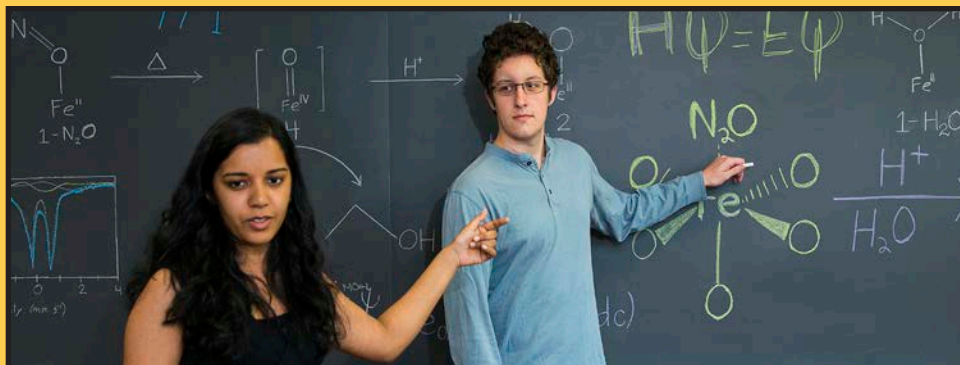


# INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PRE-ARRIVAL GUIDE

2018-2019



[ISSS.UMN.EDU/NEW](http://ISSS.UMN.EDU/NEW)

ISSS

International  
Student & Scholar  
Services

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

## ACTION ITEMS THAT NEED YOUR ATTENTION

- Initiate your UMN e-mail account (page 2)
- Apply for your student visa (page 3) or begin visa transfer process (page 6)
- Plan your arrival date (page 8)
- Remove registration holds (page 9)
- Complete the International Student Preparation Course (page 10)
- Attend Immigration Check-In and any required orientations (page 11)
- Submit English language test scores and transcripts, if necessary (page 12)
- Send your immunization record to Boynton Health Service (page 13)
- Plan your finances (page 14)
- Find temporary housing, if necessary (page 16)
- Research on- and off-campus housing (page 16)
- Attend pre-departure orientation in home country, optional (page 17)
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# WELCOME

Dear Student,

**On behalf of the staff of International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) in the Global Programs and Strategy Alliance, congratulations on your admission to the University of Minnesota!**

Our Twin Cities campus is centrally located in the exciting and friendly cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Minnesotans place a high value on education, and they also realize that hosting international students is an important component of what makes the University of Minnesota a vibrant and globalized campus. We think you will find this a warm and accepting community.

The staff of ISSS is ready to help you accomplish your academic and career goals. Our office provides:

- Information to help you adjust to the University and U.S. culture,
- Advising and counseling services to help you maintain your immigration status and succeed at the UMN,
- Academic and career support, and
- Educational and social programs to help you meet U.S. and other international students.

Please read this guide carefully and complete the activities explained at [iss.umn.edu/new](https://iss.umn.edu/new). It is very important that you understand this information so you can successfully begin your studies at the University of Minnesota.

Please email [issnew@umn.edu](mailto:issnew@umn.edu) if you have questions. We are delighted you chose to study at the UMN, and we look forward to meeting you!

Sincerely,



Barbara Kappler, Ph.D.  
Assistant Dean,  
International Student & Scholar Services



## DID YOU KNOW?

6,400 international students from 130 world locations attend the UMN

# INITIATE YOUR UMN EMAIL

Your University email address is the official form of communication at the University of Minnesota. Official announcements from the University, your department, professors, and ISSS are sent to this email address. Your tuition bill will also be emailed to this account.

**You are responsible for knowing any information sent to you through your University email**, including tuition bills and other critical information from instructors and administrative offices.

Go to [umn.edu/initiate](https://umn.edu/initiate) to initiate your email account. If you do not have a Social Security Number, you can leave the question asking for it empty.

## ATTENTION STUDENTS IN CHINA

The UMN uses Google as our email and applications platform. We are aware that it may be difficult for incoming students living in China to access their UMN email account. Please go to [umn.edu/initiate](https://umn.edu/initiate) to initiate your account and review the other recommendations at [z.umn.edu/chinatech](https://z.umn.edu/chinatech).

Many, but not all, offices will send communications to both your UMN email and the personal email address you provided on your application for admission. We also recommend you sign up to receive messages from the UMN China Office's WeChat official account ("UMNChina"). You can learn more about the China Office at [china.umn.edu](https://china.umn.edu).

The screenshot shows the University of Minnesota Information Technology website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the University of Minnesota logo and the tagline "Driven to Discover". The main header reads "Information Technology" and includes links for "Training & Events", "News & Alerts", and a "Help" button. The main content area features a large banner for "New Students: Start Using Technology" with a sub-headline "Even before you arrive on campus, you can set up your University account and start using University technology resources and services." Below the banner is a search bar with the text "Search Self-Help Guides, Knowledge, and Training". The page is organized into two columns of green boxes. The left column has a "Get Started" section with a checkmark icon, followed by a "Initiate and Manage Your Student Internet Account" section containing two links: "Initiate Your Account" and "Manage Your Account Options". Below this is a "Check your University Email" section. The right column has a "View Options" section with three links: "Expand All Categories", "Collapse All Categories", and "Print Friendly View". At the bottom of the page, there is a text box that reads: "Do you want more help with accessing your email? Do you have questions about what technology is available on campus? See [z.umn.edu/newstudentech](https://z.umn.edu/newstudentech)."

# OBTAIN A NEW VISA

- If you are a Canadian citizen, you do not need an entry visa. Skip to page 5.
- If you are currently in the U.S. in F-1 or J-1 visa status and plan to remain in that same visa status, skip to “Visa Transfers” (page 6) for instructions on how to transfer your F-1 or J-1 SEVIS record to the University of Minnesota.

There are two main categories of visas given to international students: F-1 and J-1. Most international students in the U.S. hold an F-1 visa. If you received an I-20 document from the UMN, you will apply for an F-1 visa. If you received a DS-2019, you will apply for a J-1 visa.

## 1. REVIEW THE INFORMATION ON YOUR I-20/DS-2019 AND SIGN THE BOTTOM

Review the spelling and order of your name on the visa document, and confirm that it **exactly** matches how your legal name is written at the bottom of the identity page in your passport (the page that has your picture).

It is essential that your information is printed identically on **all** of your immigration documents (I-20/DS-2019, passport, and visa), and you should **always** write it the same way when completing your visa application and any other forms.

If there is a mistake or the name on your I-20/DS-2019 does not match your name in your passport, contact the office or agency that issued your document (see the list printed on the back of this book).

If all of the information is correct, sign and date your name on the bottom of your I-20/DS-2019. Additionally, if you have an I-20 and are younger than 18 years old, your parents/guardians must also sign your document.

The image shows a sample I-20 form from the Department of Homeland Security. The form is titled "I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status" and includes fields for personal information, school details, program of study, and financials. A large, semi-transparent watermark "UW" is overlaid on the form.

I-20 Example

The image shows a sample DS-2019 form titled "CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY FOR EXCHANGE VISITOR STATUS (J-1)". It includes fields for personal information, sponsor details, and program information. A large, semi-transparent watermark "UW" is overlaid on the form.

DS-2019 Example

## 2. PAY THE SEVIS FEE AT [WWW.FMJFEE.COM](http://WWW.FMJFEE.COM)

New students must pay the SEVIS fee before applying for an entry visa or entering the United States. This fee is charged by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and it is not administered by UMN. You cannot pay the fee until you have your I-20 or DS-2019 document in your possession. To pay the fee, visit [www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com).

## 3. COMPLETE THE VISA APPLICATION FORM AND SCHEDULE YOUR VISA INTERVIEW APPOINTMENT

You should plan to apply for a visa at the U.S. embassy/consulate that is closest to where you live. You can find the official list at [www.usembassy.gov](http://www.usembassy.gov). This website also includes specific instructions for scheduling an appointment.

We recommend scheduling your appointment as soon as possible after you receive your I-20/DS-2019. To learn the estimated visa wait time for obtaining a visa at your local embassy, visit [z.umn.edu/doswait](http://z.umn.edu/doswait).

When completing the visa application, write your legal name exactly as it is printed in your passport and provide complete and truthful information throughout the application. If you do not have housing reserved in the U.S. but you are asked to provide an address in the U.S. where you will stay, you can use ISSS's address (301 19th Ave South, Suite 190, Humphrey School, Minneapolis, MN 55455).

## 4. PREPARE DOCUMENTS FOR YOUR VISA INTERVIEW

Follow the instructions from the Embassy regarding what to take to the appointment. Typically, you will be asked to provide the following documents:

- Valid passport
- I-20 or DS-2019 document
- Admission letter (or print out of electronic admission notification)
- Documented proof of financial support for, at least, one year (scholarship or assistantship letter, bank statement, etc.)
- Receipt of SEVIS fee payment
- Visa application forms (available from the U.S. embassy/consulate)
- Any documents requested by embassy/consulate

## 5. PREPARE FOR YOUR VISA INTERVIEW

The visa interview will be a very brief meeting with a consular officer. Be prepared to explain why you want to study at UMN, how you are planning to pay for your stay, and what your plans might be after you graduate. Always answer truthfully! If you have questions or concerns before the visa interview, we recommend that you contact the EducationUSA office closest to you (a list is available at [z.umn.edu/edusacenter](http://z.umn.edu/edusacenter)).

Once you receive your visa, check the accuracy of the information on it. Contact the U.S. embassy or consulate if you find a mistake.

### CAUTION

Do NOT enter the United States in visitor status (B1/B2 or Visa Waiver). Individuals with these immigration statuses are not eligible to register for an academic course of study. If you have questions about any other visa types, contact ISSS.

## ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO KNOW

### *If You Have Dependents*

Your spouse and children under age 21 are eligible to accompany you to the U.S. with a dependent visa (F-2 or J-2).

You must request a dependent I-20 or DS-2019 document for each of your eligible dependents. Dependents are not required to pay the SEVIS fee (page 4).

For more, contact the UMN office responsible for your documents (see the back cover of this book for a list).

**Note:** F-2 visa holders are not permitted to work in the United States. They, also, cannot study full-time at a university or other post-secondary institution.

### *Visa Denials*

If your visa is denied, ask the consular official to provide a written explanation of the denial, and then contact ISSS for assistance. Email [iss@umn.edu](mailto:iss@umn.edu) and write “Visa Denial” in the subject line.

### *Administrative Processing and Security Clearance Checks*

Some visa applicants are subject to additional screening that will delay the issuance of the visa. This is NOT a denial. Most applicants who are subject to administrative processing or a security clearance check will receive a visa within one to two months. It can, sometimes, take longer.

You cannot prevent additional screening or security clearance, and ISSS or your department cannot intervene to speed up the process.

## ATTENTION CANADIAN CITIZENS

Canadian citizens can enter the United States in student status without obtaining an F-1 or J-1 having an entry visa in their passport. However, Canadian citizens must obtain an I-20 or DS-2019 and pay the SEVIS fee (page 5) before entering the United States.

Upon entry, you must present to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer your passport, I-20 or DS-2019, admission letter, proof of financial support for at least one year, and receipt of SEVIS fee payment (page 4).

If you are a Canadian citizen who is currently in the United States in F-1 or J-1 visa status and plan to remain in that same visa status, you must transfer your F-1 or J-1 SEVIS record to the UMN (page 6).

# TRANSFER YOUR EXISTING VISA

**You are considered a “Visa Status Transfer Student” if you currently hold F-1 or J-1 status at another institution in the United States and plan to remain in the same immigration status (F-1 or J-1) when at the UMN. This includes students who are transferring to the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities from another UMN school.**

**If this does not describe you, skip to page 8.**

## F-1 TRANSFER STUDENTS

The F-1 transfer process involves several steps, all of which must be carried out to complete your transfer.

1. Contact the international student advising office at your current institution and inform them of your intent to transfer to the University of Minnesota. An adviser at your current school will need to set up your SEVIS record to transfer to the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities after you finish classes there.
2. **Undergraduate and Professional Degree Students** must complete the Transfer Release form available at [z.umn.edu/issstransfer](http://z.umn.edu/issstransfer).
  - A. You should complete section #1.
  - B. An international adviser at your current institution must complete section #2. They will then email it to [iss@umn.edu](mailto:iss@umn.edu) or fax it to 612-626-7361.

- C. If you are a graduate student and you indicated on your financial certification form that you are transferring your F-1 record to UMN-TC, the Graduate School will email you. You do not need to complete the form.

**\*Your I-20 cannot be processed before your SEVIS record has been transferred to the UMN.**

3. A University of Minnesota “Transfer Pending” I-20 record will be created within two to three weeks after the record from your previous school has been received. This is a TEMPORARY I-20 that will expire 15 days after the start of the semester.
4. Complete Immigration Check-In (page 11) after arriving at the UMN.

## WILL YOU TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES DURING THIS PROCESS?

If you are currently on an F-1 or J-1 student visa and you are traveling outside the U.S. before starting your UMN studies, you need to obtain a temporary “transfer pending” I-20 or a new DS-2019 to re-enter the United States. You may request a “transfer pending” I-20 or new DS-2019 after your record has been released to UMN by your previous institution. If you cannot obtain your I-20 before departing the U.S. you must arrange for it mailed to your overseas address.

You must also have a valid entry F-1 or J-1 visa in your passport. If it has not expired, you may use the F-1 entry visa from your previous educational institution to re-enter the United States. If you have a J-1 visa, contact an ISSS adviser.



5. Update your “Mailing Address” (your address in Minnesota) on [myu.umn.edu](http://myu.umn.edu). Directions are at [z.umn.edu/issaddress](http://z.umn.edu/issaddress).
6. Register full-time for courses.
7. You will receive an email from ISSS within the first two weeks of the semester indicating your University of Minnesota “Transfer Completed” I-20 is available for pick up at ISSS (190 Humphrey School). This is your official University of Minnesota I-20, and **you are required to pick up this document**. Failure to do so could put your F-1 status at risk.

## J-1 TRANSFER STUDENTS

1. Meet with a J-1 adviser at your current school to discuss your intent to transfer to the University of Minnesota and to determine a SEVIS transfer “effective date.”
2. Complete and submit the DS-2019 Application for New J-1 Degree-Seeking Applicants at [z.umn.edu/jfincert](http://z.umn.edu/jfincert).
3. Ask the J-1 adviser at your current school to transfer your SEVIS record to the University of Minnesota.
4. Once your transfer becomes effective, meet with Julie Halfen (or Gabriele Schmiegel for sponsored students) at ISSS within 25 days to complete Immigration Check-In and to obtain your University of Minnesota DS-2019.



# PLAN YOUR ARRIVAL DATE

**Undergraduate students** starting in Fall 2018 are required to arrive at the UMN by Monday, August 20, 2018.

**Graduate, Professional, and Non-Degree students** should plan to arrive 10 days prior to the program start date on their I-20 or DS-2019.

**Spring 2019 students** should arrive in the U.S. 10 days before the program start date on their I-20 or DS-2019.

If you need to search for off-campus housing (page 16), we recommend arriving 3 weeks before classes start.

Students who follow these arrival date guidelines will be more prepared to begin their studies, as they will have sufficient time to do the following:

- Rest and recover from jet lag
- Remove registration holds (page 9)
- Attend any required orientation sessions and complete Immigration Check-In (page 11)
- Register for classes
- Complete paperwork for on-campus employment and assistantships (if applicable, see box for more about assistantships)
- Take any necessary exams, such as English proficiency or SPEAK test
- Go to Graduate Assistantship training (if applicable)

ISSS also arranges special programs for new international students before the start of the fall and spring semesters. These programs can help you prepare for classes and meet other international students. See page 20 to learn about Global Gopher Events and more.

## IF YOU HAVE A GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP

Most graduate assistantships start at least one week before the start of classes. You must be on-campus and ready to begin working on this date. You should arrive a few days prior to your employment start date so you can complete payroll procedures.

**If you will need to obtain a Social Security Number (SSN), arrive 10 days prior to your employment start date. This will ensure you can complete the necessary paperwork and apply for a Social Security Number (SSN).**

Your department may require you to arrive earlier for a special orientation. Failure to begin working on your start date may result in a loss of salary and/or a portion of your tuition and health care benefits.

## DID YOU KNOW?

You are allowed to arrive in the U.S. up to 30 days before the program start date listed on your I-20 or DS-2019.

You **must** enter the U.S. no later than the start date on your I-20/DS-2019. Email [issnews@umn.edu](mailto:issnews@umn.edu) if your arrival will be delayed.

# REMOVE REGISTRATION HOLDS

Registration holds prevent you from registering for classes. They are placed on your record you need to complete a requirement. Many international students have at least two holds on their record when they arrive at the UMN.

Below are brief descriptions of the registration holds commonly placed on new international student records, and see [z.umn.edu/isssholds](http://z.umn.edu/isssholds) for more.

## AI HOLD: “DETERMINE CURRENT VISA STATUS”

*Office Placed By: International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)*

ISSS will remove this after you complete the International Student Preparation Course (see page 10) and attend Immigration Check-In (see page 11).

Undergraduate students will also need to complete the New International Student Seminar (NISS) before registering for future semesters. ISSS will send more information after classes begin.

## AZ HOLD: “ESL, ENGLISH/SECOND LANGUAGE”

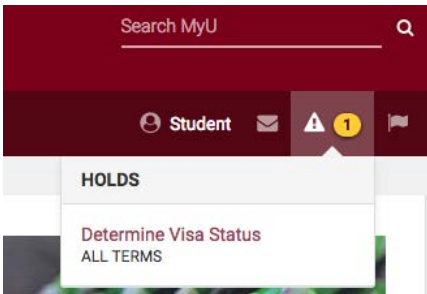
*Office Placed By: The Minnesota English Language Program (MELP)*

To remove this, you may need to take an English proficiency test or register for a class. See page 12 for more about contacting MELP ([z.umn.edu/melp](http://z.umn.edu/melp)).

## MJ/MG HOLD: “GRAD SCHOOL FINAL DEGREE/TRANSCRIPT”

*Office Placed By: The Graduate School*

This hold indicates that the Graduate School needs a transcript or other record to complete your admission file. Learn more at [www.grad.umn.edu/admissions](http://www.grad.umn.edu/admissions).



The screenshot shows the MyU student portal interface. At the top, there is a search bar labeled 'Search MyU'. Below it, a navigation bar includes a 'Student' profile icon, an email icon, a notification bell icon with a yellow circle containing the number '1', and a flag icon. A dropdown menu is open under the notification bell, displaying the word 'HOLDS' in bold. Below 'HOLDS', there is a link that reads 'Determine Visa Status ALL TERMS'.

To see a list of your holds, go to MyU and click the “Holds” notification. For further directions, go to [z.umn.edu/holdsremove](http://z.umn.edu/holdsremove).

## CAUTION

You **will not** be allowed to register until the holds are removed from your record. It is essential that you take action to remove them **before your registration time**.

# COMPLETE THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PREPARATION COURSE

All new international students are required to complete the International Student Preparation Course. This is an online tool developed by ISSS to help you prepare for arrival at the University and learn about your visa status.

**You should complete the International Student Preparation Course as soon as possible.**

## ATTENTION UNDERGRADUATE TRANSFER STUDENTS

All undergraduate transfer students must complete **two** online courses: the International Student Preparation Course and the Transfer Student Online Orientation (see [checklist.umn.edu](https://iss.s.umn.edu/checklist)).

You must complete both of these items before attending your in-person Transfer Student Orientation and Immigration Check-In. You may be delayed when registering if you do not complete both before arriving at orientation.

The International Student Preparation Course has helpful modules addressing:

- What Will Happen When You Arrive
- Immigration Regulations
- Academics and Class Registration
- Health Insurance
- Campus Safety
- Getting To and Around the University
- Living On and Off-Campus
- Diversity at the UMN
- Student Life and Student Stories

There is an AI “Determine Current Visa Status” Hold (page 9) on your student record. This hold will prevent you from registering for classes until you complete the International Student Preparation Course and attend Immigration Check-In (page 11).

See [iss.s.umn.edu/new/online.html](https://iss.s.umn.edu/new/online.html) for information about how to begin.



# ATTEND IMMIGRATION CHECK-IN & ANY REQUIRED ORIENTATIONS

**Upon arrival, all new international students are required to attend an in-person Immigration Check-In. At this session, ISSS staff will review your documents and provide you with essential information about maintaining your visa status. Your AI “Determine Current Visa Status” hold will be temporarily or permanently removed after you complete Immigration Check-In.**

**First-Year (Freshman) Undergraduate Students** will attend Immigration Check-In during their Freshman Orientation. If you have not yet selected your orientation date, review your New Student Checklist at [checklist.umn.edu](http://checklist.umn.edu).

**Transfer Undergraduate Students** will attend a two-part Immigration Check-In during their on-campus Transfer Orientation. Part one will occur in the morning and part two will occur in the afternoon of your orientation. **You must attend the morning AND afternoon sessions.** If you have not yet selected your orientation date, review your New Student Checklist at [checklist.umn.edu](http://checklist.umn.edu).

**Graduate and Professional Degree Students** will register for Immigration Check-In while completing the online International Student Preparation Course (page 10). Your Immigration Check-In will be separate from any other orientation you may attend. **DO NOT** register for Immigration Check-in at a time that conflicts with other requirements.

Watch for communications from other departments regarding their required and/or optional orientations.

**Non-Degree Students** will register for Immigration Check-In while completing the online International Student Preparation Course (page 10). All Non-Degree students will also have a separate, required orientation with their exchange coordinator. Information will be sent by your exchange coordinator.

**Sponsored Students** who are Freshmen and Undergraduate Transfer students will complete Immigration Check-In during their on-campus Freshman/Transfer Orientation (see [checklist.umn.edu](http://checklist.umn.edu)). All other sponsored students (Non-Degree, Graduate, and Professional School students) will register for Immigration Check-In while completing the online International Student Preparation Course (page 10).

ISSS will host a Welcome Reception for sponsored students in September and January where you can network with your peers. Review your sponsored student materials for more details.

## IMPORTANT

All new international students should complete the online International Student Preparation Course (page 10) as soon as possible.

Students who have not completed this requirement at least 24 hours before Immigration Check-In may be asked to reschedule, and they may be delayed in registering for classes.

# DETERMINE IF YOU NEED TO TAKE AN ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TEST

Strong language skills are important for any student to be successful at the University of Minnesota, and we are committed to supporting students as they develop their skills while at the University.

Students without a valid English test score, or a score below the minimum required by the University, may be required to take an English test when they arrive on campus. They may also be required to take a supportive English class during their first semester, in addition to their other coursework.

If you have an AZ hold on your student record (page 9) instructing you to go the Minnesota English Language Program, please arrive by the mandatory arrival date (page 8) so you have enough time to take the test.

For information about minimum test scores, how to send your scores to the UMN, and the English as a Second Language course requirements, go to [z.umn.edu/intlenglishreq](https://z.umn.edu/intlenglishreq). See page 22 for more about the Minnesota English Language Program's courses.

# SUBMIT YOUR FINAL HIGH SCHOOL/ SECONDARY SCHOOL TRANSCRIPT

## UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE-SEEKING STUDENTS ONLY

Successful completion of secondary school/high school graduation is a requirement for enrollment at the University of Minnesota.

In order to verify that you have completed secondary school, have your school submit your final secondary school transcript and proof of graduation (i.e., graduation certificate or leaving exam results) to the Office of Admissions no later than August 1 for those enrolling in the fall or January 15 for students enrolling in spring.

For country-specific requirements, visit [z.umn.edu/adintldocs](https://z.umn.edu/adintldocs).

To be considered official:

- All documents not issued in English must be written in the original language and include a certified true English translation.
- Transcripts must be an original document (or attested copies of original academic documents).
- They must be mailed in a stamped and sealed envelope directly from the secondary school.

Send your documents to the Office of Admissions at:

University of Minnesota  
Office of Admissions  
240 Williamson Hall  
231 Pillsbury Drive SE  
Minneapolis MN 55455, USA

# LEARN ABOUT HEALTH INSURANCE AND HEALTH CARE

Medical expenses in the United States are extremely high. In fact, one day in the hospital in the U.S. can cost well over \$10,000, even for routine care. Because of this, it is very important to understand your health insurance and where to go for health care.

**All international students (and their dependents) must purchase the University-sponsored Student Health Benefit Plan (SHBP)** unless they are eligible for a waiver (for more about waivers, see [z.umn.edu/shbpwaiver](https://z.umn.edu/shbpwaiver)). You will automatically be enrolled in the SHBP after your documents are validated during Immigration Check-In (page 11).

Students holding a qualifying graduate assistantship will be eligible to enroll in the Graduate Assistantship Plan (GAHP), as an alternative to the SHBP.

**Do not purchase alternative insurance from a private insurance company for yourself or your dependents.**

Email [umshbo@umn.edu](mailto:umshbo@umn.edu) if you have questions about the SHBP or the GAHP, and additional information can be found at [shb.umn.edu](https://shb.umn.edu).

## DEPENDENT INSURANCE

International students are required to enroll any dependents (spouse or children) who are in the United States in F-2 or J-2 status in the Student Health Benefit Plan. Dependents are not enrolled automatically in the plan. An enrollment form should be completed and returned to the Office of Student Health Benefits within 30 days of their arrival. Go to [shb.umn.edu](https://shb.umn.edu) to obtain this enrollment form.

## PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS

The University's health insurance plans cover any pre-existing conditions. Bring copies of your medical records and a list of medications with you to the U.S. if you have a health condition that requires ongoing care (diabetes, heart problems, asthma, depression, etc.). This will help prevent interruptions in care.

## IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Minnesota law requires all students to be immunized against measles, mumps, rubella, tetanus, and diphtheria. Review the immunization requirements and complete the online or printable immunization record available at [z.umn.edu/immunizationreq](https://z.umn.edu/immunizationreq).

You may choose to obtain vaccinations in your home country or once you arrive. If you receive vaccinations before coming to the United States, you can have your health care provider sign the immunization form and send it directly to Boynton Health. If you are unable to get vaccinated before arriving in the United States, you can get vaccinations at Boynton Health or at another clinic. Immunizations are covered by the student insurance plans.

If you do not complete the vaccination form before the start of classes, a registration hold will be placed on your record for the semester following your arrival.

# PLAN YOUR FINANCES

Your I-20 or DS-2019 is a legal document that reflects the estimated expenses for tuition, fees, insurance, supplies, and living expenses. When you completed the financial certification form, you indicated that you have sufficient funding to cover those expenses.

The University and the U.S. government hold you responsible for the information you provided on the form. **If you do not have the funds to cover these costs, you should defer your enrollment until you obtain adequate funding.**

## BRING FUNDS FOR YOUR IMMEDIATE EXPENSES

When planning for arrival, prepare to bring sufficient funds to pay your immediate expenses, such as a security deposit and two months' rent, phone and electricity charges, and, possibly, the purchase of warm clothing.

We recommend that you open a bank account in the United States soon after your arrival (see [z.umn.edu/intlbanking](http://z.umn.edu/intlbanking) for more). There are several different banks located near the University of Minnesota campus. When choosing a bank, ask if money can be transferred into the account from overseas if you plan to have money transferred to pay tuition, fees, mandatory health insurance, and ongoing living expenses.

If you choose to bring large amounts of money, we recommend carrying traveler's checks rather than cash (see page 18 for information if you and/or those travelling with you will bring more than \$10,000 USD in cash or checks). Do not put money in your checked baggage; you should carry it at all times.

## UNDERSTAND YOUR ASSISTANTSHIP

If you are a graduate student with an assistantship, your first paycheck will most likely not be issued until a month after the start of your assistantship. Therefore, you should bring funds to cover your initial expenses.

Your assistantship may not cover all your expenses, so plan your budget and calculate how much additional money you may need for the rest of the year. The total value of your appointment may be subject to a deduction of, as much as, 28 percent to cover taxes on the value of your tuition waiver.

## KNOW YOUR EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

Visa regulations vary about when/how international students can work in the U.S. More information is available in the International Student Preparation Course.

### *On-Campus Employment*

J-1 students whose DS-2019 forms are issued by the UMN and all F-1 students may work on-campus for up to 20 hours a week during an academic year.

### *Off-Campus Employment*

Off-campus employment is prohibited for F-1 students during their first academic year in the United States. J-1 students need to receive approval from their J-1 sponsor prior to starting employment in the U.S.

## PLEASE NOTE

On-campus student jobs are great opportunities to gain skills and experience. They can provide partial support, but they do not pay enough to fully cover a student's living expenses.



## PAY YOUR TUITION WITH FLYWIRE

International students can pay tuition online through their Student Account by using Flywire. This is a service that allows you to bypass international transfer fees and access foreign exchange rates that are more favorable than those offered by banks.

To do this, go to the “My Finances” tab of MyU ([www.myu.umn.edu](http://www.myu.umn.edu)) and select “International Payment” when making your payment.

You will need to create an account with Flywire, so have your student ID and information available. Learn more at [z.umn.edu/intlpay](http://z.umn.edu/intlpay).

## ATTENTION SPONSORED STUDENTS

If your financial sponsor (home country government, U.S. government, international organization, employer, bank, etc.) needs to be billed by the UMN, you must email a billing authorization, financial guarantee, or financial support letter to [isssspon@umn.edu](mailto:isssspon@umn.edu) before the beginning of the semester. You must also provide an updated letter to ISSS each year if your funding is renewed on an annual basis.

This letter must be on official letterhead, be written in English, and state that the University of Minnesota is to bill the sponsor directly. In addition, the letter must include the following information:

- Your full name
- The length of time for which the funding is granted
- What items are to be billed (for example, tuition, fees, and/or health insurance)
- The address to where the UMN must send your bill
- The name of a contact person
- Any limitations or exclusions on the funding (for example, a specific degree or major)
- The signature of your sponsor

The University **cannot** send an invoice to the sponsor until we receive this letter. The University does not accept wire transfers on behalf of individual students outside the Third-Party payment process.

# FIND TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT HOUSING

## RESERVE TEMPORARY HOUSING, IF NECESSARY

**For Fall 2018**, new international students can stay in the International Early Arrival Housing from July 30, 2018 to late August. At only \$26 a night, this temporary on-campus housing is an affordable option for new students needing somewhere to stay before they can move into their permanent on- or off-campus housing.

Please note:

- Only students can stay in International Early Arrival Housing; students traveling with family (including parents, siblings, or spouses) should find another temporary housing option.
- Students who will live on-campus during the school year will be required to move into their assigned housing on August 24, 2018.
- Students who will live off-campus during the school year will be required to move out of the temporary housing by 9:00 a.m. on August 25, 2018. No exceptions will be made, so ask your off-campus housing if you will be able to move in on August 25 or if you will need to find other housing until September 1.

Visit [housing.umn.edu/international](https://housing.umn.edu/international) to make a reservation in the International Early Arrival Housing.

**There are no temporary housing options available for students arriving in the spring.** Students needing temporary housing options for spring should consider the options listed at [housing.umn.edu/international](https://housing.umn.edu/international).

## EXPLORE THE ON-CAMPUS HOUSING OPTIONS AT [HOUSING.UMN.EDU](https://housing.umn.edu)

**All new first-year undergraduate students** are guaranteed housing if you confirm your enrollment and apply for housing by May 1, 2018.

Housing assignments are done in the order received, so apply as soon as possible.

The online housing application requires that you pay a fee with a major credit card. Email the housing office if you have any questions at [housing@umn.edu](mailto:housing@umn.edu).

**Transfer, graduate, and professional students:** You need to apply for housing online. **You will only be considered for on-campus housing after first-year undergraduates receive rooms.** Be prepared to find off-campus housing.

There are a limited number (approximately 200) of guaranteed spaces for undergraduate transfer students. Priority is given to students who select (and are admitted to) one of the transfer Living Learning Communities.

Married/partner housing is available, but it is in high demand. Find more at [housing.umn.edu/family](https://housing.umn.edu/family).

### DID YOU KNOW?

There are over 30 Living Learning Communities (LLC) on-campus where you can live with other students who share your interests. See [housing.umn.edu/llcs](https://housing.umn.edu/llcs) for more information.

## RESEARCH OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING

Start researching your housing options early; we recommend starting at least one to two months before your arrival.

See [housing.umn.edu/off-campus](https://housing.umn.edu/off-campus) or [housing.umn.edu/international](https://housing.umn.edu/international) to learn about housing options and costs, and you can learn about the neighborhoods on campus in the “Housing” section of the International Student Preparation Course (page 10).

## UNDERSTAND YOUR LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES WHEN RENTING OFF-CAMPUS

You should always see an apartment in person before signing a lease (a legal contract that you agree to rent a place for time a specific time period), and most apartment managers will require a 12-month lease. Please review the information at [z.umn.edu/tenantguide](https://z.umn.edu/tenantguide) to learn more about the rights of tenants.

# ATTEND A PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION

## ATTEND AN EDUCATIONUSA PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION IN YOUR HOME COUNTRY (OPTIONAL)

EducationUSA offices all over the world offer pre-departure orientation sessions to international students preparing to depart for the United States. These sessions address frequently asked questions about living in the U.S., succeeding at a U.S. university, and the logistical issues involved with moving and entering the country. For details, visit [educationusa.state.gov/find-event](https://educationusa.state.gov/find-event).

## ATTEND THE UMN'S UNDERGRADUATE PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION IN CHINA (OPTIONAL)

The University of Minnesota's China Office offers two Pre-departure Orientations for new undergraduate students in the middle of May each year. These sessions provide information that is specific to the University of Minnesota. For details, please visit [www.china.umn.edu](https://www.china.umn.edu).

## DO NOT MISS ISSS'S PROGRAMS FOR NEW INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

ISSS has great activities before the start of classes to welcome international students to campus. See page 20 for more information about our programs that will prepare you to succeed academically and personally at the UMN.

# ARRIVE IN THE U.S.

## PREPARE FOR INSPECTION AT YOUR PORT OF ENTRY

You will need to present the following documents to a U.S. Customs and Border Protection officer when you arrive in the U.S. Keep these documents close to you during your travel. **Do not pack them into your luggage**, as you will not be allowed to retrieve your luggage until you have gone through immigration.

- Your passport and entry visa
- I-20 or DS-2019 document
- Form 6059, “Customs Declaration” (given to you as you arrive)

You may also be asked to provide additional documents, such as proof of financial support and/or UMN admission.

When completing your paperwork, always spell your name *exactly* as it appears in your passport and visa.

## GET YOUR I-94 TRAVEL RECORD

An I-94 is a record of your travel to the United States. You should check the accuracy of your I-94 after you arrive in the U.S., and you should keep a copy for your records.

- If you arrive via air or sea, your I-94 will be recorded electronically, and you can access and print your electronic I-94 arrival record after inspection at [i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94](https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94).
- If you arrive via a land border, you may be given a paper Form I-94 record. To save time at the border, apply for a land border I-94 arrival record seven (or fewer) days before your arrival at [i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94](https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94).

See [z.umn.edu/cbpintvisitors](https://z.umn.edu/cbpintvisitors) for more.

## WILL YOU AND YOUR FAMILY BRING MORE THAN \$10,000 USD IN CASH OR CHECKS WHEN YOU ENTER THE U.S.?

You will be required to file a report with U.S. Customs when you enter the country if you bring cash or checks with you to the U.S. that are worth \$10,000 USD or more (USD or the foreign equivalent). The U.S. government allows you to carry any amount of currency or other monetary instruments into the United States, but the funds may be confiscated by the U.S. government if you fail to report amounts of above \$10,000 or more.

If traveling with family members, including your parents, your family must file a family declaration if you, collectively, bring \$10,000 or more into the U.S. This declaration will list all of the funds being brought into the U.S.

# TRANSPORTATION TO CAMPUS FROM THE AIRPORT

## RIDE THE GOPHER CHAUFFEUR (AVAILABLE AUGUST 10 - AUGUST 26)

### *For those arriving in Fall 2018:*

The UMN's Gopher Chauffeur gives students free rides from the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport to the University of Minnesota campus and several nearby hotels. The van departs hourly between 10:20 a.m. and 9:20 p.m.

**The Gopher Chauffeur is not available for the spring semester.**



Visit [z.umn.edu/airportrides](http://z.umn.edu/airportrides) to learn more about the Gopher Chauffeur and submit an online reservation (strongly preferred, but not required)

## OTHER TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

There are many ways to get to the University of Minnesota campus from the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport.

Below is basic information, and more information is available at [z.umn.edu/msptranspo](http://z.umn.edu/msptranspo).

- **Light Rail Transit:** The Blue Line leaves the airport every 10 minutes during peak hours and every 10 to 15 minutes at other times of the day. Tickets are sold at ticket machines at the rail station.
- **Buses:** City bus service is provided by Metro Transit. For bus fare and route information, call the 24-hour automated system at 612-341-4287.
- **Shuttles:** SuperShuttle is a shared shuttle that costs approximately \$20 per person. If you have more than 3 pieces of luggage you will be charged an extra fee. Bus, van, and limousine service can be scheduled.
- **Taxis:** Taxi service is available for approximately \$40-\$50. A \$6.25 fare will be displayed on the Taxicab meter when you start your trip. This fee includes a \$2.50 "flag drop" fee and a \$3.75 airport access fee. Use taxis and shuttle services that have the name of the company clearly marked.
- **App-based Ride Services:** Uber, Lyft, or another app-based ride services pick up on Level 2 of the Green Parking Ramp, above the Ground Transportation Center.

International student organizations may also offer to assist you with transportation from the airport. Contacts are available at [gopherlink.umn.edu](http://gopherlink.umn.edu).

# ATTEND THE ISSS NEW STUDENT PROGRAMS (OPTIONAL)

**ISSS organizes programs and events where international students can make new friends and gain leadership skills.**

**Some of these programs start before classes begin, so sign up now!**

## **INTERNATIONAL BUDDY PROGRAM (IBP)**

The International Buddy Program wants to ease your transition to the University of Minnesota! As part of IBP, you will be matched (based on mutual interests) with a current undergraduate student to be your mentor.

Your mentor will contact you before you travel to campus to help you prepare, guide you around the UMN and Twin Cities, teach you about academic and support resources, and be a familiar face on campus. IBP also hosts fun events throughout the semester!

Registration opens in fall and spring  
*Undergraduate and non-degree students only*

***iss.umn.edu/programs/Interbuddy  
ibp@umn.edu***

## **ISUCCESS (INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SUCCESS PROGRAM)**

iSuccess is a customized pre-orientation program that will give you an early start to your new life at the University of Minnesota. You will have time to experience an American classroom, learn strategies for bridging cultural challenges, and prepare to succeed academically and personally at UMN.

Dates: August 13-18, 2018

*We do not offer iSuccess in the spring*

Registration required

***iss.umn.edu/programs/iSuccess  
isuccess@umn.edu***

## **GLOBAL GOPHER EVENTS**

Start your UMN experience in the best possible way with Global Gopher Events! This is a special opportunity for you to meet other new international students, prepare for classes, discover the University's amazing services, and get advice from experienced international student leaders.

Fall Dates: August 20-31, 2018

Spring Dates: To Be Announced

Registration Requested

***iss.umn.edu/programs/ggumn***

## **WANT TO IMPROVE YOUR ENGLISH?**

If you are interested in improving your English skills before beginning your academic classes, the Minnesota English Language Program (MELP) offers an Intensive English Language Program during the summer.

MELP also offers American English courses during the school year for credit, including courses focused on Grammar, Pronunciation, Reading & Writing, and Listening & Speaking.

To learn more, go to ***z.umn.edu/melp*** or email ***esl@umn.edu***.

## INTERNATIONAL AND CHINESE PARENT ORIENTATION PROGRAMS (IPOP AND CHIPOP)

International parents are encouraged to register for the International/Chinese Parent Orientation Programs. These programs are an opportunity for parents to ask questions directly to the staff who specialize in working with international students.

The International Parent Orientation Program is a half-day supplement to the two-day Parent Orientation offered by Orientation & Transition Experiences (previously called Orientation and First Year Programs). There is no additional charge.

Chinese-speaking international parents are invited to join a one-day Chinese International Parent Orientation Program. This orientation is delivered in Mandarin, and it addresses specific questions and concerns of Chinese parents.

iPoP and ChiPoP are organized by ISSS, the Parent and Family Program, and Orientation & Transition Experiences.

Fall Dates: August 21 (iPoP) and August 24 (ChiPoP)

*We do not offer a parent orientation in the spring*

***[iss.umn.edu/programs/parentipop@umn.edu](http://iss.umn.edu/programs/parentipop@umn.edu)***

### WANT TO BE MORE INVOLVED?

In addition to the programs organized by ISSS, There are more than 900 student groups at the University of Minnesota.

Joining a student group is a great way to meet students with similar interests, make new friends, and become a student leader.

Visit ***[gopherlink.umn.edu](http://gopherlink.umn.edu)*** to see a full directory of student groups.

## OTHER ISSS PROGRAMS

ISSS organizes programs for international students wishing to gain leadership experience and meet international and domestic students.

Many of these programs will accept new students during your first semester. Learn more at ***[iss.umn.edu/programs](http://iss.umn.edu/programs)***.

### ***Cultural/Social***

- **Cross-Cultural Discussion Groups:** Gathers small groups of international and U.S. students to explore cross-cultural issues and perspectives.
- **Small World Coffee Hour:** Invites all students to learn about new cultures in a relaxing social environment.
- **Students Crossing Borders:** Brings international and U.S. students together into a single housing community and creates global experience.

### ***Leadership Opportunities***

- **Cross-Cultural Leadership Retreat:** A highly interactive, high-energy retreat that becomes a living laboratory of what it takes to work with people from vastly different cultures.
- **Culture Corps:** Enables international students to share their unique perspectives inside the classroom and with the UMN community.
- **International Student Ambassadors:** Offers insights to prospective and new students of what life is like as a UMN international student.
- **MATCH (Minnesota Ambassadors Taking College Home):** Opportunities for international students to share their experience of studying at Minnesota with students in their home countries.

# INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) is committed to making the University accessible and inviting for students, faculty, staff, and guests with disabilities. If you have a disability or have questions about what constitutes a disability that requires an accommodation, you should contact the DRC.

Contact the DRC as early as possible to discuss reasonable accommodations. An Access Consultant will assist you with disability-related concerns that affect learning and student life.

The primary responsibility of the Access Consultants is to determine your eligibility for services and to facilitate the process of identifying appropriate and reasonable accommodations. Please contact Disability Services at least one month before your arrival if you have additional questions or wish to register for services.

Disability Resource Center  
180 McNamara Alumni Center  
200 Oak St. SE  
Minneapolis, MN 55455 USA  
Phone: 612-626-1333 (v/tty)

Email: [\*\*ds@umn.edu\*\*](mailto:ds@umn.edu)

Web: [\*\*diversity.umn.edu/disability\*\*](http://diversity.umn.edu/disability)









## PROBLEMS WITH YOUR I-20 OR DS-2019?

If you need to change of the information on your I-20 or DS-2019, contact the office/agency that issued it.

### ***If you have a I-20, contact the following:***

- Undergraduate Students: ***iss@umn.edu***
- Graduate Students: ***gsquest@umn.edu***
- Professional Degree Students: Your college's admissions office

### ***If you have a DS-2019, contact the following:***

- Issued by the UMN: ***iss@umn.edu***
- Issued by a different J-1 program (for example, Fulbright): Your placement office

## WANT TO TALK TO A CURRENT INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA?

Our International Student Ambassadors are here to help!

Visit ***www.passport.umn.edu*** to see the Ambassador's blogs, photos, and videos. They share about the student experience at the UMN and what it is like to transition, study, live, and achieve here.

Have a question? Email ***passport@umn.edu*** or follow them on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.



## FOR ALL OTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT BEING A NEW INTERNATIONAL STUDENT, EMAIL ***ISSSNEW@UMN.EDU!***



# UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

International Student & Scholar Services

190 Humphrey School

301 - 19th Avenue South

Minneapolis, MN 55455 USA

Phone: +1-612-626-7100

***iss@umn.edu***

***iss.umn.edu***

Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram: ***@isssumn***

The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation.