

Pre-Arrival Checklist for New International Students

As an admitted UT Dallas student, you are on your way to successfully joining our acclaimed international student community. You may be feeling overwhelmed with all that it takes to study abroad. Before you depart for your journey, we have created this checklist to help you with your pre-arrival needs. Even if this is not your first time in the U.S., we hope you find this information beneficial during your transition.

International Student Services

800 West Campbell Rd., MC 36

McDermott Library, MC 1.310

Richardson, TX 75083-0688

Phone: (972) 883-4189

Fax: (972) 883-4010

ISSOCurrent@utdallas.edu

<http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international>

When To Arrive

Students should plan to arrive in Dallas before classes begin and in time to attend Orientation and get settled. Some things to consider when you are planning when to arrive are:

- USCIS immigration regulations permit you to enter the United States no more than 30 days prior to the start date on your I-20 or DS-2019.
- New International Student Orientation is mandatory for all F and J visa holders enrolling at UT Dallas for the first time. You will be unable to register for classes until after you attend Orientation. Please visit our [Orientation website](#) to determine which Orientation session works best for you.

Booking Your Flight

International flights fly into the [Dallas/Fort Worth \(DFW\) International Airport](#).

Before You Leave

Medical and Dental Care: You should plan to schedule medical and dental appointments before you depart your home country. You may also want to bring any prescription or any non-prescription medications (with copies of your prescriptions translated into English) with you. UT Dallas requires all international students to have health insurance. For more information about this requirement, please visit our [student health insurance website](#).

Money: Contact the [UT Dallas Bursar's office](#) to determine the cost of tuition and fees and acceptable payment methods. In the past, international students have spent approximately \$10,000 (U.S. dollars) in their first month at UT Dallas for tuition and fees, living expenses, and start-up deposits. *Do not bring this amount in cash.* We have found that international students typically bring \$200-\$400 in cash when they arrive. You may also want to bring a credit card. At International Student Orientation, you will be able to sign-up for a [Wells Fargo bank account](#) if you choose. While there are several banks which you can bank with in the U.S. however, UT Dallas has an established business relationship with Wells Fargo.

Important Documents: You should consider having your important documents (school transcripts, marriage license, medication prescriptions, etc.) translated into English before you leave your county.

Packing Your Bags

Pack Light: Because you will have to carry everything yourself once you arrive, you will want to make sure it is a manageable load. Remember that if you forget things, you can always purchase them once you arrive. One helpful website to find packing lists, advice, and important links is www.onebag.com. You may also consider visiting the [U.S. Transportation Security Administration](http://www.tsa.gov) where you can determine which items are prohibited for air travel.

Clothes: The weather in Texas is very hot during the summer, ranging from 90-100 degrees Fahrenheit. You will want to keep this in mind when packing suitable clothes and shoes. You will also want to plan for all four seasons—fall, winter, spring, and summer. To plan for the changing weather during fall and winter, you will want to have at least one heavy coat or jacket and a light jacket or sweater to start with. You can buy other clothing items you will need after you arrive.

Fashion: While there is no formal dress code at U.S. universities, most students dress casually such as jeans and shirts. If you are able, you may want to bring traditional dress from your country for festivals and/or special occasions. It is recommended that you bring at least one semi-formal outfit.

Mementos from Home: You will want to bring photographs of friends and family from back home. You may also want to bring items that remind you of home to comfort you when you may be missing your home culture.

Household Items: Plan on purchasing most of your household items (small electrical appliances, kitchenware, bed sheets, towels, etc.) once you arrive.

Valuables: We recommend that you put valuable items in your carry-on bag in case your suitcase gets lost or misplaced during your flight. Carry your immigration documents on your person during your flight.

Housing Arrangements at UT Dallas

UT Dallas offers its students apartments conveniently located on the UT Dallas campus, as well as a residence hall for first-year freshman only. **If you would like to live on UT Dallas' campus, it is important that you act quickly.** Housing on campus is not guaranteed, and we recommend you submit your housing application as soon as possible. You can do so by following the instructions on the [UT Dallas' Residential Life website](http://www.utdallas.edu/residential-life).

- Please note that on-campus housing is not guaranteed. To find a list of apartments located near UT Dallas, please visit the UT Dallas [housing website](http://www.utdallas.edu/housing).
- **For temporary housing information**, please visit the UT Dallas [housing website](http://www.utdallas.edu/housing).

Getting to UT Dallas from the airport

- Some [UT Dallas student organizations](#) provide transportation for new students from the DFW airport to campus. Please contact these groups directly for more information on airport pickups. The [International Christian Fellowship](#), [Indian Student Association](#), [Friendship Association of Chinese Students and Scholars](#), [Grace Chinese Christian Fellowship](#) and [Chinese Bible Study](#) are some of the international student organizations that have provided this service in the past.
- Taxi cabs from DFW airport to campus generally range from \$55 to \$75. Taxis wait outside the airport.
- Shuttle services from DFW airport to campus generally range from \$25 to \$40. Shuttle services are available at designated spots in the airport.

Port of Entry Travel Tips

- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement provides [information on what an F-1 student or J-1 exchange visitor can expect upon arrival at a U.S. port of entry](#). You may want to download and print this information to carry it with you as you travel to the U.S.
- [Cultural student organizations](#) can also offer suggestions of what to bring with you to the U.S.

Calling Home

You will want to call home to tell your friends and family that you arrived safely. To make an international call, you will need to purchase an international calling card. You can purchase an international calling card at the airport or at a local store in Richardson, near the UT Dallas campus.

Most international students have successfully purchased U.S. cell phones at MetroPCS. There is one located in Richardson, near the UT Dallas campus.

Check-in with the ISSO

When you arrive, you will want to check-in with the International Student Services Office and submit copies of your stamped immigration documents.

All F-1 and J-1 visa holders must submit copies of their immigration documents to the ISSO prior to registering for classes and attending Orientation. You may submit your immigration documents by:

- E-mail to ISSOProspective@utdallas.edu
- Fax to 972.883.4010
- ISSO office (McDermott Library MC 1.310)

Important note: The International Student Services Office will **not** be able to make copies for you. Please make photocopies in advance. Copy machines are available on the ground floor of the McDermott Library across from the Student Union building. Each copy costs 10 cents.

Students Arriving from Overseas

If you are arriving from overseas, please submit the following documents upon arrival in the U.S:

- The stamped I-20 (page 1 and 3)
- The visa
- The identification page in your passport including expiration date
- Both sides of the I-94

Students Transferring from Another U.S. Institution

If you are transferring your SEVIS record from another U.S. institution to UT Dallas, please submit copies of the following documents 30 days before your program start date:

- [UT Dallas Financial Affidavit](#)
- Financial support documents:
 - Bank statement on bank letterhead, no older than six months
 - UT Dallas TA/RA letter, if applicable
 - UT Dallas Scholarship letter, if applicable
- The visa
- The identification page in your passport including expiration date
- Both sides of the I-94
- Most current I-20 (page 1 and 3)
- EAD card (if applicable)

We hope this information is helpful to you. We are happy you have selected the U.S. and UT Dallas as your host country and academic institution. If you have found that some of your questions have not been answered, please see the following contacts and route your question accordingly:

ISSOProspective@utdallas.edu – I-20, visa-related, and immigration questions as a new student

ISSOPrograms@utdallas.edu – Orientation, arrival information, housing information, and other non-immigration related questions for new students

ISSOInsurance@utdallas.edu – Student health insurance questions

[Student Health Center](#) – TB test requirement questions

The International Student Services Office staff looks forward to meeting you and ensuring your successful transition. We wish you a safe and pleasant journey.