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Welcome

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, visiting scholars, faculty and researchers. Located in 210 Talbert Hall on the North Campus, ISSS provides a wide range of services to this international population:

- Immigration advice, updates and document processing
- Assistance and referrals in solving a variety of student concerns
- A positive environment in which students and scholars feel comfortable and secure
- Orientation programs, workshops and excursions for students and scholars to learn about life in the Buffalo-Niagara region
- Cultural events such as International Education Week to give international students the opportunity to showcase their cultures for the University community

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 other useful information.

International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) Office

Please feel free to contact ISSS should you require assistance:

- Address: 210 Talbert Hall, Buffalo, NY 14260
- Tel: (716) 645-2258
- Fax: (716) 645-6197
- Email: intlservices@buffalo.edu
- Office Hours: Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- Website: www.buffalo.edu/intlservices



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 United States, you must renew it at your Embassy or Consulate. If you lose your passport, you must file for a replacement at your Consulate or Embassy. Contact information for Consulates and Embassies in the U.S. is available at: www.embassy.org/embassies/index.html

Visas

To enter the United States, you and your accompanying dependents (spouse and/or children) must obtain a visa stamp from a U.S. Consulate or Embassy. 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 United States 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 United States 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 or students whose home countries require it are also issued J-1 visas. Students for whom UB is issuing the DS-2019 will find that form enclosed in their admissions packet. These students can use it to apply for a J-1 visa.



Applying for a U.S. Visa Stamp

U.S. Consulates and Embassies establish their own procedures for visa applications. You should determine in advance the procedures at the U.S. Consulate or Embassy where you will apply for your U.S. visa. A list of U.S. Embassies and Consulate is available at travel.state.gov/visa/questions_embassy.html

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) with original or notarized copies of your guarantee of financial support
- 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. Consulate or Embassy 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. You must apply for an F-1 or J-1 visa at a U.S. Consulate or Embassy.

Arrival in the United States

Upon arrival 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. For more information on Customs regulations, you may consult the pamphlet "Welcome to the United States: A Guide for International Visitors" at www.cbp.gov/linkhandler/cgov/newsroom/publications/travel/welcome2us.ctt/welcome2us.pdf

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 that you carry 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 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 www.cbp.gov/linkhandler/cgov/newsroom/publications/travel/currency_rpt_flyer/currency_reporting.ctt/currency_reporting.pdf

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 do, be sure to enter your name as it appears on your passport and I-20. 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 I-20 or DS-2019 and Arrival/Departure Record (I-94 card), and enter your information into the Student & Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). Be sure that the Immigration Inspector writes the correct visa status and “D/S” on your I-20 and I-94 card. Also, be sure to keep both in a safe place.

Be sure to keep your immigration documents in a safe place and carry them in your carry-on luggage when you travel. Do not put them in your checked luggage.

Problems

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

Please note that you must report to the college or university whose I-20 or DS-2019 you used to enter the U.S.



IMMIGRATION CONCERNS FOR CANADIAN STUDENTS WHO ARE OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES

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 find a Certificate of Eligibility (I-20 or DS-2019) with copies of your 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-1FeeIncrease.pdf. At the port of entry, you should present your I-20 (or DS-2019) to the U.S. 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 (or DS-2019) and 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). If you hold an I-20, D/S means that you are permitted to stay in the U.S. as long as you are a full-time student pursuing a degree, but no later than the expected date of completion in Item 5 on your I-20. If you hold a DS-2019, D/S means that 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 in Item 3 on your DS-2019.

Be sure to keep your immigration documents in a safe place and carry them in your 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, 210 Talbert Hall, after arrival in Buffalo.

Part-time Canadian Commuting 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/sevisfee.pdf. At the port of entry, you should present your I-20 (or DS-2019) 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 (or DS-2019), 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 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. After June 1, 2009, you will also need a valid passport, Fast card, Nexus card or other document acceptable to the Department of Homeland Security.



IMMIGRATION CONCERNS FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE ALREADY IN THE UNITED STATES

Students Currently Attending Another U.S. Educational Institution

Immigration regulations require that international students complete an immigration transfer procedure when they change educational institutions. Both students who began a degree program at one school and will continue it at UB and students who completed a course of study at one school and will start another at UB must complete the immigration transfer process. The Office of International Admissions will e-mail you instructions on what you need to do to complete the transfer process. *Note: Failure to follow immigration transfer procedures may cause you to lose your F-1 or J-1 student status.*

Students Holding Other than F-1 or J-1 Student Status

If you are not on a student visa (e.g. F-1 or J-1) and wish to study, you may need to change your immigration status. To find out if this is necessary, please contact ISSS (Tel. 716-645-2258, E-mail: intlservices@buffalo.edu). To change your immigration status, you must submit an application to the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS). Information about application procedures may be obtained from ISSS, 210 Talbert Hall.

Please note that assistantships require that you hold a visa status that allows you to work. If you will need to change your visa status to accept an assistantship, be aware that the application process can be lengthy and you cannot begin your assistantship until the change of status is approved.

If you plan to leave the U.S. for a destination other than Canada or Mexico and re-enter in F-1 or J-1 status, you will need to apply for a new visa stamp at a U.S. Consulate or Embassy. (Refer to the section “For Students Who Are Outside the U.S.”)

Students Already Attending UB

F-1 and J-1 students who are already attending UB and who have been admitted to a new department, new degree level or both must complete the SEVIS transfer procedure and receive a new I-20 / DS-2019 before beginning their new program.



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).

The University at Buffalo is the largest of the four State University of New York (SUNY) research centers. The SUNY system, encompassing 65 campuses, is the largest public higher education system in the United States. The University at Buffalo is divided into North and South campuses plus a Medical 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 still 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 Medical Campus, which is being developed in downtown Buffalo. 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 \$20 for one person. 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 return the International Student Orientation reservation form found in the letter or register online at www.buffalo.edu/intlservices/orientation_registration.html.



PREPARING FOR YOUR TRIP

U.S. Educational Advising Centers

The United States has educational advising centers in many countries. You might find it helpful to visit these centers 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. For the location of a center, inquire at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate. The links to the U.S. Embassies and Consulates can be found at usembassy.state.gov

Familiarize Yourself with Buffalo

Buffalo is a vibrant and historically rich city that offers great entertainment, food and attractions. Please visit the following websites to familiarize yourself with the city and the Niagara region.

www.buffalo.com

www.greaterniagara.com

www.buffalorising.com

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 \$100 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, slides, 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 United States 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. Because of that, 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 many are air-conditioned during the summer.

In general, student dress is casual. Many of your teachers 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.

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 and scholars 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.

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.



FINANCIAL CONCERNS

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 Officers 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. Some 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 travelers checks, a bank draft or money order 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 and meals). Please visit src.buffalo.edu/studentaccount/howtopay.shtml 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.



When you arrive at UB, you will need to complete a refund request form at the Student Response Center, 232 Capen Hall, North Campus. Please keep in mind that it may take 2-3 weeks to process a refund so be sure to have enough personal funds to satisfy your needs during that time.

Assistantships and Employment

The only financial assistance available to international students from the University is a fellowship or 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.



Temporary Housing

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.

HOTEL INDIGO

10 Flint Road
Amherst, NY
Tel. (716) 689-4414
\$99 (UB Rate)

www.ichotelsgroup.com/h/d/in/1/en/hotel/buffr

COMFORT INN

1 Flint Road
Amherst, NY
Tel. (716) 688-0811 or 1-800-800-8000
\$88 - \$132

www.choicehotels.ca/hotels/hotel?hotel=NY293

RED ROOF INN

42 Flint Road
Amherst, NY
Tel. (716) 689-7474
\$59 - \$100

www.redroof.com

RAMADA HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTER

2402 North Forest Road
Amherst, NY
Tel. (716) 636-7500
\$79

www.ramadahotelamherst.com

UB International Student Clubs are often able to offer airport pick-up and settling-in assistance. A list of clubs is included in your International Student Orientation packet. You can also visit www.buffalo.edu/intlservices/clubs.html for club contacts.

University Residence Halls

The enclosed University Residence Halls brochure lists the various options available for on-campus housing, including apartment options. Please refer to this material for projected costs for the academic year. *Students who contract for on-campus housing are financially obligated for the entire Fall and Spring semesters.* Residence hall rooms are reserved according to the application received date and space availability. Students wishing to live on campus should return the enclosed application with the required deposit immediately to:

University Residence Halls & Apartments
University at Buffalo
106 Spaulding Quadrangle
Buffalo, NY 14261-0008
Tel. (716) 645-2171
Fax: (716) 645-3968
E-mail: ub-reshalls@buffalo.edu
Internet: www.ub-housing.buffalo.edu



Meals and Food Service

The on-campus Dining Service offers a variety of dining options to residence hall students, ranging from the purchase of meals on a daily basis to contracting for one of several plans that cover a specified number of meals per week. Freshmen who live on-campus must purchase a food contract for both the Fall and Spring semesters. Other residence hall students are exempt from this requirement. Food contracts must be paid in full at the beginning of the semester. Contracts begin the day before the first day of classes and expire at the close of the examination period. Dining halls are open between semesters and on some holidays on a cash basis only. Specific information about meal plans and food options are 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.

Off-Campus Housing

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

Apartment listings can be found at:

www.buffalo.craigslist.org/roo/
www.apartmentfinder.com/Default.aspx?mid=A062
www.TheRentersGuide.com
www.BuffaloApartments.com
www.apartmentspotlight.com
www.buffalonews.com
www.Artvoice.com

After you arrive in Buffalo, you should purchase a local newspaper, *The Buffalo News*, (preferably the Saturday or Sunday edition). The classified ads list rooms, apartments and houses for rent in the Buffalo area. You may also find advertisements of rentals on campus bulletin boards or in campus newspapers. When you start your apartment search, we recommend purchasing a Buffalo map (available at grocery stores, gas stations and bookstores or at International Student Orientation) to help you become familiar with the area.

SBI Legal Assistance, 377 Student Union, 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 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 Requirements and Health Background Form

The University requires that all students complete and return the Health Background Form, which is included in this acceptance packet. Completion of this form involves an examination by a physician and proof of immunizations. Any disabilities or chronic conditions should be noted on this form. Failure to complete and submit the Health Background Form will result in the inability to register for classes in the future.

The New York State Department of Health requires that students entering the University at Buffalo show proof of immunity against measles, mumps and rubella. Failure to provide this documentation can result in cancellation of course registration. If students do not have these immunizations, they can get them in the U.S. Please visit www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/shs/student-health/ for more information.

Health Care and Health Insurance

Health care in the United States 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 requires that each international student purchase comprehensive health insurance provided by the State University of New York system. Each student will be billed each semester for this insurance unless s/he can provide proof, in English, of comparable coverage through another plan. Waiver forms and instructions are available on the website at www.subboard.com/smi. Please note that most other insurance is not sufficient and not comparable so we do not advise you to purchase health insurance before you come to the U.S.

Dependents are not automatically covered by student health insurance. Students must purchase coverage for their dependents at the Student Medical Insurance Office, 223 Student Union, immediately upon arrival. No enrollments are allowed for dependents who have been in the U.S. for more than 30 days. 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 will be enrolled in a health insurance program as a benefit of employment. In such cases, the University pays 90% of the cost for single students and 75% for family coverage. 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 PROGRAM

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 src.buffalo.edu/calendars/index.shtml

International students are required to maintain a full-time course load each semester. For undergraduate students, full-time is 12 credit hours per semester. For graduate students, full-time is also 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/pdf_files/maintain.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 be changed after the student becomes familiar with the department and faculty interests. Undergraduate students who have not yet been admitted to a major receive advisement from Student Advising Services. Undergraduates who have been accepted to a major will have a 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.

Classroom Instruction

Many of the courses taught at UB follow a lecture-discussion format. The majority of class time often consists of a lecture by the professor. However, in general, students are expected to participate in class discussions and ask questions. Regular attendance is required in most courses and excessive absences may result in automatic failure.

In most classes, grades are based upon class participation, completion of assignments, research papers, projects and examinations. The exams are usually written rather than oral and are given separately for each course. Ordinarily, an exam is given at mid-semester and another exam is given at the end of the semester. A type of testing common in the U.S. and often unfamiliar to international students is the objective test, which may take several forms: multiple choice or true-false. You should inquire about the type of test each of your professors will use for grading purposes.



Conditional Admission

Some undergraduate students will note an English language requirement documented on their letter of acceptance 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), 213 (computer-based) or 550 (paper-based). 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 at the English Language Institute (ELI), 320 Baldy Hall, North Campus upon arrival for removal of the “F” checkstop (block to course registration) and registration for the 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 the first semester and will be limited to 4 courses in the first semester, including both ESL and academic courses. TOEFL Deferral students will have an “F” checkstop, which will prevent them from registering 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 “F” checkstop, which will prevent them from registering 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:

English Language Institute
320 Baldy Hall
University at Buffalo
Buffalo, NY 14260-1000
Tel. (716) 645-2077
E-mail: elibuffalo@buffalo.edu
Internet: www.buffalo.edu/eli



CHECKLIST FOR DEPARTURE TO U.S.

International Student Orientation

- Submit reservation form (www.buffalo.edu/intlservices/orientation_registration.html)
- Arrive by date on I-20 or DS-2019 (arrive no more than 30 days before the 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

- University bills and living expenses
- Currency and exchange regulations
- Travelers' Checks
- Small Amounts of Cash

Arrival in U.S.

- Transportation from airport to UB, your hotel or your off-campus housing
- Hotel accommodations
- Temporary housing
- Permanent 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.

Good luck and we look forward to seeing you soon!



IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Airport Taxi Service (Buffalo Airport)	Tel. 1-800-551-9369
Amtrak (trains) www.amtrak.com	Tel. 1-800-872-7245
General University at Buffalo Information	Tel. (716) 645-2000
Graduate Student Association	Tel. (716) 645-2960
Greyhound Bus Lines www.greyhound.com	Tel. 1-800-231-2222
Office of International Admissions www.buffalo.edu/intadmit/new/index.html	Tel. (716) 645-2368
Office of International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) www.buffalo.edu/intlservices	Tel. (716) 645-2258 Fax: (716) 645-6197
Metro Bus / Metro Rail (in Buffalo area) www.nfta.com	Tel. (716) 855-7211
Student Health Center www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/shs/student-health/	Tel. (716) 829-3316
Student Medical Insurance (Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.)	Tel. (716) 645-3036 Fax: (716) 645-3465
University Police www.public-safety.buffalo.edu/	Tel. (716) 645-2222
University Residence Halls & Apartments Operations www.ub-housing.buffalo.edu/ (Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)	Tel. (716) 645-2171

