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The entire staff of the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) is pleased to welcome you to the University at Buffalo, which we call “UB”. We hope that your stay at UB will be rewarding and that you will become an active participant in our academic and campus life.

ISSS, which reports to the Office of the Vice Provost for International Education, serves the international community at UB, including students and visiting scholars. Located in Talbert Hall 210 on the North Campus, ISSS provides a wide range of services to this international population:

- A positive environment in which students feel comfortable and secure
- Assistance and referrals in solving a variety of concerns
- Immigration advice, updates and document processing
- International Student Orientation to help new students get off to a good start at UB
- Workshops to provide valuable information on a variety of topics
- Excursions for students and scholars to learn about life in the Buffalo-Niagara region
- Weekly e-newsletters to inform students and scholars about workshops, activities and events of special interest to them
- International Education Week to provide opportunities for the campus community to learn about international issues and for international students to showcase their cultures
- International Student Mentoring Program to help new students adjust to life in Buffalo
- Global CINEMAspectives Film & Discussion Series to promote meaningful dialog between U.S. and international students

We have prepared this booklet to answer questions frequently asked by students preparing to come to Buffalo and the U.S. Please read this information carefully as you plan your trip to UB.

More information about ISSS and its services will be provided as part of International Student Orientation. Please visit www.buffalo.edu/intlservices/prospective.html for an orientation schedule, the orientation registration form and orientation FAQ’s (Frequently Asked Questions).

Please feel free to contact ISSS should you require assistance:

- Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- Address: Talbert Hall 210, Buffalo, NY 14260
- Tel: (716) 645-2258
- Fax: (716) 645-6197
- Email: intlservices@buffalo.edu
- Website: www.buffalo.edu/intlservices
Visa & Immigration Concerns for International Students

PASSPORTS
International students must obtain a passport from their government for permission to travel abroad and re-enter their country. Your passport, which also serves as proof of identification, must be kept valid at all times. If your passport will expire while you are in the U.S., you must renew it at your Embassy or Consulate. If you lose your passport, you must apply for a replacement at your Embassy or Consulate. Contact information for Embassies and Consulates in the U.S. is available at:

www.embassy.org/embassies/index.html

VISAS
To enter the U.S., you and your accompanying dependents (spouse and/or children) must obtain a visa stamp from a U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Depending upon diplomatic relations between the U.S. and your country, the visa stamp will be issued for one, two or multiple entries and will have a specific expiration date after which a new U.S. visa stamp must be obtained in order to re-enter the U.S. The expiration date does not determine how long you may stay in the U.S.; it merely determines how long the visa stamp is valid for entry into the U.S. You may remain in the U.S. with an expired visa stamp as long as you maintain your student status.

Students studying in the U.S. usually obtain F-1 student visas or J-1 Exchange Visitor visas and their accompanying dependents obtain F-2 or J-2 visas, respectively. If parents, in-laws, aunts, uncles, siblings, etc. wish to accompany you to the U.S., these individuals will not qualify for dependent visas. In most cases, they must obtain B-2 (Visitor for Pleasure) visas.

F-1 STUDENT VISAS
Most individuals who come to the U.S. to study obtain F-1 visas. Enclosed you will find a Certificate of Eligibility (Form I-20). You will use the Form I-20 to apply for an F-1 visa at a U.S. Consulate or Embassy. Be sure the Consular Officer returns the I-20 to you and that you keep it in your carry-on luggage as you will need to present it to an Immigration Inspector when you enter the U.S.

J-1 EXCHANGE VISITOR VISAS, STUDENT CATEGORY
Some individuals who come to the U.S. to study obtain J-1 visas. A J-1 visa is usually required for students who are sponsored by an international organization or government (either in the U.S. or abroad). The sponsoring agency issues these students a Certificate of Eligibility (DS-2019) so they can apply for a J-1 visa. Participants in university exchange programs are also issued J-1 visas. Students for whom UB is issuing the DS-2019 will find that form enclosed in their admissions packet. They can use it to apply for a J-1 visa.
APPLYING FOR A U.S. VISA STAMP

U.S. Embassies and Consulates establish their own procedures for visa applications. You should determine in advance the procedures at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate where you will apply for your U.S. visa. A list of U.S. Embassies and Consulates is available at [www.usembassy.gov](http://www.usembassy.gov).

Generally, students are required to present the following documents to apply for an F-1 (or J-1) visa:

- A valid passport
- A completed visa application form
- A Form I-20 (or DS-2019)
- A SEVIS Fee Receipt, verifying that you have paid the SEVIS Fee. *In your acceptance packet you will find information about the SEVIS fee and how to pay it. You must pay the SEVIS fee prior to appearing at the U.S. Consulate to apply for your visa.*
- Financial documents showing sufficient funds to cover the costs of your U.S. education

U.S. Consular staff will review your study intentions and ask that you provide proof (family ties, job prospects, assets) that you are coming to the U.S. temporarily for the purpose of studying and that you intend to return home upon completion of your studies. If you meet these criteria, you will be issued the appropriate student visa (F-1 or J-1). Qualifying dependents will be issued F-2 or J-2 visas, respectively. *Please note that the most common reasons for denial of a visa are inability to prove intent to return home and inadequate financial documentation.*

If you already have a visa other than F-1 or J-1 in your passport, you should be aware that entering the U.S. on that visa may jeopardize your ability to become a student. If you have a B-1/2 (Visitor for Business or Pleasure) visa, **DO NOT** use it to enter the U.S. Since individuals in B-1/2 status are not permitted to study, you must apply for an F-1 or J-1 visa at a U.S. Consulate or Embassy instead.

If you are from a country whose citizens are eligible for the Visa Waiver Program, which enables entry into the U.S. for up to 90 days without a visa stamp in the passport, **DO NOT** enter the U.S. under this program. Changes of status after arrival in the U.S. are prohibited for individuals who entered the U.S. under this program. You must apply for an F-1 or J-1 visa at a U.S. Consulate or Embassy instead.

ARRIVAL IN THE UNITED STATES

When you arrive in the U.S., a Customs Inspector will examine your luggage to determine compliance with regulations concerning the personal items that you carry. Generally, you may bring with you any items for your personal use.

When entering or leaving the U.S., it is important to declare certain items at the border, including weapons, plants, certain foods and large amounts of money. The U.S. government does not restrict the amount of foreign currency which may be brought into the U.S. However, you must declare to the Customs Officer any amount above $10,000. If you do not, the Customs Officer will confiscate it. For this reason, we do not suggest carrying large amounts of money when entering or leaving the U.S.

Please note the following information from the Customs and Border Protection website:

“Travelers leaving or entering the U.S. are required to report monetary instruments (i.e. currency or checks) valued at $10,000 or more on a "Report of International Transportation of Currency or Monetary Instruments" form FinCEN 105“ (available at
www.fincen.gov/fin105_cmir.pdf or from a CBP officer). “Failure to declare currency in amounts of over $10,000 can result in its seizure.”

Please follow these tips when entering the U.S.:

- Do not carry large sums of cash when you come to the U.S. Please bring a money card, credit card or travelers’ checks instead.
- Do not assume that you can multiply $10,000 by the number of people in your group and bring that amount of money. The border officer will try to determine to whom the money really belongs. If s/he determines that it belongs to one person, s/he will add up the amount and seize it if it exceeds $10,000.
- Never make false statements to a border officer about money or anything else. The penalty for making false statements to border officers is very severe, including a fine and up to two years of imprisonment.

For more information, please visit the Customs & Border Protection website at https://help.cbp.gov/app/answers/detail/a_id/641/~/shipping-or-mailing-currency-or-other-monetary-instruments-to-the-u.s.-or-to-a-

At the time of your arrival inspection, you will be required to present your passport (with the appropriate visa stamp), your I-20 or DS-2019 and financial documentation. You will also be asked to complete an Arrival/Departure Record (I-94 card) and enroll in U.S. VISIT (ie. provide ten fingerprints and be photographed). When you complete the I-94 form, be sure to enter your name as it appears on your passport and I-20 (not your U.S. visa stamp). The Immigration Inspector will stamp the form, indicating the date and place of your entry and your visa status, as well as the fact that you are admitted for “D/S” (Duration of Status). This means you are permitted to stay in the U.S. as long as you are a full-time student, but no later than the expiration date on your I-20 or DS-2019.

The Immigration Inspector will stamp your Arrival/Departure Record (I-94 card). Be sure that the Immigration Inspector writes the correct visa status and “D/S” on your I-94 card, and returns your I-20 or DS-2019 to you.

If you encounter any difficulties or differences from what is described above, you should indicate this when you report to ISSS, Talbert Hall 210 after arrival in Buffalo.

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**Immigration Concerns for Canadian Students**

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**FULL-TIME CANADIAN STUDENTS**

Although Canadian citizens are exempt from U.S. visa stamp requirements, Canadian students are subject to F-1 (or J-1) immigration regulations just as other international students are. Canadian students will receive a Certificate of Eligibility (I-20 or DS-2019) with copies of their guarantee of financial support.
Before entering the U.S. as an F-1 or J-1 student, you will have to pay the SEVIS fee. For instructions on how to pay the fee, please visit www.buffalo.edu/intlservices/pdf_files/F-1FeelIncrease.pdf. At the Port of Entry, you should present your I-20 (or DS-2019) to the Immigration Officer. You will be asked to complete an Arrival/Departure Record (I-94 card) and enroll in U.S. VISIT (ie. provide ten fingerprints and be photographed). The Immigration Inspector will stamp your I-94 card, indicating the date and place of your entry as well as the fact that you are admitted for “D/S” (Duration of Status). This means you are permitted to stay in the U.S. as long as you are a full-time student, but no later than the expiration date on your I-20 or DS-2019.

Be sure to keep your immigration documents in a safe place and carry them in your hand/carry-on luggage when you travel.

If you encounter any difficulties or differences from what is described above, you should indicate this when you report to ISSS, Talbert Hall 210, after arrival in Buffalo.

**PART-TIME CANADIAN STUDENTS**

If you indicated that you will enroll part-time, you will have a “Border Commuter” I-20 with copies of your guarantee of financial support.

Before entering the U.S., you will have to pay the SEVIS fee. For instructions on how to pay the fee, please visit www.buffalo.edu/intlservices/pdf_files/F-1FeelIncrease.pdf. At the Port of Entry, you should present your I-20 to the Immigration Officer. You will also be asked to complete an Arrival/Departure Record (I-94 card) and enroll in U.S. VISIT (ie. provide ten fingerprints and be photographed). The Immigration Inspector will stamp your I-20, indicating the date and place of your entry, your visa category and the ending date on your I-20.

You are required to extend your I-20 each semester if you need more time to complete your program. You should inquire at ISSS, Talbert Hall 210 about extension procedures as that date approaches.

Be sure to carry your I-20 and I-94 card each time you cross the border in order to document your purpose for entering the U.S. You will also need a valid passport, Free and Secure Trade (Fast) card, Nexus card, enhanced driver’s license or other document acceptable to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

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**Arriving in Buffalo**

Buffalo is the second largest city in New York State, having a metropolitan population of over 1,000,000. Buffalo is approximately 450 miles (725 kilometers) northwest of New York City, 20 miles (33 kilometers) from Niagara Falls and 100 miles (160 kilometers) south of Toronto, Canada. To learn more about Buffalo, you may wish to consult reference materials at a U.S. educational advising center or search online (www.buffalo.com, www.visitbuffaloniagara.com, www.buffalorising.com, www.greaterniagara.com).
The University at Buffalo is the largest of the four State University of New York (SUNY) research centers. The SUNY system, encompassing 64 campuses, is the largest public higher education system in the U.S. The University at Buffalo is divided into North and South campuses plus a Downtown Campus in downtown Buffalo. The South Campus is 5 miles (8 kilometers) from the airport and 7 miles (11 kilometers) from downtown Buffalo. This campus is primarily a Health Science Center although a number of academic departments, University offices and residence halls are also located there.

The North Campus is 5 miles (8 kilometers) north of the South Campus. The North Campus houses most administrative offices (including International Student & Scholar Services), the majority of academic departments, recreation facilities and residence halls.

There is also a Downtown Campus, which is being developed in downtown Buffalo and is also known as the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. The three campuses are connected by frequent shuttle bus service. The University is locally referred to as “UB”.

**AIRPORT TRANSPORTATION TO UB**

After you arrive and pick up your luggage in Buffalo, look outside the terminal for Airport Taxi Service (ATS). ATS charges approximately $30 to drive one person to UB’s North Campus and $20 to UB’s South Campus. The airport is approximately 6 miles from both the North and South Campuses. It should take 15-20 minutes to reach either campus from the airport.

To check Buffalo’s weather and flight arrival information, go to www.buffalo.com and www.buffaloairport.com/Flight.asp

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION**

During the week before classes begin, the Office of International Student & Scholar Services offers an International Student Orientation program for all new international students, including graduate and undergraduate students, and transfers from other U.S. schools. It is very important that you attend this program to become familiar with the University and its rules, regulations and resources, sit for any required exams, meet with your academic advisor about your course schedule and register for classes.

You will also need to secure housing and settle in to your accommodations, become familiar with local transportation and recover from travel fatigue. Our experience indicates that failure to take care of the above matters can cause severe disruption and damage one’s ability to have a good academic beginning.

Enclosed please find a letter containing further details about International Student Orientation. You are expected to arrive on campus no later than the date indicated on your I-20 or DS-2019. If you are not able to arrive by this date, you should notify your department and the International Admissions office, and request further instructions for coming at a later date.

So that we can prepare for your arrival, please register for International Student Orientation at www.buffalo.edu/intlserivces/orientation_registration.html.
Preparing for your Trip

U.S. EDUCATIONAL ADVISING CENTERS

The U.S. has educational advising centers in many countries. You might find it helpful to visit a center for information and advice on preparing to come to the U.S. Some centers offer pre-departure orientation programs for students planning to study in the U.S. To find a center near you, visit www.educationusa.info.

LUGGAGE AND BAGGAGE

DO NOT send baggage in advance of your arrival. The University lacks storage facilities for luggage, trunks or packages. As public transportation allows some luggage to be carried without extra charge, the best arrangement is to bring personal luggage with you on the plane (check with your travel agent or airline for specific size and weight limitations). Even if you must spend money for excess weight, you will save time and money in doing so.

WHAT TO BRING

Please refer to the section “Arrival in the United States” for information about customs and limitations on what you can bring into the U.S.

We do not recommend that you bring textbooks used in previous study, although you may believe that familiar reference books are worth the expense involved in transporting them. All students are expected to purchase textbooks required for their courses. Excellent library resources provide students ample opportunity to obtain supplemental reading materials for review and research.

Many International Student Clubs organize cultural events and festivals. We suggest that you bring art, crafts, maps or other items descriptive of your country and culture for these events, and to share with interested American students. Although exchanging gifts in the U.S. ordinarily occurs among family members, very close friends or important business associates, students may encounter certain situations in which they would like to express appreciation through a gift. For example, during a visit to an American family, a small and inexpensive gift from your country would be appropriate.

CLOTHING

Buffalo enjoys four distinct seasons. For that reason, students must be prepared for weather of all types. The city is famous for its winters, with temperatures usually ranging between -5° and 32° Fahrenheit (-20° and 0° Celsius) and snow falling at the rate of more than 100 inches (254 cm.) per year. Summers are pleasant and moderate, with the temperature rarely rising above 90° Fahrenheit (32° Celsius). Fall, which occurs from September through October, varies from 28° to 77° Fahrenheit (-2° to 25.2° Celsius). Spring, which occurs from April through June, ranges from 40° to 72° Fahrenheit (4.5° to 22° Celsius).
Three basic types of clothing are essential for the Buffalo climate. In winter, heavy jackets or overcoats, warm hats, scarves, gloves or mittens and snow boots are necessary. During chilly autumn and spring days, raincoats or medium-weight wool coats or ski jackets are worn outdoors while sweaters are often worn indoors. A lightweight jacket is sometimes appropriate for cool nights during the spring, summer and fall. All University buildings are heated during cold weather and most are air-conditioned during the summer.

In general, student dress is casual. Many of your instructors will also dress informally. Blue jeans and T-shirts are acceptable for class, but you should also bring some formal clothing for interviews, receptions and other special occasions. It is a good idea to bring seasonal clothing with you or have it mailed to you after you arrive.

For more information on winter in Buffalo, how to prepare for it and other survival tips, please watch our webcast “How to Survive a Buffalo Winter” at www.buffalo.edu/intlservices/useful.html.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CLUBS

There are many international student clubs at UB. It is often useful to get in touch with a member of your international student club to clarify any doubts you have or to obtain valuable advice. Please visit www.buffalo.edu/intlservices/clubs.html to contact your student club, if available.

DAY CARE & SCHOOLS FOR DEPENDENT CHILDREN

Child care centers, day care centers and pre-schools are established settings that, in New York, are strictly regulated by the State. While there are many day care centers and preschools near the University at Buffalo, admission to a day care center may require a waiting period and/or can be very costly. As a result, most students find it helpful to postpone the arrival of their dependents until after arrangements for housing and child care have been made.

Public school education in the U.S. is free for all children ages 5-18. All children between the ages of 5-16 are required by law to attend school. There are some private or religious affiliated schools for which there is a tuition charge. The school year is from early September to mid-June. Upon arrival, you should check with the school district in which you reside to find out how to enroll your dependent children. When registering, you must bring your children’s health records, dates of immunization and birth certificate/passport. Bus transportation is provided free of charge if the school is not close to your home. For more information on child care and public schools in the U.S, please visit www.buffalo.edu/intlservices/dependents.html.

Financial Concerns

WHILE IN YOUR HOME COUNTRY

The U.S. government does not restrict the amount of foreign currency which may be brought into the U.S. although you must declare to the Customs Officer amounts above $10,000. (Please read the section “Arrival in the United States” for more detailed information.) Many foreign governments have restrictions regarding currency exchange or the amount which can be taken out of the country.
governments require a letter from the University certifying your acceptance, dates of enrollment and estimated expenses before releasing or exchanging funds. In most cases, your I-20 or DS-2019 will fulfill these requirements.

We suggest that you exchange some money before leaving your home country. It is very expensive and complicated to exchange money in Buffalo. DO NOT, however, carry all of your money in cash. You should buy a money card, bank draft, money order or travelers checks in order to safely bring your money to Buffalo. Alternatively, you can obtain a credit card or have money wired to you after you arrive.

Please note that a delay of 4-6 weeks is customary before receiving the first university paycheck so students who have assistantships should be prepared to meet all their living expenses during that time.

**UNIVERSITY BILLING**

The University bills students each semester for all University-related charges (tuition, health insurance, student fees, International Student Orientation, on-campus room, meals, etc.). Please visit [www.studentaccounts.buffalo.edu/billing/howtopay.php](http://www.studentaccounts.buffalo.edu/billing/howtopay.php) to learn more about how to pay your University bill.

University bills will be sent to the address you provide to the University as your “local address” in the U.S. If you do not receive a bill during the first month of classes, go to the Student Response Center, 232 Capen Hall, North Campus to inquire about your account.

Students who wish to wire payment directly into their University account may do so by wiring money into the following account:

Bank of America  
100 West 33rd Street  
New York, New York 10001

Bank of America ABA 0260 0959 3  
BNF = SUNY Buffalo 004834448287  
OBI = Student ID Number* + Your First Name + Your LAST (FAMILY) NAME"

Account #004834448287  
General Routing #026009593  
International Wire Swift Code BOFAUS3N  
CHIPS Code 0959

* This is the 8-digit person number from your letter of admission.

Please note that, as a security measure and in keeping with recommended banking practices, the University at Buffalo is unable to accept payments in excess of the balance due on an account. Money for your personal expenses should be wired directly to a local bank account. If UB receives overpayments to your student account, it may wire them back to your bank in your home country.
ASSISTANTSHIPS AND EMPLOYMENT

The main financial assistance available to international students from the University is an assistantship awarded through your department. You should presume that you will not receive any financial aid from the University if you were not notified by your department. Since immigration regulations prohibit international students from working off-campus except in special circumstances, you are expected to be able to support yourself and your studies through personal funds and any on-campus employment you are able to secure.

Housing

TEMPORARY HOUSING

Campus Living (University Residence Halls) allows students who have reserved a room in the residence halls for the academic year to move into their rooms on the day before International Student Orientation. If you wish to take advantage of this housing opportunity, please see the letter included in this mailing. Students who move into the residence halls early will be charged a nightly rate until the halls officially open.

Some students may choose to stay at a hotel near the University while they look for permanent housing. Those listed below are located near the North Campus and the prices listed are approximate.

- **DOUBLETREE BY HILTON**
  10 Flint Road
  Amherst, NY 14226
  Tel. (716) 689-4414
  $100 (UB Rate)
  Doubletreeamherst.com

- **COMFORT INN**
  1 Flint Road
  Amherst, NY 14226
  Tel. (716) 688-0811 or 1-800-800-8000
  $84 - $120 – Free shuttle service from Buffalo airport
  www.choicehotels.ca/hotels/hotel?hotel=NY293

- **RED ROOF INN**
  42 Flint Road
  Amherst, NY 14226
  Tel. (716) 689-7474
  $59 - $100
  www.redroof.com

- **RAMADA HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTER**
  2402 North Forest Road
  Getzville, NY 14068
  Tel. (716) 636-7500
  $79 (UB Rate)
  www.ramadahotelamherst.com

UB International Student Clubs are often able to offer airport pick-up and settling-in assistance. You can visit [www.buffalo.edu/intlservices/clubs.html](http://www.buffalo.edu/intlservices/clubs.html) for club contacts.


**CAMPUS LIVING (UNIVERSITY RESIDENCE HALLS)**

There are various options for on-campus living, including apartments. Please refer to the Campus Life website at www.ub-housing.buffalo.edu for more information on housing options as well as projected costs for the academic year.

*Students who sign a contract for on-campus housing are financially obligated for the entire fall and spring semesters.* Residence hall rooms are reserved according to space availability and the date your application was received. Students who wish to live on campus should consult the housing information provided in their acceptance packet.

**MEALS AND FOOD SERVICE**

Campus Dining & Shops (CDS), the on-campus dining service, offers a variety of dining options to residence hall and off-campus students, ranging from the purchase of meals on a weekly basis to contracting for one of several plans that cover a specified number of meals per semester. Freshmen who live on-campus must purchase a food contract for both the Fall and Spring semesters. Non-freshmen residence hall students are exempt from this requirement. Food contracts must be paid in full at the beginning of the semester. Contracts begin on the Saturday before the first day of classes in the fall and expire at the close of the examination period. Specific information about meal plans and food options is available at www.myubcard.com.

Although cooking is not allowed in residence hall rooms, limited cooking facilities are available in all residence halls. International students who prepare their own meals should know that international foods are available at local grocery stores and specialty shops. For a list of local grocery stores and restaurants that offer international foods, please see our Restaurant Guide and Shopping Guides at:


**OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING**

ISSS has extensive information about off-campus housing on our website at [www.buffalo.edu/intlservices/offcampus.html](http://www.buffalo.edu/intlservices/offcampus.html). We urge you to read this information carefully before you search for off-campus housing.

SBI Legal Assistance, Student Union 377, North Campus, offers advice about the legal obligations of renting off-campus housing. **You should consult with them before agreeing orally or in writing to rent an apartment.** Once you have rented an apartment, keep duplicate copies of all communications with your landlord, all bills and all receipts in case there are questions at a later time. For further information, please visit the SBI Legal Assistance web page at [http://www.subboard.com/legal/](http://www.subboard.com/legal/)

Low-cost accommodations for families are often difficult to locate immediately upon arrival. Therefore, married students are urged to delay bringing their families until they have made living arrangements and accumulated sufficient savings. This will help you avoid living in uncomfortable surroundings, incurring considerable expense for temporary housing and renting an apartment in haste for more than you can afford.
Health Issues

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS AND HEALTH BACKGROUND & IMMUNIZATION FORMS

The University requires that all students complete and return the Health Background and Immunization Forms, which were sent to you along with your acceptance letter. **Failure to complete and submit these forms will result in your inability to register for classes.**

The New York State Department of Health requires that students entering UB show proof of immunity against measles, mumps and rubella. It also requires that students entering UB verify that they have been educated about meningitis. If you arrive on campus without having completed the Health Background and Immunization Forms and without fulfilling the immunization and meningitis information requirements, UB’s Student Health Services office will assist you in obtaining the immunizations you need. However, this will delay your ability to register for classes and you may not get the classes you desire.

Please visit www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/shs/student-health/ for more information about these requirements.

HEALTH CARE AND HEALTH INSURANCE

Health care in the U.S. is very expensive and can become extremely burdensome to students on a limited budget. Students can usually have routine health problems treated by the Student Health Center at minimal or no cost. More serious problems are referred to physicians who are off-campus.

To avoid the financial problems of costly health care, the State University of New York (SUNY) requires that international students purchase the SUNY international health insurance. All students are billed each semester for this insurance unless they can provide proof, in English, of comparable coverage through another plan. Please note that most other insurance plans are neither sufficient nor comparable so we do not advise you to purchase health insurance before you come to the U.S. Waiver forms and instructions are available at [http://saboard.com/insurance/](http://saboard.com/insurance/).

Dependents are not covered by the SUNY international student health insurance. Students must purchase coverage for their dependents at the Student Medical Insurance Office, Student Union 223 within 30 days of the dependents’ arrival in the U.S., after marriage or after the birth of a child. If insurance is not purchased for dependent within 30 days, there will be a six-month waiting period for coverage of pre-existing conditions. Dependent family members cannot be treated at UB’s Student Health Center. Therefore, they must seek their medical services off-campus.

Students holding University assistantships may be able to enroll in a health insurance program as a benefit of employment. In such cases, the University pays a certain percentage of the health insurance premium and the student is responsible for the remainder of the cost. Students who hold qualifying assistantships must attend an enrollment seminar. Details and instructions will be included in the letter of appointment for the assistantship.
ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The academic year at UB runs from late August through May and is divided into two semesters. Each is approximately 15 weeks in length. In addition, there are three summer sessions between May and August. Courses taken during these sessions are equivalent in credit to those taken during the academic year. The official academic calendar is available at:

www.registrar.buffalo.edu/calendars/index.php

International students are required to maintain a full-time course load each semester. For undergraduate students, full-time means 12 credit hours per semester. For graduate students, full-time also means 12 credit hours per semester, unless you hold an assistantship, in which case 9 credit hours is considered full-time. International students are not required to be registered during summer sessions. Please visit www.buffalo.edu/intlservices/documents/MaintainingF-1StatusLH7-12.pdf to learn about maintaining your F-1 student status.

ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT

Students will receive academic advisement during International Student Orientation prior to registering for classes. Graduate students should visit their academic department, where they will be assigned an initial departmental faculty advisor who may change after the student becomes familiar with the department and faculty interests. Undergraduate students who have not yet been admitted to a major will receive advisement from Student Advising Services. Undergraduates who have been accepted to a major will have a school or departmental academic advisor.

The transfer of credits from another school in the U.S. or abroad is determined by the Office of International Admissions. However, transfer credit may or may not be accepted toward requirements for a degree in a particular field. In addition, transfer credit may not be evaluated until after your first semester of study has already begun. Therefore, careful academic planning with your advisor is essential.

English Language Requirements & Courses

CONDITIONAL ADMISSION

Some undergraduate students will note an English language requirement documented on their letter of acceptance from the Office of International Admissions, and on their I-20 or DS-2019. Determination of this requirement is based upon a TOEFL score of less than the required score of 79 (Internet-based) or 550 (paper-based). (Note: Some students are admitted with IELTS scores instead
of TOEFL scores.) Any student required to register for English as a Second Language courses as a conditionally admitted student during the first semester of study at UB will need to see Keith Otto, Program Director, English as a Second Language Programs, at the English Language Institute (ELI), Baldy Hall 320, North Campus upon arrival for removal of the electronic block to course registration and for registration for two ESL courses (ESL 407 and 411 or 412).

**TOEFL DEFERRAL**

TOEFL deferral students will be given a paper-based TOEFL during International Student Orientation. Students who do not pass this paper-based TOEFL with a minimum score of 523 will be required to enroll in the full-time, non-credit Intensive English Program offered by the English Language Institute. Students who score between 523-547 will be required to register for 1 or 2 ESL courses during their first semester and will be limited to four courses in that semester, including ESL courses. TOEFL Deferral students will have an electronic block to course registration so will not be able to register for courses until they have taken the TOEFL.

**SPEAK**

SPEAK, a test of spoken English, is required of graduate students in some departments and all graduate students who have been offered assistantships. The SPEAK test is given during International Student Orientation. A score of 55 is required for immediate approval to begin teaching. Students who score less than 55 may be advised to register for ESL 512 Communication for International Teaching Assistants or ESL 411/412 Spoken English. Students who are required to take the SPEAK test will have an electronic block to course registration so will not be able to register for courses until they have taken the SPEAK.

Students who wish to improve their English language proficiency prior to the beginning of their academic studies may apply to attend the English Language Institute’s Intensive English Program, a full-time, non-credit English language and pre-academic program of study. For further information, contact the English Language Institute at:

E-mail: elibuffalo@buffalo.edu
Website: www.buffalo.edu/eli
# Checklist for Departure to the U.S.

## International Student Orientation
- Register for orientation program (www.buffalo.edu/intlservices/orientation_registration.html)
- Arrive by date on I-20 or DS-2019 (no more than 30 days before the I-20/DS-2019 start date)

## Travel documents
- Passport
- U.S. Visa Stamp
- I-20 or DS-2019
- Proof of SEVIS Fee payment
- Financial Documents

## Health Background Form (send or bring form)
- Physical
- Immunizations

## Financial concerns
- Money Card or Travelers’ Checks
- Some Cash
- Currency and exchange regulations
- University bills and living expenses

## Arrival in the U.S.
- Transportation from airport to UB or your temporary housing
- Hotel accommodations
- Temporary housing

## Dependents
- Marriage certificate
- Birth certificates
- Health and immunization records

Please note that this is a basic checklist. You may need to consider other factors before you embark on your journey to UB.
Important Contact Information

Airport Taxi Service (Buffalo Airport)
https://buffaloairporttaxi.com
Tel. 1-800-551-9369
E-mail: buffaloairporttaxi@gmail.com

Amtrak (intercity trains)
www.amtrak.com
Tel. 1-800-872-7245
1-800-523-6590

Greyhound Bus Lines (intercity buses)
www.greyhound.com
Tel. 1-800-231-2222

University at Buffalo Information
www://www.buffalo.edu/
Tel. (716) 645-2000

Office of International Student & Scholar Services (UB)
www.buffalo.edu/intlservices
Tel. (716) 645-2258
E-mail: intlservices@buffalo.edu

Campus Living Office (UB)
www.ub-housing.buffalo.edu/
Tel. (716) 645-2171

Off-Campus Student Services (UB)
www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/offcampus/
Tel. (716) 829-3541

Student Health Services (UB)
www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/shs/student-health/
Tel. (716) 829-3316

Student Medical Insurance Office (UB)
http://subboard.com/insurance/
Tel. (716) 645-3036
E-mail: asksmi@buffalo.edu

University Police (UB)
www.public-safety.buffalo.edu/
Tel. (716) 645-2222