PRE-ARRIVAL GUIDE
for New International Students
2017-2018

ISSS.UMN.EDU/NEW

ISSS
International Student & Scholar Services

University of Minnesota
ACTION ITEMS THAT NEED YOUR ATTENTION

BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

☐ Initiate your UMN e-mail account (p. 2)
☐ Apply for your student visa (p. 3) or begin student visa status transfer process (p. 7)
☐ Submit final transcripts (p. 9) and English language test scores (p. 22), if necessary
☐ Find temporary housing, if necessary (p. 10)
☐ Research on- and off-campus housing (p. 10)
☐ Plan your expenses (p. 12) and paying your tuition (p. 14)
☐ Send your immunization record to Boynton Health Service (p. 16)
☐ Complete the International Student Preparation Course (p. 17)
☐ Attend pre-departure orientation in home country, optional (p. 18)
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☐ Plan transportation from the airport (p. 20)

WHEN YOU ARRIVE

☐ Remove registration holds (p. 21)
☐ Take English Proficiency Test, if needed (p. 22)
☐ Attend Immigration Check-In and any required orientations (p. 23)
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Dear Student,

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

Our Twin Cities campus is centrally located in the exciting cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. These cities have a strong reputation for welcoming international students. We think you will find this to be a warm and accepting community. The people of Minnesota place a high value on education and also realize the importance of having international students studying alongside students from Minnesota and the rest of the United States.

ISSS staff are here to help you in accomplishing your academic and career goals. Our office provides:

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

Please read this booklet carefully and complete the activities at iss.s.umn.edu/new. Understanding this information is very important to make sure your studies at the University of Minnesota begin well.

Please email isssnew@umn.edu if you have questions. We are delighted you chose to study at the UMN, and we look forward to welcoming you!

Barbara Kappler, Ph.D.
Assistant Dean,
International Student & Scholar Services
INITIATE YOUR UNIVERSITY EMAIL ACCOUNT

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.

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.

You must go to www.umn.edu/initiate to initiate your email account. You can leave the section asking for a Social Security Number blank (if you do not have this number).

Note to 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 initiate your account at www.umn.edu/initiate and see the recommendations at 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. 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.
If you are a Canadian citizen, you are not required to get an entry visa. Skip to p. 6.

If you are currently in the United States in F-1 or J-1 visa status and plan to remain in that same visa status, skip to “VISA TRANSFERS” (p. 7) for instructions on how to transfer your F-1 or J-1 SEVIS record to the University of Minnesota.

By now, you should have your visa document (I-20 or DS-2019) from the University of Minnesota or your sponsoring agency (if you have not, see p. 6 for who you should contact).

You must next apply for an entry visa sticker, so you can enter the United States with student status. You must have a visa document AND entry visa sticker in your passport to enter the U.S. with student status.

To apply for an entry visa, follow these steps:

1. DETERMINE THE TYPE OF ENTRY VISA YOU NEED TO ENTER THE U.S.

Most UMN students should apply for an F-1 student visa, but the J-1 student visa is more appropriate for some students (see right for more).

If you received an I-20 document from the UMN, you will apply for an F-1 visa. If you received a “DS-2019” document from the University or another U.S. agency, you will apply for a J-1 student visa. If you think you received the wrong type of visa document, please contact ISSS.

 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.
2. PAY THE SEVIS FEE AT 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 will not be able to pay the fee until you have your I-20 or DS-2019 document in your possession. To pay the fee, visit www.fmjfee.com.

3. LOCATE THE NEAREST U.S. EMBASSY OR CONSULATE IN YOUR HOME COUNTRY

Embassy and consulate information (including locations and document requirements) is available at www.embassyworld.com.

4. SCHEDULE YOUR VISA INTERVIEW APPOINTMENT

Your local embassy or consulate will have specific instructions for scheduling an appointment. Waiting times for an appointment can be lengthy (up to several weeks or longer), especially during the busy summer months. Schedule your appointment as soon as possible after receiving your visa documents.

5. PREPARE DOCUMENTS FOR YOUR VISA INTERVIEW

All visa applicants must provide the following documents to the U.S. embassy or consulate at the time of their application:

- 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

6. PRACTICE FOR YOUR VISA INTERVIEW

We recommend practicing your visa interview with a family member or friend!
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.

For more, contact the UMN office responsible for your visa documents (p. 6).

IMPORTANCE OF NAME CONSISTENCY

To avoid problems or delays in obtaining your visa and entering the United States, ensure that the name printed on all of your immigration documents is written exactly as it is shown in your passport (specifically, the Machine Readable Zone on the bottom of the biographical page).

Always write your name clearly, and:

• Do not use punctuation (such as hyphens, apostrophes, periods, or commas), numbers, or non-English letters or markings.
• Do not use “nicknames” or shortened names.
• Do not include prefixes or suffixes (such Dr, Mr, Ms, II, Jr, MD).
• Spaces can be used between multiple names, and always use them consistently.
• If you only have one name, write your name in the Surname/Primary Name field and leave the Given Name field blank.

DECIDING BETWEEN MULTIPLE SCHOOLS

You MUST attend the school shown on the I-20 or DS-2019 that you use for your visa application.

If you received I-20 or DS-2019 documents from more than one school, you should NOT apply for a visa until you are certain which school you would like to attend. Return any unused I-20 or DS-2019 documents once you have made a decision and applied for your visa.

DID YOU KNOW?

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

**If you have an I-20, contact the following:**
- Undergraduate Students: isss@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: isss@umn.edu
- Issued by a different J-1 program (for example, Fulbright): Your placement office

**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 isss@umn.edu and write “Visa Denial” in the subject line.

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSING AND SECURITY CLEARANCE CHECKS**

Some visa applicants will be 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 (although, it can take longer).

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

**Canadian Citizens:** Canadian citizens can enter the United States without having an entry visa in their passport. However, Canadian citizens must obtain an I-20 or DS-2019 and pay the SEVIS fee (p. 5) before entering the United States. Upon entry, you must present to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection 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.

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 (p. 9).
TRANSFER YOUR VISA STATUS, IF NECESSARY

You are considered a “Visa Status Transfer Student” if you 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. If this does not describe you, skip to p. 9.

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 a Transfer Release form.
   
   A. You should complete section #1 of the Transfer Release form available at [z.umn.edu/issstransfer](http://z.umn.edu/issstransfer).
   
   B. An international adviser at your current institution must complete section #2 of the Transfer Release form. They must then email it to [isss@umn.edu](mailto:isss@umn.edu), or fax it to 612-626-7361.

*Your I-20 cannot be processed before your SEVIS record has 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. A “Transfer Pending I-20” will be issued if it is needed for travel outside the United States. This is a TEMPORARY I-20 that will expire 15 days after the start of the semester.

4. Complete your Immigration Check-In (p. 23) after arriving at the UMN.
5. Update your “Mailing Address” (your local Minnesota address) on myu.umn.edu. Directions are at isss.umn.edu/INSGen/address.html.

6. Register for course full-time at the University.

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 isss.umn.edu/forms/pdf/j1/JFinancialCert.pdf

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.

Traveling During the Transfer 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 studies at the UMN, 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. You may use the F-1 entry visa from your previous educational institution to re-enter the United States, if it has not expired. Check with an ISSS adviser if you have a J-1 visa.
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 July 1 for those enrolling in the fall or January 15 for students enrolling in spring.

All documents not issued in English must be written in the original language and include a certified true English translation. To be considered official, transcripts must be an original document (or are attested copies of original academic documents) that are mailed in a stamped and sealed envelope directly from the secondary school.

For information on country-specific requirements, please visit z.umn.edu/adintldocs.

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
FIND TEMPORARY HOUSING BEFORE ARRIVING AT THE UMN

For Fall 2017, temporary on-campus student housing for newly admitted international students is available in the International Reception Center (IRC) from July 15 to August 27. At only $24 a night, the IRC is an affordable option for new students needing somewhere to stay before they can move into their on- or off-campus housing.

Please note:

• Only students can stay in the IRC; students traveling with family (including parents, siblings, or spouses) should find another temporary housing option.

• Students will be required to move out of the IRC on August 27. If you will be living off campus, check if you will be able to move into your permanent housing then or if you will need to find other temporary housing until September 1.

Visit housing.umn.edu/international to make a reservation at the IRC or to learn more about other temporary housing options near the UMN.

For Spring 2018, there are no temporary housing options available in the residence halls or apartments on campus. Students needing temporary housing options before the start of the spring semester should consider the options listed at housing.umn.edu/international.

If You Will Live in a Residence Hall: Students who have been assigned a room in a University Residence Hall during the academic year can ask for permission to move in early at housing.umn.edu/earlymoveinrequest or by sending an email to housing@umn.edu for more information.
EXPLORE ON-CAMPUS HOUSING OPTIONS
AT HOUSING.UMN.EDU

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

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

The online housing application will require a fee payable with a major credit card. Email the housing office if you have any questions at housing@umn.edu.

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

There are a limited number (approximately 200) of guaranteed spaces for transfer students. Priority will be 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.

RESEARCH OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING

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

It is important that you understand the legal responsibilities of renting in the U.S. You should always see an apartment before signing a lease, and most apartment managers will require a 12-month lease. For more tips, visit usls.umn.edu/tenancy.html

See www.rentals.tc.umn.edu/ochls and housing.umn.edu/international to learn about housing options and costs.

DID YOU KNOW?
There are over 30 Living Learning Communities where you can live with people with similar interests. Learn more at housing.umn.edu/llcs.

DID YOU KNOW?
You can learn about the types of housing and the neighborhoods near campus in the “Housing” section of the International Student Preparation Course (p. 19).
COMPLETE YOUR FINANCIAL CERTIFICATION

Your financial certification form must be completed before the University of Minnesota can issue your I-20 or DS-2019 form.

The financial certification must anticipate the minimum amount of funds needed to cover your educational and living expenses for at least 12 months, with the expectation that you have sufficient funds available for the length of your degree program. You must have funds available equal to or above these expected costs, including any increases in the cost of tuition.

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

KNOW YOUR EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

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 is prohibited for F-1 students during the first academic year in the United States. J-1 students need to receive approval from their J-1 sponsor prior to beginning any employment in the United States.

Please Note: While on-campus student jobs can provide partial support, they do not pay enough to fully cover a student’s living expenses.
When planning for arrival, make sure to bring sufficient funds to pay your immediate expenses, such as a security deposit for rent, two months’ room and board, 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 isss.umn.edu/Resources/banking.html for more). Money for your tuition, fees, mandatory health insurance, and ongoing living expenses can be transferred into that account from overseas.

If you choose to bring large amounts of money with you, we recommend that you carry traveler’s checks rather than cash (see the box below for more information if you and/or those travelling with you will bring more than $10,000 USD in cash or checks). Do not carry money in your baggage; keep it on your person at all times.

If you are a graduate student with an assistantship, your first paycheck will most likely be issued 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 make sure to plan your budget and calculate how much additional money you may need for the rest of the year. Keep in mind that 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.

**Important:** If you carry $10,000 USD or more (or the foreign equivalent) in cash or checks, you must file a report with U.S. Customs when you enter the United States. The U.S. government allows you to carry any amount of currency or other monetary instruments into the United States but failure to report amounts above $10,000 may result in confiscation of these funds by the U.S. government.

If traveling with family members, including your parents, your family should file a family declaration listing all of the funds being brought into the U.S. if the total amount is $10,000 or above.
PAYING 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 take advantage of this option, go to the “My Finances” tab on MyU (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.

PAYMENTS BY SPONSORED STUDENTS

If your financial sponsor (home country government, U.S. government, international organization, employer, bank, etc.) needs to be billed by the University, you must email a billing authorization, financial guarantee, or financial support letter to 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
• Length of time for which the funding is granted
• What items are to be billed (for example, tuition, fees, and/or health insurance)
• 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)
• Signature of sponsor

The University of Minnesota cannot send an invoice to the sponsor until we receive this letter.

Please note that the University does not accept wire transfers on behalf of individual students outside the Third-Party payment process.
Medical expenses in the United States are extremely high. It is, therefore, important to understand your health insurance and where to go for health care.

The University requires that all international students (and their dependents) enroll in the University-sponsored health insurance program—the Student Health Benefit Plan (SHBP). International students will automatically be enrolled each semester.

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

DO NOT purchase alternative insurance from a private insurance company for yourself or your dependents.

Questions about the SHBP or the Graduate Assistant Health Plan can be emailed to umshbo@umn.edu and you can also find additional information at shb.umn.edu/twincities/international-students.

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 into the UMN's insurance plan. Dependents are not enrolled automatically in the plan.

They are covered from the date of their arrival as long as the F-1 or J-1 student completes the enrollment paperwork with the Office of Student Health Benefits within 30 days of their arrival.

For information about cost and coverage details, visit shb.umn.edu or contact umshbo@umn.edu.
PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS

The University's insurance plans cover any pre-existing conditions. If you have a health condition (diabetes, heart problems, asthma, depression, etc.) that requires ongoing care, please bring copies of your medical records and a list of medications. This will help prevent interruptions in your 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 secure online immunization record at www.bhs.umn.edu/international-students.

If you do not complete this form, a registration hold will be placed on your record for the semester following your arrival (spring semester for students starting in the fall and fall for those starting in the spring).

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 Services. If you are unable to get vaccinated before arriving in the United States, you can get vaccinations at Boynton Health or at another clinic.

DID YOU KNOW?

Students needing care can go to Boynton Health, the UMN’s on-campus clinic. Boynton’s services include primary care, dental, eye, massage, mental health, nutrition, pharmacy, physical therapy, women’s, immunization, and urgent care. Learn more at www.bhs.umn.edu.
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.

There is an AI “Determine Current Visa Status” Hold (p. 21) on your record. This hold will prevent you from registering for classes until you complete the International Student Preparation Course (p. 17) and Immigration Check-In (p. 23).

Students who do not complete the required portions of the International Preparation Course at least 24 hours prior to their Immigration Check-In may be asked to reschedule their check-in, and this could cause them to be delayed when registering for classes.

Learn more, including when and how to enroll in the course at isss.umn.edu/new/online.html.

Note for undergraduate transfer students: All transfer students must complete two online courses: the International Student Preparation Course described above and the Transfer Student Online Orientation (learn more at checklist.umn.edu).

You must complete both of these items prior to attending your in-person Transfer Student Orientation and Immigration Check-In. Failure to do so could cause you to be delayed when registering.
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 United States, succeeding at a U.S. university, and the logistical issues involved with moving and entering the country. For details, please visit www.educationusa.info/students-orientations.php.

ATTEND THE UMN’S PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION IN CHINA (OPTIONAL)

The University of Minnesota’s China Office in Beijing also offers pre-departure orientation sessions in late May each year. These sessions provide information that is specific to the University of Minnesota. For details, please visit www.china.umn.edu.

CONNECT WITH CURRENT UMN STUDENTS ONLINE (OPTIONAL)

Do you have questions about what it is like to be a student at Minnesota? Our International Student Ambassadors (ISA) are here to help. Check out the Ambassador’s blogs, photos, and videos if you want to learn about the student experience at the UMN and what it is like to transition, study, live, and achieve as an international student.

Web: www.passport.umn.edu
Email: passport@umn.edu
Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram: @ISAUMN

DID YOU KNOW?

EducationUSA is a network of over 400 international student advising centers in more than 170 countries. You can learn more at educationusa.state.gov.

DID YOU KNOW?

You can email questions to passport@umn.edu, and one of our International Student Ambassadors will respond.
Undergraduate students starting in Fall 2017 are required to arrive at the UMN by Monday, August 21, 2017.

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 2018 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 (p. 11), 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 any registration holds (p. 21)
- Attend any required orientation sessions and complete Immigration Check-In (p. 23)
- Register for classes
- Complete paperwork for on-campus employment and assistantships (if applicable, see box below for more about assistantships)
- Take any necessary exams, such as English proficiency or SPEAK test (p. 22)
- Go to Graduate Assistantship training (if applicable)

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.

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 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 a portion of your tuition and health care benefits.
ARRIVING IN THE U.S.

PREPARE FOR INSPECTION AT YOUR PORT OF ENTRY

Do not put your documentation into your luggage when you travel to the United States. You will be asked to present the following to a U.S. Customs and Border Protection officer when you arrive:

- Your passport and entry visa
- I-20 or DS-2019 document
- Form 6059, “Customs Declaration”
- Additional documents if requested, such as proof of financial support and/or UMN admission

When completing this paperwork, spell your name exactly as it appears on your passport or visa.

If you arrive via a land border, you will be given a paper Form I-94 record. If you arrive via air or sea, you can print an electronic I-94 arrival record after inspection from i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94.

See www.cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors for more. If you are arriving via a land border, apply for a land border I-94 arrival record seven (or fewer) days before your arrival at i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94.

ARRANGE FOR TRANSPORTATION FROM THE AIRPORT

For those arriving in Fall 2017, the UMN’s “Gopher Chauffeur” will give students and families rides from the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport to the University of Minnesota campus.

This van departs the airport hourly every day between August 11 and August 27, and it can be used any time between 10 a.m. and 9:20 p.m. Visit z.umn.edu/airportrides to learn more and submit your online reservation (preferred, but not required).

You can learn about other transportation options at www.mspairport.com.

International student organizations may also assist with providing transportation. Contacts are available at www.sua.umn.edu/groups.
It is essential that you take action to remove the registration holds that are on your student record before your registration time (to see a list of the holds on your record, go to www.myu.umn.edu and click on the “Holds” tab). You will not be allowed to register for classes until these holds are removed.

ISSS will either permanently or temporarily remove the AI (“Determine Visa Status”) hold from your record after you complete the International Student Preparation Course and attend Immigration Check-In.

If you have an AZ (“ESL”) or MJ/MG (“Grad School Final Degree/Transcript”) hold, you must take steps to remove it before Immigration Check-In to avoid a delay in your registration.

More information about removing common holds is at isss.umn.edu/new/removeholds.html.

Note to undergraduate students (first-year and transfer): The AI hold on your record will only be temporarily removed after Immigration Check-In. It will not be permanently removed until you attend a New International Student Seminar (NISS) during your first semester. ISSS will email more information after the semester starts.
DETERMINE IF YOU NEED TO TAKE AN ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TEST

If you have not asked your testing agency to send your official TOEFL, IELTS, or MELAB scores to the University of Minnesota, you can ask your testing agency to send your scores directly to the Office of Admissions.

We also recommend that all students who have taken a TOEFL, IELTS, or MELAB test bring their official scores when they arrive on campus.

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 on arrival. If so, you will have an AZ hold on your student record (p. 21) instructing you to go the Minnesota English Language Program (www.cce.umn.edu/esl) when you arrive. Please plan to arrive by the mandatory arrival date (p. 19), so that 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.

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, please contact MELP at esl@umn.edu or visit www.cce.umn.edu/esl.
ATTEND IMMIGRATION CHECK-IN AND 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, provide you with essential information about maintaining your visa status, and permanently or temporarily remove the AI “Determine Current Visa Status” hold on your record (p. 21).

Important: All new international students should complete the online International Student Preparation Course (p. 19) 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 could be delayed in registering for classes.

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.

Transfer Undergraduate Students will attend a two-part Immigration Check-In during their on-campus Transfer Orientation. Part one of the sessions will be held in the morning and part two will be 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.

Graduate and Professional Degree Students will register for Immigration Check-In during the online International Student Preparation Course (p. 17). Your Immigration Check-In will be separate from any other orientation you may attend. Watch for communications from other departments regarding their required and/or optional orientations.
Non-Degree Students will register for Immigration Check-In during the online International Student Preparation Course (p. 17). 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 more at checklist.umn.edu). All other sponsored students (Non-Degree, Graduate, and Professional School students) will register for Immigration Check-In during the online International Student Preparation Course (p. 17). ISSS will host a Welcome Reception for sponsored students in September where you can network with your peers. Review your sponsored student materials for more details.

DID YOU KNOW?
You can connect with ISSS on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram to see photos and stay up-to-date: @isssumn.
ISSS has organized several programs to help you prepare for the new school year. Below are several programs that you will need to register for before you arrive on campus.

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 21-29, 2017
Spring Dates: To Be Announced
Registration Requested
issss.umn.edu/programs/ggumn

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.

iSuccess registration will begin in March. If you are interested in applying for registration before then, send an email to isuccess@umn.edu stating your preferred email address, 7-digit student ID number, and your full name, and we will contact you once registration opens.

Dates: August 14-19, 2017
We do not offer iSuccess in the spring
Registration required, as space is limited
issss.umn.edu/programs/iSuccess
isuccess@umn.edu
INTERNATIONAL AND CHINESE PARENT ORIENTATION PROGRAMS (IPOP AND CHIPOP)

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

International parents who sign up for the two-day OFYP Parent Orientation are invited to join ISSS for a half-day International Parent Orientation Program (iPOP) on Tuesday, August 22. This session is a supplement to the two-day orientation, and there is no additional charge.

Chinese-speaking international parents are invited to join a one-day Chinese International Parent Orientation Program (ChiPOP) orientation session on Thursday, August 17. This orientation is delivered in Mandarin, and it addresses specific questions and concerns of Chinese parents.

Fall Dates: August 17 (ChiPoP) & August 22 (iPoP)
We do not offer parent orientation in the spring
Email ipop@umn.edu to register or ask questions
isss.umn.edu/programs/parent

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 open in fall and spring
Email ibp@umn.edu if you have questions
isss.umn.edu/programs/Interbuddy

DID YOU KNOW?
iPoP and ChiPoP are organized by ISSS, the Parent and Family Program, and Orientation and First-year Programs.

WHAT PAST PARTICIPANTS SAY

“Thanks IBP for giving me the portal to meet one of my best friends in college.”
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 isss.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 in classrooms and on campus.

• International Student Ambassadors: Offers insight to prospective and new students of what life is like as a UMN international student.

• MATCH (Minnesota Ambassadors Taking College Home): Facilitates the opportunity for current University of Minnesota international students to share their experience of studying at Minnesota with students in their home countries.

Want to Get More Involved? There are more than 800 student groups at the University of Minnesota. You can join a group centered on the environment, cultural/nationality affiliation, fine arts/film/music, health and wellness, social action, or practically any other interest.

A full directory of student groups is available at sua.umn.edu/groups/directory.
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 that requires an accommodation, you should register with 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
Web: diversity.umn.edu/disability