



SECTION TWO
General Admissions Process

The journey of
a thousand miles
starts with the
first step.

—Lao Tzu

Prospective Students

Welcome!

It is an honor to support your exploration of Tai Sophia's graduate degree programs. Each distinct program provides you with the knowledge and skills to build a successful career and to become a healing presence in the community.

We invite you to visit Tai Sophia, speak with an admissions counselor, and observe a class. The admissions team is committed to providing you with clear information, institutional resources, and personalized guidance throughout the admissions process. We look forward to joining you as you take the next steps.

In partnership,



Gabrielle Julien-Molineaux
Director of Graduate Admissions

Honoring Diversity

Tai Sophia seeks qualified applicants who have the maturity, commitment, and preparation necessary to take full advantage of the specialized studies offered by the Institute in each of our three programs of study.

Tai Sophia is committed to being, communicating, and educating in ways that recognize and honor the full range of human diversity. Each student and faculty, staff, and board member strives to use language and manifest behavior that promotes inclusiveness. Further, each student and faculty, staff, and board member is responsible for creating an atmosphere that supports all in growth and movement toward inclusiveness and the acceptance of diversity. The Institute is committed to broadening the diversity of student body, staff, administration, and board members.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Tai Sophia Institute is an equal opportunity institution. Applicants for admission, employment, and financial aid are considered on the basis of individual merit. No person is excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subject to discrimination in any program or activity of Tai Sophia Institute on the basis of race, color; national or ethnic origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, age, religion, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law. Please see the Director, Office of Human Enrichment, for inquiries or concerns related to this policy.

Application and Admission Procedures

Campus Visit

Prospective students are strongly encouraged to visit Tai Sophia Institute, meet with an admissions counselor, and observe a class before applying. Please call to schedule your visit and to review the admissions process.

Application Process

We encourage prospective students to apply as soon as you decide on a program and start date. Applications for admission are accepted on a rolling (space available) basis. We recommend you apply six to eight months before the intended start date to ensure a space in the class.

The completed application form, essay and resume must be submitted with the application fee. The following application fees apply:

Graduate Certificate in Chinese Herbs	\$75
All other Graduate Certificate Programs	\$50
All Master's Degree Programs	\$95

For Master's Degree Program applications received after July 31, 2010 for September 2010 classes and November 30, 2010 for January 2011 classes, the application fee is \$150.

Once application materials are received, you may be contacted to schedule a formal admissions interview. Applicants will be notified in writing regarding the decision of the admissions committee.

Transcripts

Official transcripts for all degrees should be sent directly from the respective college or university. Herbal medicine applicants may also send a transcript of prior physiology coursework to be reviewed for fulfillment of the physiology pre-requisite. Tai Sophia Institute reserves the right to request additional transcripts and course descriptions.

International students or those who have earned degrees outside of the U.S., please refer to the requirements outlined in this section under the heading International Students.

Please mail or deliver all application materials to:

Office of Graduate Admissions
Tai Sophia Institute
7750 Montpelier Rd
Laurel, MD 20723

New Student Matriculation Fee

An individual accepted into one of our degree programs will be billed a non-transferable, non-refundable matriculation fee. This fee holds a seat in the class for which the applicant has been accepted. This fee is due upon acceptance and may be paid by cash, check, MasterCard or Visa.

The following matriculation fees apply:

Graduate Certificate in Chinese Herbs	\$150
All other Graduate Certificate Programs	\$100
All Master's Degree Programs	\$350

Deferrals

Offers of acceptance and applications prior to acceptance may be deferred one time for up to one year. Requests for deferral must be made in writing to the Office of Graduate Admissions. If a student with a deferred acceptance does not enroll and the matriculation fee has been paid prior to the request for deferral, that fee is forfeited and the student will be billed the matriculation fee for the expected new intake period.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition

Tuition rates vary by program. For current tuition rates contact the Office of Graduate Admissions or visit the website at www.tai.edu.

Costs Not Covered in Tuition

Acupuncture

Required materials include: a computer with internet access; books; a long, white polyester-cotton examination coat; a sphygmomanometer (blood pressure cuff) and stethoscope; disposable acupuncture needles and moxa (to be purchased before entering Level III); and regular (e.g. seasonally, five times a year minimum) acupuncture treatments.

Herbal Medicine

Required materials include: a computer with internet access and books. The cost of books required for the program runs between \$800 and \$900. Another \$1,000 could be spent on recommended books; however, purchase is not necessary and the library is an excellent resource for many of these books. Additionally, the software program, Endnote, is highly recommended to assist in writing requirements of the program; the student rate for this software is approximately \$100. Other costs include those associated with field trips (i.e., transportation, food, and lodging) and supplies in the Herbal Medicine program, which may range from \$1,000 to \$2,000.

Each student is required to have three consultations with a clinical herbalist within Level I of the program. Individual consultation fees may range from \$35 to \$100, depending on whether the student sees a Level III clinic intern, a graduate of the program, or a professional member of the American Herbalist Guild. Students in Level III who are practicing as clinic interns are required to charge a fee for each herbal consultation.

Transformative Leadership and Social Change

(*formerly called the *Applied Healing Arts program*)

Required materials include a computer with internet access, books, and other miscellaneous supplies for your studies. In addition, if the student chooses to participate in a class, workshop, program, or any other fee-based experience as part of an Independent Study, the student is solely responsible for that expense.

Chinese Herb Program

Students must have internet access with the ability to open Word documents. The cost of materials may be approximately \$700 and includes several required and recommended books. Students also may be required to purchase sample herbs for their learning.

For all programs, please note: the costs associated with books will vary dramatically by person and program. Many choose to borrow rather than buy some of the required and recommended texts. Should it become necessary for a student to retake coursework, a fee will be charged.

Health Requirement Costs

Acupuncture, herbal medicine, and Chinese herb students are responsible for the costs associated with one-time and ongoing health requirements, including CPR certification, PPD tests, and hepatitis B vaccinations. The Institute's mandatory annual bloodborne pathogens classes are free.

Clinic and Resource Fees for Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine Programs

An additional continuing registration fee is due each month for any student who does not complete the program by her or his anticipated completion date. Please see the student handbooks for more detailed information on these fees.

Post Graduate Trainee Program Fees for Acupuncture Program

Students who wish to complete additional hours of supervised clinical treatment beyond the Master of Acupuncture degree requirements may enroll in the Post Graduate Trainee Program. A one-time application fee and a continuing monthly supervision fee applies. Please see the Clinical Student Handbook for details.

Refund Policy

Tai Sophia Institute follows Maryland State refund guidelines and the federal policy for return of Title IV funds. This information is posted on the Tai Sophia website, www.tai.edu. It is also available by request from the business and finance office.

International Students

If you were educated outside the United States for your bachelor's degree equivalent, you must submit:

1. Completed application, essay, and a non-refundable application fee in U.S. dollars.
2. Official transcript (in a sealed envelope) sent directly from the degree-granting institution.
3. Official evaluation (in a sealed envelope) from a foreign credential evaluation service confirming that the foreign degree earned is equivalent to a U.S. baccalaureate. Students must order this evaluation independently. Below is a recommended company (not affiliated with Tai Sophia) that evaluates international transcripts.

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers:
AACRAO's Foreign Education Credential Service
Phone: 202-296-3359 Web: www.aacrao.org

The Institute is authorized under U.S. law to enroll non-immigrant alien students in the Master of Acupuncture and the Master of Science in Herbal Medicine programs. Please note that transformative leadership and social change students are not eligible to obtain I-20 visa due to the part-time nature of the program.

Students interested in seeking Form I-20 must secure this immigration material and application (required to apply for the appropriate visa) from the registrar's office. International students seeking Form I-20 must be granted admission and request the Form I-20 three months prior to the start date of classes.

If accepted for admission from an academic perspective, students seeking Form I-20 must apply for the credential and begin the process by providing the Institute with a copy of a valid passport, photo identification and proof of financial support. Students must submit a financial statement before this eligibility may be considered. Applicants must be able to support themselves or be able to receive fiscal support from a sponsor.

Applicants should give careful financial consideration when considering study in the United States because United States immigration regulations regarding employment is strict and financial aid is not available. Tai Sophia is not responsible for any changes in financial circumstances once the student is enrolled. Please note that foreign currency should be converted to the U.S. equivalent.

Maintaining Legal F-1 Status

As an international student, it is essential that you adhere to the Department of Homeland Security regulations that govern your status. This is your individual responsibility for which you must be aware and accountable. Please be advised that these policies are enforced and that ignorance of the law is not considered an excuse for non-compliance. Therefore, it is essential that you maintain your awareness and currency with regard to maintaining your legal F-1 status. The following is provided solely for informational purposes:

- Ensure that your passport is valid at all times. Contact your embassy regarding extension issues at least six months prior to your passport expiration date (www.embassy.org).

- Students must be registered for a full course load in each trimester to maintain F-1 status.
- Should you move to another address, ensure that the registrar's office is notified in writing within 10 days of the move.
- Should you leave the U.S., make sure the F-1 visa in your passport is valid. If this is not the case, you must apply for a new one overseas before attempting to re-enter the U.S. (see Department of State Visa Services). Make an appointment with the associate vice president for student services and registrar to have your I-20 endorsed for travel before departing from the United States.
- F-1 students are not permitted to work.
- Should you change your program or need an extension of time to complete the program, you must apply for an extension, one month before your I-20 expires.
- New students with a Form I-20 are required to pay the SEVIS fee, which is non-refundable (subject to change). This is a separate fee paid to the Student and Exchange Visitor Program in the Department of Homeland Security. You can fill in the Form I-901 online at www.fmjfee.com. For more information on the SEVIS I-901 non-refundable fee, please see the website at <http://www.ice.gov/graphics/sevis/i901>.

The United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) implemented a new system for recording information on international visitors entering and exiting the U.S. in December 2003. As part of this initiative, the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) was implemented and administered by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), which is a division of United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and considered the largest investigative division of the Department of Homeland Security. SEVIS is a centralized and automated web-based information system which manages and maintains data for international students and exchange visitors who are studying in the United States and their dependents. We do realize this is an involved process and have provided the SEVIS information and website (<http://www.ice.gov>) to assist you in learning more about this process.

English Language Requirements

Success in Tai Sophia's graduate degree programs is dependent on a student's ability to communicate in English. This ability not only includes comprehending, reading, and writing English, but specifically the ability to understand the nuances in the language and to speak effectively. This level of proficiency is greater than that which is required for daily living. The requirements stated below are in place to ensure a student's ability to take full advantage of the academic programs and serve the outside community as practitioners.

Students who are non-native English speakers may be required to report scores from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the TOEFL Internet-based Test (IBT). Tai Sophia Institute's school code is 8400. Contact TOEFL directly at toefl.org for information about registering for the test. If you have any questions related to fulfilling the language requirement please speak with an admissions counselor.

Commonly Asked Questions and Answers

How are the programs at Tai Sophia different from other programs?

Tai Sophia offers a holistic healing approach at the foundation of our degree programs. Our programs are experiential and relationship-based. The philosophical core of this work incorporates ancient wisdom from around the world. These teachings will help you recover a worldview that honors the unity of all life. This oneness will have an enormous impact on you as a healer and in your person-to-person relationships with patients, clients, friends, family, and all those in your community. All three programs begin with an opening ceremony and SOPHIA® (School of Philosophy and Healing in Action®) Intensive course in which this core philosophy is introduced.

May I visit the school and sit in on a class?

Yes, of course. Please contact the Office of Graduate Admissions to make arrangements. Open Houses, class visits, and the Redefining Health weekend workshop also provide wonderful opportunities for prospective students to meet faculty and staff and get a sense of the philosophy that underpins our programs.

How important is it that I have a background in a health-related field?

Approximately 30 percent of our students have experience in professional healthcare, while about 70 percent have backgrounds or degrees in a broad range of areas. We find that the learning of each class is enriched by this diversity of backgrounds and gifts provided by people from all walks of life.

May I talk with some of the students or graduates who have the same background as I do?

Yes, of course. Please make arrangements through the Office of Graduate Admissions.

Am I too old to start something new?

Our students have ranged in age from 22 to 68, with an average age of 39. Thirty percent have advanced degrees beyond a bachelor's degree. For most of our students, pursuing one of our degree programs is an important and desired change of career. Many shift from successful and lucrative jobs in order to study a healing modality that has changed and enriched their own lives. For many, this change is an opportunity to pursue a path for which they have a passion.

What if I don't have a bachelor's degree?

You must have a bachelor's degree in any discipline as the minimum requirement for all three of the graduate degree programs. We recommend that you contact a variety of local and online universities and colleges to investigate bachelor's programs tailored to adult learners. Admissions counselors at Tai Sophia are available to give you ideas of bachelor's level courses that will prepare you for our master's programs.

Is Federal Financial Aid available for the graduate degree programs?

Yes. Please speak directly with our financial aid director for details on financial aid. Contact the Office of Financial Aid at ext. 6628.

May I transfer credits from another school?

The Master of Acupuncture program is largely a series of courses that are required and offered in a prescribed sequence. With few exceptions, you will attend courses with fellow students who begin the program with you. Because much of our teaching is based on an oral tradition, with highly experiential classes, our courses are often not easily compared to courses at other schools.

Please see refer to the Acupuncture section of this catalog, under the heading Additional Information for information on transfer credits in the Acupuncture program. For information on transfer credit possibilities for the Herbal Medicine program, please contact the Office of Graduate Admissions. There is no transfer credit possibility for the Transformative Leadership and Social Change program.

Is it possible to work while enrolled in the degree programs?

It is possible to hold a part-time job and attend the Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine programs. Based on our experience working with students in these programs, we recommend that you work no more than 15 hours per week on average. Please note that the clinical portion of these programs places significant additional time and energy demands on students, and that this may have an impact on the amount of time that will be available for employment. The Transformative Leadership and Social Change program is offered in an executive/part-time format thus designed for working professionals, as are the graduate certificate programs.

Will I need access to email?

To receive institutional communications, students must have access to email. Each student is assigned an Institute email address and can use that address to access their institutional email through Tai Sophia's web page.