be eligible for a Service Fee. If the student changes agents after receiving admission or if there is no evidence that an agent was involved during the application process, no Service Fee will be paid.
- d) In order for an agent to be paid the Service Fee, agents must include the agency name and contact information on the student's online application, or include that information on a cover letter accompanying the official admission documents which are sent to the institution.
- e) The U.S. Department of Education forbids the payment of commissions for the recruitment of American students, so SEMO cannot pay any agents who send students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

5.9. Negotiated fee payment amounts: There will be no exceptions regarding the Service Fee amounts nor the dates of payment as described in these guidelines. The amount of our Service Fees is fixed and cannot be negotiated.

5.10. Taxes: Agents will be responsible for paying any taxes that might be owed. Depending on a country's tax treaty with the United States, taxes may be withheld from Service Fee payments.

## **6. Exceptions to the Guidelines**

6.1. Exclusivity: With very few exceptions, SEMO will not appoint any agency as our "exclusive" representative for a particular city or country. Below are our exclusive agreements.

6.1.1. China: SEMO requires all applications from mainland China to come through an approved agency. Education Brand-making International (EBI) is now SEMO's official China Office in the country, and all inquiries and applications that come to SEMO without agency representation will be routed through the official China Office (at no additional cost to the applicant). In addition to the official China Office, SEMO only recognizes two other authorized agencies based in mainland China (Beyond International Education, Inc. and Shandong Provincial Education Co.), and will not be seeking nor accepting any new relationships there.

6.1.2. Sri Lanka: SEMO has an exclusive agreement with Progressive Academy to be the sole authorized representative in Sri Lanka.

## 6.2. Undergraduate Students from Nepal

Due to the extremely high numbers of Nepalese undergraduate students transferring from SEMO after one semester, the following conditions apply to the recruitment of undergraduate students from Nepal.

- 1) First-time freshmen undergraduate applicants from Nepal will only be admitted for the Fall semester intake if they meet the academic qualifications for the International Academic Achievement scholarship. Any first-time undergraduate applicant can be admitted in the Spring semester intake.
- 2) The Service Fee paid to agents for the recruitment of Nepalese all new undergraduate students will be distributed over the course of the first two semesters the students enroll at SEMO. Agents will be paid 50% of the Service Fee in accordance with the Payment Schedule above. Payment of the other 50% is contingent upon the recruited student enrolling in a second, consecutive semester at SEMO. When the recruited student enrolls

in a second semester, the remainder of the Service Fee will be paid in the second semester according to the Payment Schedule above.

- 3) These conditions DO NOT apply to Nepalese undergraduate transfer or graduate applicants.

## **7. Additional information for agents**

7.1. Sub-agents: Southeast Missouri State University does not work with sub-agents. Agencies who work with sub-agents are responsible for their sub-agent's record keeping, code of conduct, and payment.

7.2. Expiration of agency authorization: All of SEMO's current agency partnerships will expire on June 30, 2019. At that point, authorized agencies will be asked to complete the online application again, and subsequent approvals will be granted for two years.

7.3. Changes to guidelines: We review our Guidelines for Agents at least once a year at the end of the academic year. However, changes may be made at any point during the year. SEMO will notify agents whenever changes to the guidelines are made.