



Information for International Students

CLASS OF 2029

Welcome, Class of 2029.

Congratulations on your admission to Colgate University! We are eager to welcome you to Hamilton, N.Y., and to assist in your transition to university life in the United States. This is an exciting venture that is bound to have its challenges, but we are confident that you will find a home within the Colgate community, where you will develop meaningful relationships, grow in knowledge, and thrive. The Office of International Student Services (OISS) is here to support you throughout your time at Colgate and beyond. We care deeply about our students and understand the unique challenges that international students face when coming to a new country to pursue their educational and personal goals. Whether it is through immigration advising, fun activities and excursions, or seeing each other at an event on campus, we hope to get to know you and offer our support.

The purpose of this booklet is to provide important information that will help you prepare for your arrival on campus and your first weeks at Colgate. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us.

The Office of International Student Services (OISS)

We strive to provide exceptional immigration services and support to international students, as well as to enhance the Colgate student experience by promoting understanding and awareness of cultural issues with the goal of cultivating informed global citizenship. Studying at Colgate as an international student is exciting and rewarding, but there may be many governmental, cultural, and even personal obstacles to overcome. **We provide the following services to help you with these challenges so you can have an excellent experience at Colgate: F-1 student immigration advising and support, SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) administration, International Student Orientation (ISO), cultural adjustment support, advocacy, campus programs and events, and local excursions and activities.**

If you have questions about your immigration status, American culture, adjusting to life in the United States, or if you are homesick or just want to say hello, we welcome you to stop by OISS to chat. We are located in the Center for International Programs (CIP) in 101 McGregory Hall.



Kerra Hunter
Associate Dean
and Director



Nicole Marshall
Administrative
Coordinator



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Arrival Information

International Student Arrival Day: Tuesday, August 19, 2025

Traveling to Campus

Colgate University is located in Hamilton, N.Y., a one-hour drive southeast of Syracuse, the closest big city. Because of its rural location, transportation from the airport to Hamilton can be very costly, with private taxi fares exceeding US \$200.

As a service to international students arriving at Syracuse Hancock International Airport (SYR) on Tuesday, August 19, OISS will arrange for transportation from the airport to Colgate University. With the exception of flight delays, if you will arrive on a date other than August 19, you will be responsible for your own transportation to Colgate.

Please note that Colgate is a 5-hour drive from New York City, so if you are considering flying into JFK International Airport, you should book a connecting flight to SYR because OISS will not offer transportation from JFK. Those driving to campus should plan to arrive on Tuesday, August 19, before 4 p.m. EDT.



Arrival Survey

Once you have made your travel plans, please take the OISS Arrival Survey at bit.ly/ArrivalSurvey2029. Please complete before August 1.

International Student Orientation

Wednesday, August 20–Sunday, August 24

International Student Orientation (ISO) is an exciting experience designed to prepare you for life at Colgate as an international student. During ISO, the OISS staff, as well as current student leaders and other Colgate faculty and staff members, will help you get acquainted with campus and will cover important topics such as immigration regulations, taxes, services offered at Colgate, adjusting to life in the U.S., American classroom expectations, and opportunities for campus involvement. Several social events and activities will give you an opportunity to form friendships with your fellow international students. Meals will be provided for you during scheduled ISO activities. After ISO, you will join the rest of the Class of 2029 for New Student Orientation, Sunday, August 24–Wednesday, August 27.

Immigration

During ISO, you will learn all about your F-1 visa status and what you need to do to maintain legal status. Refer to the guides provided with your Form I-20 for instructions on how to apply for your visa and what to expect at a port of entry. (Canadian citizens should refer to the guide on acquiring F-1 status at a U.S. port of entry.) The guides can also be downloaded from the OISS website at colgate.edu/oiss. Refer to the OISS website for detailed information about F-1 visa status, employment authorization, and maintaining valid F-1 status. Another great resource is studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students.



Class of 2026 International Student Arrival Day

Mandatory Check-in With OISS: SEVIS Registration

As an international student with F-1 visa status, you are required by federal regulations to check in with OISS so that your SEVIS record can be “registered”/activated. This check-in process is called “SEVIS Registration.” We have scheduled designated check-in times during ISO for you to do so. During this time, we will review your immigration documents, answer any questions you may have, and make a copy of your documents for your immigration file. **You will need to complete “SEVIS Registration” at the beginning of each semester while you are at Colgate.**

Health Services and Medical Insurance

Colgate’s Student Health Services (SHS) operates a clinic on campus to provide students with routine medical care and wellness education. You may visit SHS regarding illness, injury, immunizations, women’s and men’s health issues and medical testing, prescriptions, and more at little to no cost. SHS is a fabulous resource, and you will have the opportunity to meet with SHS staff members during ISO.

Mandatory Health Insurance

All international students are required to have U.S. health insurance coverage. Unless you already have comparable coverage with a U.S. insurance company, you will need to purchase Colgate’s student health insurance policy. Policy information will be made available on the SHS page at colgate.edu/healthservices. You will need to pay for the cost of insurance above and beyond any financial aid award and/or family contribution. Health insurance and health care in the United States can be confusing, so take a moment to explore the information and videos at bit.ly/internationalinsurance to learn more.

Required Medical History Report and Immunizations

Colgate University requires that all students submit a completed medical history report and receive the immunizations listed on incoming student medical and immunization forms. Please refer to the incoming student checklist on colgate.edu/newstudents. If the immunizations are unavailable or costly in your home country, you will have the opportunity to get your immunizations from SHS during ISO. The cost will be covered by your student health insurance if you are enrolled in Colgate’s student health insurance policy. All students must have received all, or at least have started the series, of the required immunizations before the first day of classes.

Financial Concerns

You will have many immediate expenses upon arrival, including supplies for your room, books, and personal items. It is advisable to have at least U.S. \$3,000 available to cover these immediate expenses. It is not advisable, however, to carry large amounts of cash. A combination of cash and credit & debit cards is more secure. Two banks near campus, NBT Bank (nbtbank.com) and Community Bank (cbna.com), will allow you to open an account

without a Social Security number (see below). Most students prefer NBT Bank because it operates an ATM on campus. You will have the opportunity to open an account during ISO. Please note that, if you have an on-campus job, you cannot receive a paycheck until you receive your Social Security number, which may take up to a few months. It is important to plan ahead to cover your financial needs.

Working on Campus

International students with F-1 visa status are permitted to work on campus up to 20 hours per week while school is in session, although it is strongly recommended that students do not schedule more than 15 hours per week. Students with an on-campus job as part of their financial aid package will see on-campus job openings in the student portal (portal.colgate.edu) as early as August. For more information about on-campus jobs, be sure to visit the student employment website at colgate.edu/studentemployment.

Please note that students with F-1 visa status are not permitted to work off campus unless employment authorization has been granted through Optional Practical Training (OPT) or Curricular Practical Training (CPT). Employment authorization will be briefly covered at ISO, and detailed information is available on the OISS website at colgate.edu/oiss. OISS offers OPT and CPT workshops throughout the academic year for those who want to learn more.

Social Security Number

A Social Security number (SSN) is a taxpayer identification number issued by the Social Security Administration (SSA) to accurately record your earnings in the United States. You also need an SSN in order to get paid for an on-campus job, apply for a credit card, obtain a cell phone plan with a contract, and many other things. As a student with F-1 visa status, you become eligible to apply for an SSN once you have an on-campus job. To apply for an SSN, you will need to first obtain a letter from OISS verifying your employment and then apply in person at an SSA office. Once you have applied for an SSN, you should receive it within a few months. Although you can begin working at your on-campus job right away, you will not be able to receive a paycheck until you have received your SSN and have reported it to Colgate’s Office of Human Resources. The OISS organizes several trips to the SSA office in Utica, N.Y., throughout the academic year.

Taxes

As an international student with F-1 visa status, you are required to complete the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 8843 every year you are present in the United States, even if you did not earn any money. If you have worked or have had taxable income,

you will also need to file the appropriate IRS form, either 1040NR or 1040NR-EZ. Students who have an on-campus job and/or taxable scholarships will receive a tax packet from the Office of Accounting and Payroll in early March, which will contain all of the information you need to properly file your tax forms. The deadline to file all tax forms each year is April 20.

What Should I Pack?

Packing can be a challenge. Not only do you need to anticipate your clothing and things for your room that you will need, but you also need to navigate the baggage policy of your airline. We recommend that you pack only the things you will need immediately upon arrival and things that will be difficult or expensive to purchase in the U.S. If you do not know if an item will be available in the U.S., you can always check online retailers such as Amazon, Walmart, or Target to check the price and availability. You may need to carry your luggage to your residence hall room without assistance, so make sure that your bags are not too heavy for you to lift. Some students choose to mail boxes of personal items to their Colgate postal box in advance of their arrival. You are welcome to do this, but keep in mind that you will only be able to pick up your packages while Mail Services is open (Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.). You may find your mailbox number (CU Box) in your portal. **The mail room will not accept packages before August 1.** You may use the shipping address as follows:

SHIPPING ADDRESS

Name ’29 (Your full name followed by class year)
Colgate University
CU Box (Your Colgate University Box number)
13 Oak Drive
Hamilton, NY 13346
USA

Carry-on Bag

Because luggage can get lost or delayed, it is important that you pack the following items in your carry-on bag or personal bag when traveling to Colgate: cash/credit cards, immigration documents, change of clothing, travel-size toiletries (shampoo, toothbrush, etc.), electronics, jacket, blanket, and medication (if necessary).

Weather

Hamilton, N.Y., has four distinct seasons. Since you will be arriving at the end of the warm summer season, it is recommended that you plan ahead and bring clothing for cold weather (coat, sweater, etc.); the temperature will quickly begin to drop. Many students bring things such as winter coats, boots, hats, gloves, and scarves from home, while others choose to purchase them after they arrive.

Clothing

Clothing purchase options in Hamilton are very limited, so you should plan to bring clothing with you or purchase online. Since the weather can change very quickly, we recommend that you bring a jacket, sweater, and heavy coat. Students typically dress casually (T-shirt, jeans, khaki pants, button-down shirt, sweatshirt, etc.) while attending classes, but there will be occasions where you will need to dress more formally and/or wear business attire (dress pants, dress shirt, blazer, dress, suit, tie, etc.). Also, there are several events on campus for which many students choose to wear the traditional clothing of their countries, so if this interests you, it’s a good idea to bring some garments from home.

SEASONAL TEMPERATURES

Season	Months	Average Temperature Range	Characteristics
Summer	June–September	12°C to 24°C	hot, sunny, some thunderstorms
Fall	September–December	-8°C to 20°C	cool, leaves change color
Winter	December–March	-12°C to 4°C*	very cold, snowy, ice
Spring	March–June	-6°C to 23°C	cool, rainy, wet

*Temperatures can get much colder than the average range listed in this chart. It may reach as low as -30°C! Be sure to come prepared.



A typical winter scene on campus

Bedding

Residence halls are not furnished with linens, so it is your responsibility to make arrangements to have bed linens for your first night at Colgate. Many students choose to purchase their bedding from online stores and have them delivered to Colgate in advance of their arrival. Walmart, Target, and other vendors carry “Dorm-in-a-box” sets that are very economical and can be purchased online if you have a credit card.

Many students also choose to purchase bed sheets at home and bring them in their luggage. The dorm mattresses are size Twin XL, which measures 99 cm by 203 cm and is longer than the standard twin size. A basic sheet set, which includes a fitted sheet, flat sheet, and one pillowcase, starts at US \$25. You should plan to spend roughly US \$100–\$200 on moderate-quality bedding and linens. The Colgate Bookstore also carries bedding, which you may purchase upon arrival.



Personal Items From Home

Many students recommend bringing some personal items to make your residence hall feel more like home. Some great ideas: pictures of your family, friends, and favorite places in your hometown; a few of your favorite recipes, etc. In addition to giving you comfort during times you are feeling homesick, these items from home can also be useful to help your friends get to know you.

Cell Phones

One of the first items students want to purchase is a cell phone plan. There are two major carriers that have good reception in the area. Verizon Wireless and AT&T. You may not be able to enroll in a payment plan or a purchase agreement if you do not yet have a credit card or Social Security number; however, there are companies that offer prepaid or no-contract plans, such as TracFone, Cricket Wireless, H2O, and Straight Talk. CampusSIMs, Verizon Wireless, and AT&T also offer prepaid plans. Please refer to each carrier’s website for detailed information.

Driver’s License

For those interested in obtaining a New York State driver’s license, please discuss with OISS staff how to obtain a learner’s permit. Once you have your learner’s permit, you will need to pay to take a mandatory 5-hour course about driving safety before you can take the road test. We can provide a list of driving schools you can contact to get driving lessons before your road test. Obtaining a New York State driver’s license is a time-consuming and costly process.

If you hold a driver’s license in your home country, you may be permitted to drive in New York with that license as long as it has not expired. Learn more about the requirements at dmv.ny.gov. In many instances, it is less expensive and less time consuming to obtain a license in your home country. If you plan to drive using your driver’s license, it is advisable to bring your official driving record with you.

Academic Support Resources

At Colgate, academic support is a vital part of the learning process, and all students are encouraged to make use of the resources available on campus. University-level work may be quite different from the work you did during high school/secondary school. Additionally, the academic system in the U.S., and particularly at Colgate, may be quite different from what you are used to. Professors look favorably upon students who proactively seek to improve their academic skills by utilizing the excellent support services available.

Academic Adviser

You should meet with your academic adviser regularly to develop a good relationship. Get to know them and make sure they know you. Meet with your adviser to discuss your academic plan and interests and to strategize on which courses you should take. Seek their advice on majors/minors, any academic difficulties you may be experiencing in your classes, and even your post-Colgate plans. Your academic adviser(s) can be an excellent resource for you throughout your time at Colgate.



Flags at Frank Dining Hall represent the various backgrounds of students at Colgate University.



Students share cultural meals in the Center for International Programs.

Administrative Dean

In addition to an academic adviser who assists students in their academic choices, all Colgate students have an administrative dean who is available to assist with a wide range of concerns, from questions about University policies that cannot be answered by reading the *Colgate University Catalog* or *Colgate Student Handbook*, to personal problems, to letters of recommendation, and everything in between. Your administrative dean will help you navigate the transition to college and can serve as a connecting point to other campus resources so that you can thrive and make the most of your Colgate experience.

Writing and Speaking Center

The Writing and Speaking Center is committed to the improvement of writers of all levels and abilities. Peer writing consultants will work with you at any stage in your writing process, with the goal of helping you become confident and accomplished writers. Consultants will not make changes for you, but instead will help you: understand an assignment, develop and organize your ideas, edit grammar and punctuation errors, and cite your sources properly. Peer speaking consultants can help you organize your presentation and practice its delivery. The center is familiar with many of the writing and speaking issues faced by students who are not native speakers of English, and several of the peer consultants are fellow international students. Visit colgate.edu/writingcenter to learn more.

Center for Learning, Teaching, and Research

The Center for Learning, Teaching, and Research helps students see connections between their own learning and academic priorities and ways to improve their effectiveness by tapping into the knowledge and resources available. The center provides a variety of resources, including academic advising, instruction in learning strategies and study skills, assistance with time management and organization, peer tutoring, and support in study skill development. Visit the center's website at colgate.edu/cltr for more information.

Librarians

Librarians are professionals who are available to help you navigate the library and find excellent sources for your research. If you have a question about a research project or need help identifying or finding information and sources, ask a librarian! Check out the main library site at colgate.edu/library.

Code of Conduct

As a student and member of the Colgate community, you are expected to conduct yourself in a manner that is consistent with University standards outlined in the Code of Student Conduct, the Academic Honor Code, and the Policy on Sexual Harassment, and to be accountable and responsible for the choices you make. Since international students have varying degrees of familiarity with American culture and American social and academic values, it is very important that you familiarize yourself with University policies and expectations, especially those related to plagiarism, academic integrity, and sexual harassment. Some cultures view these issues quite differently from how they are viewed in the American context, so it is important that you are aware of these issues even before you arrive on campus. You can find these policies in the *Colgate Student Handbook*, available at bit.ly/universitystandard, and at the following websites:

Code of Student Conduct: bit.ly/codestudentconduct
Academic Honor Code: bit.ly/CUhonorcode

Violations of the Code of Student Conduct and the Academic Honor Code will be addressed through the University disciplinary process. We encourage you to visit the links above to learn more about the disciplinary process. Additionally, violations of the Code of Student Conduct that are related to discrimination and harassment (including sexual harassment) may be addressed through the Non-Discrimination, Anti-Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy, which is described in detail in the student handbook. Although the University strives to be a safe and inclusive space for everyone, should you have a negative experience or interaction, there are people, services, and departments available to support you. If you experience any form of harassment or discrimination, or if you have a concern about your safety or that of another student, you are encouraged to speak with your administrative dean and/or another University official, or to report the incident of concern online at colgate.edu/concern (anonymous submissions are accepted).

Students who enroll at Colgate University are expected to respect the customs, cultures, backgrounds, and rights of all members within the Colgate community. As an F-1 international student, you are required to obey all local, state, and federal laws during your stay in the United States. Any violation of the laws could impact your immigration status. For more information, visit studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students.



Class of 2026 International Student Arrival Day
Photo credit Mark DiOrio



Class of 2026 International Student Orientation activity

A Message on Cultural Adjustment

From Charm Little-Ray, Director of Haven, and Dawn LaFrance, Assistant Vice President of Wellness

Attending university in a new country can be exciting and, at times, stressful. Feeling overwhelmed when living in a new environment is a natural response to unfamiliar surroundings. For many students studying in the United States, there are certain aspects of the environment, including language, communication styles, cuisine, weather patterns, personal worldviews, social activities, and customs, that are different from what you might be used to in your home country. This process of cultural adjustment can be unsettling and cause discomfort. You may feel nervous and overwhelmed during the beginning stages of your journey at Colgate. It is important to remember that this is normal and that many students experience these emotions during their initial transition.

Although you may have already traveled to the States before attending Colgate and experienced many other cultures and cultural challenges, it is essential to remember the support systems and resources that are available to you on campus. Health and Wellness at Colgate is composed of four departments; Counseling and Psychological Services, Haven, Shaw Wellness Institute, and Student Health Services. We support all students' wellbeing and help ensure you have a healthy and successful journey at Colgate. If your journey is causing you distress and you are having trouble performing to your abilities, consider meeting with a counselor to help you through it or connect you to other services on and off campus.



Dawn LaFrance



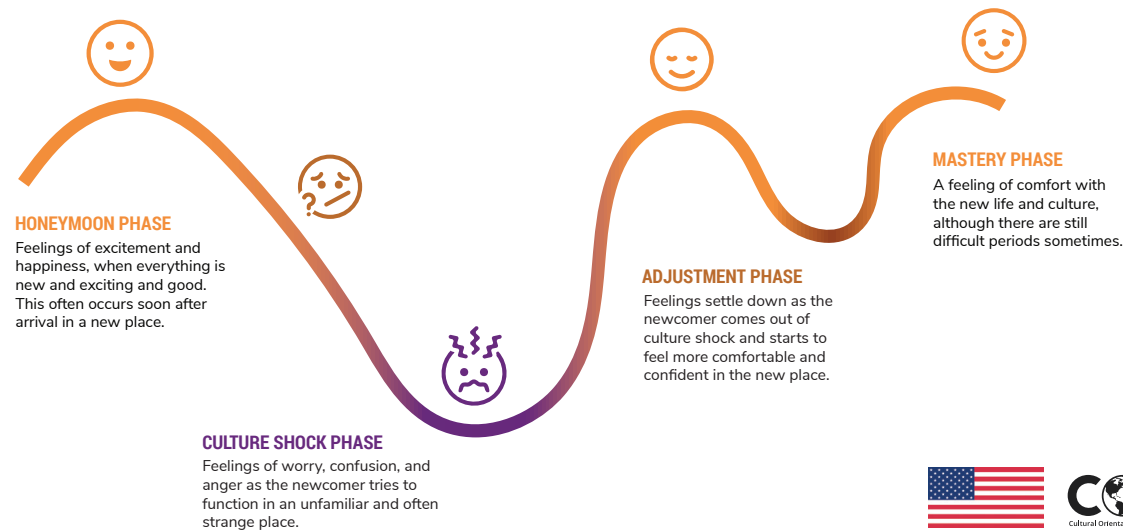
Charm Little-Ray

In the average year, nearly 25% of Colgate students use the services of the counseling center. These services are available at no cost to you. All contacts are confidential unless you give permission for the counselor to share information, or if a serious concern arises about your safety and/or the safety of the community. Haven, Colgate's sexual violence resource center, is connected to the counseling center, and staff members are available to help students who have experienced traumatic life events before and/or during their time at Colgate.

Counseling center and Haven staff members want to help make your Colgate experience enjoyable, productive, and meaningful. If you would like to meet with one of our staff members, call 315-228-7385 to schedule an appointment, or visit the counseling center website for staff and appointment information. You can also stop by our offices, located at Conant House (counseling center) or Curtis Hall (Haven) on the upper part of the campus. We are here to support you! colgate.edu/counseling

U-CURVE OF CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

The graph below shows the common phases of cultural adjustment that most people experience when moving to or visiting a new place. It is important to note that the length and intensity of each phase will vary, and that a newcomer may skip a phase altogether (such as those who plan to move on to another destination and do not go through the honeymoon phase) or go through the U-Curve, or portions of the U-Curve, several times.



Welcome to Colgate! We look forward to meeting you at International Student Orientation.

New International Student To-Do List

Use this checklist as a guide to help you prepare for your arrival in the U.S. and your first weeks at Colgate University. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of all of the things you should do, but simply a guide to help you be prepared. Please keep up-to-date with the checklist on the First-Year Students website at colgate.edu/newstudents.

- ☐ **SIGN** your I-20. Only after reading the Instructions page.
- ☐ **PAY** the SEVIS I-901 fee and print your receipt. Information on the SEVIS fee can be found at ice.gov/sevis/i901/.
- ☐ **APPLY** for and receive your F-1 student visa at a U.S. Embassy. Be sure to follow the embassy's instructions for nonimmigrant visa applicants and provide all of the required documentation. For more information, read the guide titled "Applying for an F-1 Visa at a U.S. Embassy/Consulate" that was included with your I-20. (Note: Canadian citizens do not apply for an F-1 visa at a U.S. Embassy and should refer to the guide titled "Acquiring F-1 Visa Status at a U.S. Port of Entry.")
- ☐ **LEARN** about your immigration status by visiting studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students.
- ☐ **BOOK** your flight to the States. Plan to arrive at Syracuse Hancock International Airport (SYR) on Tuesday, August 19. Refer to the "Arrival Information" section in this booklet for more information.
- ☐ **NOTIFY** the Office of International Student Services (OISS) of your flight schedule/arrival plans by completing the OISS Arrival Survey by August 1. bit.ly/ArrivalSurvey2029
- ☐ **PREPARE** your finances. Anticipate how much money you will need to cover your immediate expenses upon arrival in the United States, and plan accordingly. Refer to the "Financial Concerns" section in this booklet for more information. Please note that, if you plan to have an on-campus job, you will not receive a paycheck until you obtain your Social Security number. This entire process may take a few months.
- ☐ **COMPLETE** your medical history report and get the necessary immunizations listed on incoming student medical and immunization forms. Please refer to the incoming student checklist on colgate.edu/newstudents.
- ☐ **ENJOY** your trip. You have embarked on an exciting journey to fulfill many of your personal, academic, and professional goals. Take a moment to reflect on all of the hard work that has gotten you to this point in your life. For information on what to expect at the port of entry, read the guide titled "What to Expect at a U.S. Port of Entry" enclosed in this packet.
- ☐ **ARRIVE** at Syracuse Hancock International Airport (SYR). If you are arriving on August 19 and have completed the "OISS Arrival Survey" by August 1, a Colgate representative will be at the airport to welcome you at the baggage claim area. With the exception of flight delays, if you will arrive outside of the scheduled arrival time, or at a location other than SYR airport, you will be responsible for your own transportation to Colgate.
- ☐ **ATTEND** International Student Orientation (ISO). ISO will take place August 20 through August 24. A detailed orientation schedule will be emailed to you in early August.
- ☐ **ATTEND** New Student Orientation with the Class of 2029. Learn more at colgate.edu/newstudents.
- ☐ **HAVE** a great semester! Study hard, get to know your professors, and participate in campus activities to make friends and feel at home. The OISS is always here to assist you to make your time at Colgate successful and memorable.

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colgate.edu/oiss

COLGATE UNIVERSITY

Dean of the College Division