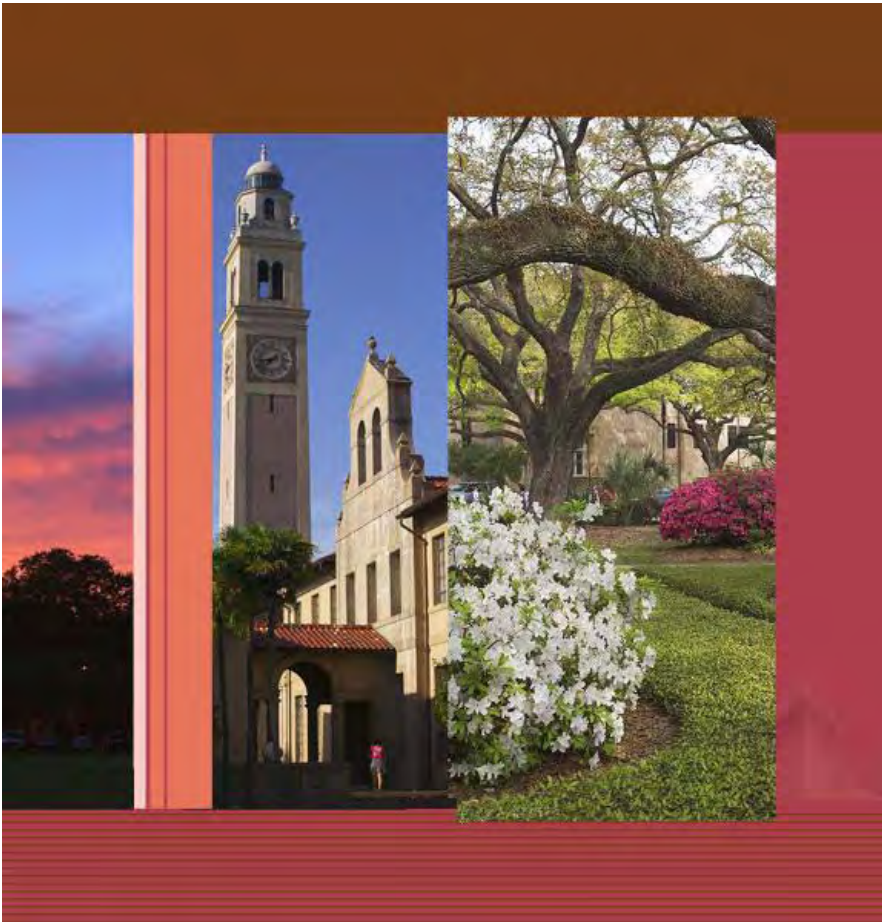


LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY AND AGRICULTURAL & MECHANICAL COLLEGE

Baton Rouge, LA

US Immigration (School Code: NOL214f00094000)
US Department of State (Program Number: P-1-01594)



WELCOME TO LSU



This LSU welcome information is a pre-arrival guide for international students, filled with information on:

- Obtaining a Visa
- Travel
- Arrival Services
- Housing
- International Student Orientation
- Pre-Travel Checklist

And Much More!!

In addition to the information contained in this booklet, please visit the web site of LSU International Cultural Center at: www.lsu.edu/icc and the International Services Office at: www.lsu.edu/iso

This will help to answer any additional questions you may have.

We have also included what we call “**lagniappe**” or a little bit of extra information that you may find useful in preparing for your journey. Please read each section carefully, as this booklet contains important tips that will ease your transition to coming to LSU and living in the United States.

We congratulate you on your admission and look forward to meeting you soon.

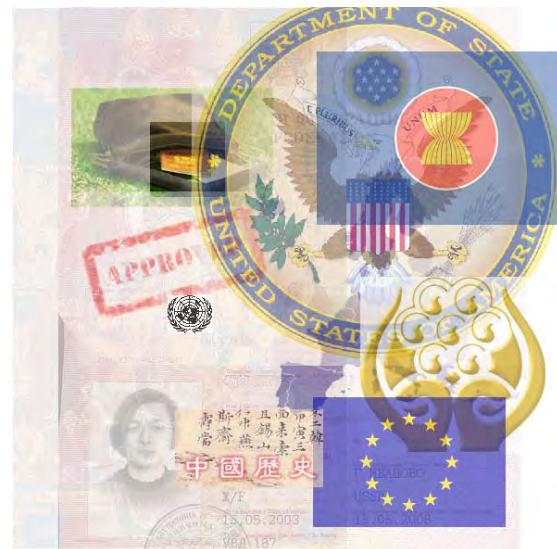
The International Services Office has compiled this information to provide some basic information on the visa application process, travel, housing, arrival services, and international student orientation.

PAYING THE SEVIS FEE/OBTAINING A VISA

To enter the United States, an appropriate visa must be stamped in your passport (except Canadians are visa exempt). Contact the nearest U.S. Consulate or Embassy as soon as you have received your I-20 (F-1 student) or DS-2019 (J-1 student) for instructions on how to apply for a student visa. Most U.S. Embassies and Consulates require that you make an appointment and can refuse entrance to you without one.

If your first I-20 or DS-2019 used to enter the U.S. was issued after 9/1/04, you must pay a SEVIS fee of \$100 before you are eligible to apply for a visa at the U.S. Consulate and/or present yourself to the U.S. Port of Entry (i.e. Canadian citizens-visa exempt). Visit the following web sites to gain more information on this procedure:

- www.FMjfee.com
- www.ice.gov/sevis/i901



For information about making an appointment at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate in your country, please visit the web sites:

- <http://travel.state.gov/>
- www.unitedstatesvisas.gov
- <http://educationusa.state.gov>

Many U.S. Embassies or Consulates now operate on a drop box system, so please take special care to include all required documents when submitting your visa application. Failure to do so may lead to delays or even a denial.

In some cases, scheduling an appointment may take weeks or months. Please allow for additional security clearance processing of your visa application, as this can take up to 21-45 additional days. Keep this in mind when purchasing airline tickets.

REMINDER

You must enter the country using the I-20/DS-2019 you used to apply for your visa. Federal regulations require you to report to the university listed on the visa stamp for your initial U.S. entry, even if you were granted a visa to attend another US institution and now wish to enroll at Louisiana State University. For more information, please e-mail us at: isodoc@lsu.edu

DO NOT enter the U.S. on a B-2 tourist visa or WT (Visa Waiver) if you intend to be a student. While this may seem like a convenient and timesaving solution, you CANNOT register as a student in the B-2 tourist or WT visa waiver categories. To become a student, you must leave the US, obtain a student visa stamp and re-enter the US in the student visa category.

Attention all CANADIANS! Do NOT enter the U.S. as undocumented. You must present your I-20/DS-2019 and have it PROCESSED at an official U.S. Port of Entry and issued an I-94 card (student portion stamped) to be considered in F-1 or J-1 student status. Failure to do so will mean no U.S. Social Security Number, no on-campus employment or assistantship, and no F-1 Practical Training or J-1 Academic Training. Your U.S. Stay would be limited to less than six months. Undocumented Canadians are not allowed to enroll for study.



AIRPORTS

Baton Rouge Metropolitan Airport (travel agent code BTR) has connections from many major cities in the United States. Some airline services to Baton Rouge use small air crafts (20 passenger planes). If you are reluctant to fly on a small plane, ask at the time you make a reservation to be sure that there is turbo jet service all the way into Baton Rouge.

New Orleans International Airport (MSY) is approximately 85 miles from LSU. An alternative is to fly into New Orleans and travel by motor bus to Baton Rouge. Please note: Arrival services listed on the following page DO NOT apply to the New Orleans airport.



BUSES

The Greyhound/Trailways bus departs from the New Orleans airport for Baton Rouge a number of times each day, with the last bus departing the airport around 4:00 p.m. Travel time is approximately 1-1/2 hours and the one-way fare is around \$20. Greyhound advises its customers to be at the bus stop/terminal approximately one hour prior to the designated departure time. Depending on your arrival time and the remaining departure times and availability for the buses to Baton Rouge, you may need to be prepared to stay in the city of New Orleans overnight to schedule a bus departure the next day. For more information, visit their web site at: www.greyhound.com

TRAVEL TIPS

Safety is of utmost concern in U.S. airports and bus stations. Please be aware of the following:

- ☒ Allow plenty of time for airport check-in. (Possibly 2-4 hours)
- ☒ Upon arrival in the United States, the process through U.S. border customs may be lengthy. Take that into consideration when scheduling your connecting flights. (Possibly 2-4 hours)
- ☒ Keep your personal belongings, especially your carryon items, with you at all times, and do not trust them with anyone.
- ☒ Do not pack your passport, I-20/DS-2019, admission letter, I-901 SEVIS fee payment receipt (if applicable) or any other related documents in your luggage. You will need to present these items at the U.S. Port of Entry and it is important to have them handy at all times.
- ☒ If you must hire a taxi at any time (see Arrival Services for Baton Rouge transportation), be sure to take one that has the company sign on the vehicle. You should be charged only the fees shown on the meter (there may be an additional fee after midnight).
- ☒ Taxi drivers are usually paid a gratuity of 15 percent. An airport or hotel porter usually receives \$2 per suitcase/bag. You do not have to tip anyone if you provide your own service.



For more information, visit the International Cultural Center' web site at: www.lsu.edu/icc Click on the section titled "JOURNEY TO LSU" which will provide you with more comprehensive information about preparing for travel and the actual journey.

ARRIVAL SERVICES/TEMPORARY HOUSING

Traditionally, LSU international student associations assist new arriving students from their countries/areas of the world with transportation from the Baton Rouge airport or bus station to the campus. This assistance is free of charge, available 24 hours a day, and is coordinated by the International Cultural Center (ICC).

You can look for student associations from your country at the ICC web site by clicking on the word "Associations" Of course, even if your country isn't listed, you can still take advantage of their arrival services. This will give you an opportunity to make some connections with other international students on campus before you even arrive!

You may also contact the ICC for assistance with temporary housing. Rooms in an on-campus residence hall may or may not be available. The ICC itself offers very limited temporary housing. Neither of these facilities can accommodate families or friends. An on-campus hotel is available with guest rooms and suites that are available to anyone.

All of these facilities offer temporary housing only. The ICC will also assist you with permanent housing arrangements, which should be secured by the first week of class. If you are in need of arrival services and/or temporary housing, please contact the ICC with the following information: your name, arrival date, time, airline, flight number, as well as what country you are from. Should your arrival plans change or you miss a connecting flight, contact the ICC immediately with the new arrival information.



International Cultural Center (ICC)
3365 Dalrymple Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70803

ICC Telephone: 225 342-3084
ICC Fax: 225 342-0864
www.lsu.edu/icc
icc@lsu.edu



HEALTH INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

It is mandatory that all non-immigrant students on F and J visas have health insurance which meets LSU and US Department of State requirements. Students will be automatically charged for LSU's health insurance policy upon registration for classes.



Students who wish to utilize their own private health insurance plans while in the US and avoid the automatic LSU health insurance policy charge must have their insurance company fill out and sign the Insurance Coverage Evaluation form. Private insurance coverage must meet all of the University requirements listed on this form in order to avoid the automatic LSU Health Insurance charge. The form must be filled out and turned in each and every semester of registration at LSU for the request of a waiver of the charge.

To download the Insurance Coverage Evaluation form and for more information about LSU's health insurance requirements for the University policy, visit the "Insurance" section under "Current Students" of the ISO web site: www.lsu.edu/iso

CAMPUS DINING

LSU Dining offers several flexible dining options through the purchase of dining contracts in University dining facilities. No deposit is required. Students living on or off campus are eligible to participate in these meal plans.



A freshman living in a residence hall is required to purchase a meal plan for the first semester only. If you do not wish to purchase a meal plan, you can still use the dining facilities and pay for each meal individually.

For information concerning all aspects of dining plans and meals, contact:

LSU Dining
 E-mail: dsheidke@lsu.edu
 Telephone: 225 578-6642
 E-mail: dining@lsu.edu
 Fax: 225 578-0834
www.lsu.edu/dining

PERMANENT HOUSING

ON-CAMPUS HOUSING

On-campus housing includes residence halls and one, two, and three bedroom apartments. You may apply for housing before being admitted to the University; a \$5 non-refundable processing fee, \$50 non-refundable application fee and \$100 refundable deposit (Total = \$155) is required with applications to the residence halls or East Campus Apartments and a \$150 deposit is required for Edward Gay or Nicholson Apartments. Space is limited, so apply as early as possible. Housing assignments are decided on a first-come, first-serve basis. Therefore the earlier you apply, the better your chances of getting the housing selection you desire. Once your housing application has been processed, should you decide not to live in your residence hall assignment for any reason, the following cancellation deadlines apply:

Fall Semester (August – December) July 1
Spring Semester (January – May) December 1
Summer Term (June – August) May 1



After these dates, a \$150 fee will be charged and any balance will be refunded to you. For more complete information about on-campus housing, including application procedures, change of plans/cancellation of application, rates, and residence hall and apartment specifications/floor plans, contact the Department of Residential Life:

Department of Residential Life
 99 Grace King Hall
 Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803
 Telephone: 225 578-8663
 Fax: 225 578-5576
www.lsu.edu/housing
 E-mail: reslife@lsu.edu

OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING

If on-campus housing is not available or you would rather live off-campus, there are many apartments in Baton Rouge. However, be sure to locate an apartment near campus and near the bus route to and from LSU if you do not plan on purchasing a car. The ICC has a list of convenient locations on its web site under the section "Temporary Housing: Off-Campus Housing". Below is a list of typical ranges of rental costs (per month):

<u>One-bedroom apartments</u>		<u>Two-bedroom apartments</u>	
Furnished	\$625 - 950	Furnished	\$750 - 1200
Unfurnished	\$550 - 850	Unfurnished	\$650 - 900

Deposits for rent and utilities and temporary housing expenses while apartment hunting are not included in above estimates.

To reduce monthly living expenses, many of our international students live with roommates. The ICC also has a roommate search on its web site, under the section "Roommate Search." You can either answer advertisements that are currently posted or post one of your own.



Plan to arrive at LSU a few days prior to New International Student Orientation. It is important that you use this time to recover from travel fatigue, secure housing, get settled into life in a new environment and cultural setting, as well as become familiar with the University and Baton Rouge. At New International Student Orientation you will learn vital information about University requirements, resources and advising, registering for courses, fees, employment, insurance, U.S. government and ISO requirements, and English placement tests. For this reason, attendance at orientation is MANDATORY. A detailed letter regarding the orientation date, time, and location is sent with your admission letter and I-20/DS-2019 and also can be found at the ISO website www.lsu.edu/iso.

IMMUNIZATION COMPLIANCE

Completion of a “Immunization Compliance” form is required for all new students and reentering students who have been out of school for one or more semesters. A form should be included in this packet, but if not, you may obtain a form from the Student Health Center web site at: [http://appl003.lsu.edu/slas/shc.nsf/\\$Content/Immunization+Requirement?OpenDocument](http://appl003.lsu.edu/slas/shc.nsf/$Content/Immunization+Requirement?OpenDocument)

If you have questions concerning the immunization requirements or the form contact: immunization@lsu.edu or studenthealth@lsu.edu

Before you return the completed form to the Student Health Center at the address on the form, make a copy of it for your own records to bring with you when you come to LSU. If you do not complete the form meeting all requirements, and return this form to the LSU Student Health Center, you WILL NOT be allowed to register for courses which will negatively affect your immigration status in the U.S.

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS: PLACEMENT EXAMS

FRESHMAN AND TRANSFER UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

All non-native English speakers are required to take placement tests in English prior to registration. Freshmen are also required to take a mathematics placement test. Students who have submitted test scores on the SAT or ACT or plan to take the LSU residual SAT or ACT may be placed in the appropriate English courses based on the results from the verbal or English section of either test. Also, advanced placement exams are available in most major subject areas.

GRADUATE STUDENTS

All non-native English speakers are required to take placement tests in English prior to registration. Native English speakers from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and certain Caribbean countries are exempt from this exam. Any English courses required as a result of this exam will not be counted for credit toward a graduate degree. All international graduate students who have any kind of assistantship must schedule an oral proficiency interview. Students offered graduate assistantships should sign up for the exam at the New Student Orientation or plan to visit the Spoken English Office (4 Allen Hall) as soon as possible after arrival.

“Freshmen” or “Transfer” is a student who is studying at the Bachelor’ degree level for the first time or who has earned academic credits at another University level institution, respectively.

A “Graduate” is a student who is studying for a Certificate, Master’s or a Doctoral Degree.

IMMIGRATION TRANSFER

International students already attending another U.S. institution are required to undergo the F-1/J-1 immigration transfer process. This process is not related to your academic transfer, and applies to all students, including those currently enrolled in an English language program, high school or a community college in the United States.

Please follow the instructions listed on the USCIS TRANSFER FORM, which should be included with the admission packet. If you are a transfer student and did not receive a transfer form, please contact our office as soon as possible so we may mail, e-mail or fax one to you (isodoc@lsu.edu).

Once your form is received and your SEVIS immigration record is released/transferred to LSU Baton Rouge by your previous school, we will issue your LSU I-20.

Money

International students are responsible for having sufficient funds available for their expenses during the entire time they are studying in the U.S. It is extremely important that you become familiar with your government's regulations for obtaining foreign exchange. Difficulties and delays often occur in the transfer of funds from overseas to the U.S., taking several weeks or months. Make arrangements far in advance to bring enough money to cover your expenses for the full year.



Estimated Costs

Tuition and fees for each semester are payable on strict deadlines. Your money must be available when payment is due. Money must also be available for start-up costs such as apartment and utilities deposits, books, supplies, food, and household goods for your first weeks in the United States.

Check your I-20/DS-2019 for cost estimates. Using this as a guide, plan to bring resources for tuition, fees and mandatory fees plus \$1,500 with you. Keep in mind the costs estimated are the MINIMUM amount a student may spend. In reality, these amounts will vary.

Do not carry large amounts of cash. Instead, bring your money in Traveler' Checks for immediate use or in nonnegotiable drafts. A small amount of cash will be necessary for travel expenses; a suggested amount is \$300 in small bills and coins.

Once you arrive, you should open a checking or savings account at LSU or with a private bank. You may need a checking account to pay bills such as rent and utilities. Sending cash through the mail is not safe.



LAGNIAPPE (A Little Extra You Should Know)



Weather/Clothing

The winter season in southern Louisiana is relatively mild and of short duration, with only a few very cold days. The summer is hot and humid. Rain is a consistent part of our weather, so an umbrella will always come in handy. Dress on the LSU campus is casual. Students wear blue jeans, T-shirts, and sneakers. Shorts are appropriate for most of the year. You may want to bring some dress-up clothes for special occasions, and an outfit of your national dress is fun to have for some cultural events, particularly International functions.

Books/Supplies

Students generally wait to purchase books and supplies until after registering for classes. Books and supplies are available through several bookstores on or near campus. Used books are often in good condition and less expensive than new ones. A good dictionary in English and/or in your language is useful to bring with you.

Medical Needs

If you take prescription medications, have your doctor give you a copy of the prescription to bring with you. If you wear glasses, bring a second pair. If you have any specific medical conditions, your doctor should send a copy of your medical records with you for use in the United States.

Mail

Until you have an address in Baton Rouge, you may have email and small packages sent to you in care of (c/o) ISO:

Your Name
 c/o LSU - International Services Office
 101 Hatcher Hall
 Baton Rouge, LA 70803



We will hold your letters and small packages until you arrive and can rent a post office box on campus or establish an off-campus address. This service is only offered for the first 30 days a new student is on campus. If you do not change your address or make other arrangements, mail received after 30 days will be returned to the sender.

Disability Services

If you have a disability that might require special accommodations on the part of the University, please contact:

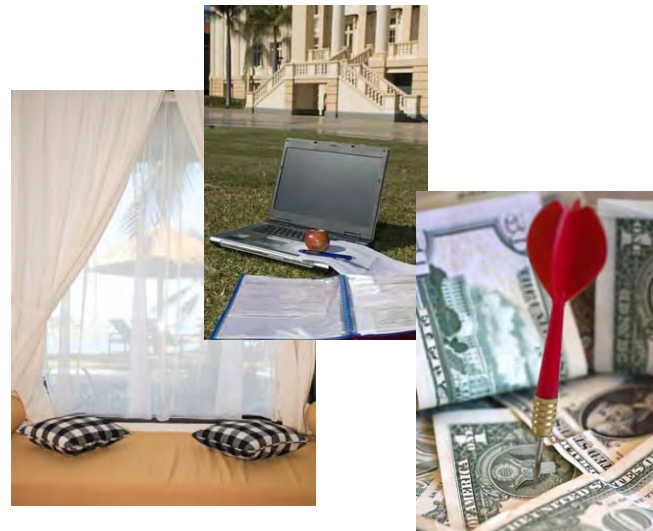
Office of Disability Services
 111A Johnston Hall
 Baton Rouge, LA 70803
 Telephone: 225 578-5919
 TDD: 225 578-2600
 Fax: 225 578-4560
www.lsu.edu/disability



The Loan Closet

The Loan Closet sponsored by IHF (International Hospitality Foundation) is a low-cost resource of household items for international students. You will pay a one-time \$2 registration fee. Both new and used items such as cookware, dishes, pillows, clocks, irons, clothes hangers, and much more are available. The Loan Closet, open Thursday afternoons from 1p.m. until 4 p.m. when classes are in session, is located in the Parker Coliseum, room 133. For more information, call the IHF office at 225 578-3015, the Loan Closet at 225 578-8307, or email: ihf@lsu.edu

Once you arrive on campus, it would be worthwhile to visit the Loan Closet before you begin shopping for household items.



CONGRADULATIONS!



Academic Calendar

The LSU academic schedule operates on the semester system. There are short intersessions available during each of these terms. The semesters begin and end as follows:

- Fall mid-August to mid-December**
- Spring mid-January to mid-May**
- Summer early June to early August**

Full-time enrollment is mandatory for the fall and spring semesters only (9 credit hours for graduate students, 12 credit hours for undergraduate students). Summer enrollment is optional, unless the summer term is your first enrollment at LSU and in the US, which means you **MUST** enroll full-time (6 credit hours for both graduate and undergraduate students). Any subsequent summer enrollment would not be required by Immigration regulations.

Holidays

During the LSU holidays and semester breaks, most campus residence halls are closed. Students planning to live in residence halls should plan their finances to cover living costs during these periods. Typical holiday and semester breaks are:

Christmas (December and January)	30 days
Intersession (May)	15 days
Summer-Fall Break (August)	20 days

Assistance in making plans for holidays, especially during Christmas holiday season, is provided by the International Hospitality Foundation (IHF). For more information, please contact them at: 225 578-3015 or ihf@lsu.edu

ARE YOU READY TO TRAVEL?

The checklist below will help you to determine whether you have completed all of the necessary preparations and are ready for a new and exciting experience in the United States and LSU.

- Passport and visa stamp received; original I-20/DS-2019 placed with passport; copy of I-901 SEVIS fee payment receipt, if applicable, on hand.
- Travel arrangements made and the ICC notified if arrival services and/or temporary housing assistance is desired.
- Application for LSU on-campus housing sent (if desired).
- Transfer form, completed by you and your current U.S. institution, sent to the ISO (if applicable).
- Required immunization form sent to the LSU Student Health Center and a copy placed with your important papers.
- Financial arrangements with sponsor, governmental agency, bank, etc. finalized for payment of University fees and living expenses for one year.
- \$300 in cash (small bills and coins) in U.S. currency purchased. Approximately \$1500 in travelers checks / negotiable drafts for immediate expenses / incidentals.
- Address, telephone number, and e-mail address of the International Services Office given to family and friends.

You must present your original (no photocopies) I-20/DS-2019 at the U.S. Port of Entry.

Keep this with your passport and a copy of your I-901 SEVIS fee payment receipt, if applicable on hand during you travel.

Have a safe trip, we look forward to meeting you and again,



You have made an excellent educational choice!

LSU is an equal opportunity/access university