

## International Student Guide – Illinois Theatre

### Welcome to UIUC!

#### Where to start?

The first thing you need to do after getting accepted into the program is going to the following link to access the International Student Orientation:

[https://iss.illinois.edu/students/incoming/orientation/grad\\_orientation.html](https://iss.illinois.edu/students/incoming/orientation/grad_orientation.html)

#### What to do once you arrive:

New Student Check-in: <https://iss.illinois.edu/students/incoming/checkin/index.html> .

Open a Bank Account: Most banks require 2 forms of identification. With your passport and your I-20 you have enough documentation to access a bank account. However, it is always good to also show a proof of residence or leasing contract. During the check-in, you will be able to meet some banks that will be advertising their services

#### International Student Checklist

[https://iss.illinois.edu/students/incoming/checkin/next\\_steps.html](https://iss.illinois.edu/students/incoming/checkin/next_steps.html) . Make sure you review this checklist, since these are things that are going to be extremely important to start your journey at UIUC. If you arrive prior to the new student check-in, you can even start by doing some of these things in advance, especially getting your ID Card.

Once you get your ID Card, you should apply to get a NetID using your UIN listed in the card:

<https://netidclaim.illinois.edu/>

#### ISSS

International Students and Scholar Services (ISSS) is going to be one of your best resources on campus. Any questions that you might have about your I-20, OPT, Visa, Passport, Taxes, etc. should be directed to an Agent in ISSS. To schedule an in-person or virtual appointment with a student advisor:

- Call [217.333.1303](tel:217.333.1303), ext. 1
- Stop by the Student branch in-person: 432 Student Services Building (610 E. John St. Champaign)

## Registered Student Organizations (RSO)

At the University of Illinois there are over 800 registered student organizations, including many oriented towards international students.

In the following link you can search among all the current RSOs at the university.

<https://illinois.campuslabs.com/engage/organizations>

## Housing

Please note that students in F-1 and J-1 status are required by federal law to report a local address upon arrival to the United States and within 10 days anytime they move. This can be done via [iSTART](#). Please visit the [Address Update page](#) for more information on how to update your local U.S. address.

The University has some housing opportunities for international grad students:

- ❖ Graduate Residence Halls: A 9-month single room with private bath dorm is around \$900 a month. Please notice that although the dorms are conveniently located on Campus, they do not provide a kitchen to their residents. However, there is an option to purchase an yearly meal plan.
- ❖ University Housing Apartments: There are 3 options for Graduate Students and the prices vary depending on which one you select. There are both furnished and unfurnished options. The prices are between \$700 and \$980 per month. Most of these apartments include water, trash, sewer, Internet, cable TV service and parking.

You can find more information on the price breakdown for each apartment in the following link: <https://housing.illinois.edu/Cost>. You need to go to the tab called "University Housing Apartment Rates 2023-2024".

- Orchard Downs: <https://www.housing.illinois.edu/Living-Communities/Apartments/Orchard-Downs>
- Green Goodwin: <https://www.housing.illinois.edu/Living-Communities/Apartments/Goodwin-Green>
- Ashton Wood: <https://housing.illinois.edu/Living-Communities/Apartments/Ashton-Woods>

In addition to university housing, we have also compiled a list of places that you can live outside of campus, as recommended by our current students:

## Health Insurance

Every semester when you pay your student fees, you are also paying for your health insurance and McKinley fee.

How does it work? Students registered for non-zero credit hours in a manner such that they are assessed on-campus fees, they will be assessed the UIUC Student Insurance fee. This will take place during the enrollment/change period, which spans roughly the first six weeks of each semester. The student can begin utilizing their insurance coverage as soon as that fee has been assessed. Students wishing to opt-out of coverage should refer to the following link for detailed instructions: [/links-and-forms](#)

What does it cover? The Student Insurance is a comprehensive, major-medical plan. Coverage includes: inpatient, outpatient and emergency care; preventive services not provided by McKinley Health Center, mental illness-related services, durable medical equipment (DME) and prescription drug coverage.

McKinley is a Health Center located on campus that provides medical care clinics, women's health, mental health resources and information on travel and immunizations. There are also other convenient cares and hospitals in the area that you can access with your health insurance. More information will be provided to new graduate students during orientation.

Additionally, please notice that your Student Health Insurance coverage is worldwide. You can access your insurance plan anywhere, whether or not you're on campus.

### **Glossary of things/words you need to know**

There are many words and terminology that people in the United States refer to that you could benefit from knowing in advance. The following links provide useful information on the vocabulary different people might refer to in an administrative setting.

<https://iss.illinois.edu/resources/glossary.html>

<https://www.edupass.org/immigrating-to-the-usa/english-as-a-second-language/glossary/>

### **Traveling as an international student**

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students/traveling-as-an-international-student>

Each country and each visa has different restrictions when it comes to traveling abroad. However, there is one standard thing every international student with an I-20 should do. Every year, you need to get ISSS to sign your I-20 and confirm that you are still an international student. You can do this any time of the year, so you don't have to wait until before traveling.

The I-20 Form is a document that the university provides to international students with an F1 visa. It is a document that confirms that you are currently enrolled as a student in the university. More information in the following link: <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students/prepare/students-and-the-form-i-20>

Students with a J1 visa, will receive a similar document called DS-2019.

When you enter the United States, the things that you will be asked for at Customs are: Passport, Student Visa and I-20/DS-2019. Additionally, if it is the first time you are entering, you can also bring a copy of your acceptance letter and SEVIS payment.

## **Working in the United States**

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students/work/working-in-the-united-states>

International students can only work 20 hours per week during the school year. However, this does not apply for the breaks. During Winter and Summer break, International Students do not have a limitation on hours they can work.

## **Obtaining a Social Security Number:**

Once you schedule a time for HR to check you in and look at your paperwork, you can schedule an appointment to get your SSN.

If you have on-campus employment, you will be eligible to apply for the SSN. For information regarding Social Security eligibility and application procedures, visit the [Applying for a Social Security Number page](#). In that same link there is detailed information about how and when to get your SSN.

## **Tax Preparation**

All international students and scholars as well as their dependents are required to file at least one tax form for every year they are present in the U.S. regardless of whether or not they earned any money. This does not necessarily mean you have to pay taxes. International students are considered “Non-Resident” aliens for tax purposes, so please make sure that you are filling the taxes that apply to this category.

ISSS provides a free tax preparation service called GLACIER. Every year, you will get an email informing you that you are ready to start using this service.

Although ISSS cannot help you prepare your taxes, they have plenty of information in their website about this: <https://iss.illinois.edu/resources/incometax.html>

## **Additional Important Information**

- ❖ It is very important that you keep all of your previously issued immigration documents, you may need them again if trying to change to another status in the US or applying for work authorization.
- ❖ You cannot work more than 20 hours a week while school is session.
- ❖ You must request official permission to accept work outside of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.
- ❖ Always Make sure that your travel documents are in order before taking any trip outside the U.S.