WELCOME

We are pleased to welcome you to Stony Brook University. We are looking forward to your active participation in the academic and social life of the University. This booklet will assist you in making preparations for your trip to the United States, and serve as an easy reference guide once you have arrived.

Please read this essential information carefully. If you have any questions about preparing for arrival or arriving in the United States, please contact us. You will find our contact information under “Quick Reference.”

Stony Brook University
Stony Brook University was established in 1957. In 1962, the campus moved to its present 1,000-acre wooded location on the north shore of Long Island, 60 miles east of New York City. The University has grown to an enrollment of more than 22,527 students. The distinguished international faculty of over 1,900 members attracts more than $150 million in external research support. The Wall Street Journal ranked Stony Brook eighth among public universities, based on students advancing to elite graduate programs.

There are many features that distinguish Stony Brook as a world-class university, including our international student body. Our campus community is diverse, representing over 100 different countries. We are looking forward to having you join us as an active participant in the many academic, social and cultural activities offered on campus.

International Services
International Services provides advice and assistance to undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and visiting scholars on matters related to studying and living in the United States. These matters include immigration, employment, taxes, financial management, and a wide variety of cross-cultural issues. We provide informational and social programs for new and continuing international students on a regular basis.

Our International Services staff members have lived, worked and studied in many different countries, including Australia, Barbados, Benin, El Salvador, France, Germany, Jamaica, Nigeria, Russia, Spain, United Kingdom and US Virgin Islands, and have many years of experience in international education.

Each year we look forward to welcoming new students to Stony Brook and are eager to help you adjust to American culture.

International Service staff members are familiar with questions and concerns of international students and the US system of education, and are available to help you prior to arrival and throughout your stay at Stony Brook University. Our orientation program is designed to help familiarize you with aspects of US education and culture and provide you with specific information about study at Stony Brook University. We will also inform you of US immigration regulations that you will need to know for maintaining your immigration status. Orientation allows time to get to know your International Student Advisers, make new friends and overcome jet-lag before school starts.

Federal immigration regulations require that the University maintain accurate information regarding F-1 and J-1 students studying at Stony Brook. All new F-1 and J-1 students meet with an International Student Adviser for “check-in” within 30 days of arrival in the US, and will meet again several times throughout their stay, as the International Services office reports required information to the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System.

SEVIS
The Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) is a real-time, federal immigration database. It serves, in part, as a tracking system for all F-1, F-2, J-1 and J-2 non-immigrants. All Forms I-20 and Forms DS-2019 are created in SEVIS. Immigration and Customs Enforcement maintains electronic records during each student’s stay in the US, and this information is stored in SEVIS.

Information from this database is shared with embassies, consulates, ports of entry, US Department of Education and other government agencies.

Events such as class registration, changes of address, changes of financial support and other actions must be reported to International Services in a timely manner so that we may update SEVIS and your immigration status is maintained. Failure to comply with reporting requirements can result in the termination of a student’s program in SEVIS.

Orientation is our first and most intensive opportunity to make you aware of the reporting requirements. Your ability to maintain your immigration status depends primarily on your awareness and understanding of F-1 and J-1 regulations.

PLANNING FOR ARRIVAL

See “Housing” (p. 17) for important information about reserving on-campus housing well in advance of your arrival.

We recommend that you visit http://educationusa.state.gov/ for the US Department of State’s pre-departure information.

Transportation to the United States
Prior to purchasing airline tickets, it is wise to shop for the most economical airfare. Costs vary significantly depending on airline and
travel date and other restrictions. **However, do not purchase non-refundable airline tickets until the visa has been stamped into your passport.**

An **International Student Identification Card**, available through STA Travel allows students to purchase reduced-price air, bus and train tickets. It also gives them discounts on accommodations in major world cities and discounts for certain services and shopping. The card automatically carries a travelers’ health and accident insurance policy for time spent en route to a destination. Please visit [http://www.isic.org](http://www.isic.org) for further information.

**IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS**

**Passport**

Every international student must obtain a passport from his/her government for permission to travel abroad and re-enter their home country. Passports must be kept valid at all times while in the US. Upon entry into the US, passports are required to be valid for at least six months into the future.

Although previously exempt from the passport requirement, Canadian students are now required to use a passport to enter the United States.

**Form I-20: Certificate of Eligibility for Non-immigrant (F-1) Student Status**

Upon admission to a specific program of study, most international students are issued a Form I-20. Its formal title is, “Certificate of Eligibility for Non-immigrant (F-1) Student Status”. Proof of financial support, English language proficiency and other eligibility requirements must be met before a Form I-20 is issued.

The start date listed on your Stony Brook Form I-20 represents the first day of classes; however, you are required to arrive in time to participate in the mandatory International Student Orientation program. The orientation dates are noted in the letter enclosed with your Form DS-2019.

**Form DS-2019: Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status**

Exchange students and students funded by the US government, home country government or other sponsoring agencies are issued a Form DS-2019. Its formal title is, “Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status”. The Form DS-2019 is issued by a sponsoring program when a prospective student is admitted to a program of study, has documented English proficiency, demonstrated adequate financial support and met other eligibility requirements for J-1 status in the US.

The start date listed on your Form DS-2019 is the first day of International Student Orientation, one to two weeks before the first day of classes. You are required to arrive in time to participate in the mandatory International Student Orientation program. The orientation dates are noted in the letter enclosed with your Form DS-2019.

**VISA PROCESSING AT US CONSULATES AND EMBASSIES**

When you receive your Form I-20 or DS-2019, you need to review it very carefully to confirm that the biographical information matches your passport exactly. US consulates or embassies will not accept even one typographical error. Your names should be spelled exactly as they are spelled in your passport.

Your date of birth should be in month/day/year format, and all other information must be correct.

If there are any mistakes, please contact our office immediately; e-mail: internationalservices@notes.cc.sunysb.edu. Write “I-20 correction” and your full name on the subject line. In the message, clearly indicate the incorrect information and carefully spell out the corrected information. If you have a general question about your form, use the same e-mail address.

After confirming that your Certificate of Eligibility has no errors, you need to apply for a F-1 student or J-1 Exchange Visitor visa stamp at a US consulate or embassy.

Before reporting to the consulate or embassy, you need to make an appointment and, in most cases, pay a $100 USD SEVIS fee. Forms and complete instructions regarding payment are available at: [http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/index.htm](http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/index.htm)

- The SEVIS fee is separate and in addition to other visa application fees
- J-1 students sponsored by US government sponsored “G-1” programs, such as Fulbright, should follow their sponsors’ instructions regarding preparation for the visa application. “G-1” sponsored students do not pay a SEVIS fee.
- Students applying for F-1 and most J-1 visas are required to pay the $100 fee. This fee can be paid online by completing Form I-901 and using a credit card. When paying online, be sure to print a receipt to take with you to the visa interview. It is important that online fee-payers pay the fee at least three business days before their visa appointment.
- It is also possible to pay by check or via Western Union Quick Pay. Follow instructions on the webpage above; a receipt will be mailed to you. You need this receipt before reporting to the consulate to apply for the visa.
- F-2 and J-2 dependent family members are not required to pay SEVIS fees.
To make your consular appointment, check instructions for the US embassy or consulate nearest you: http://usembassy.state.gov/
Once you have received the Form I-20 or DS-2019 and everything is correct, pay the SEVIS fee (if applicable) and apply for your consular appointment right away. HOWEVER, only use the Stony Brook form if you truly intend to attend Stony Brook, as you are not allowed to use this paperwork to enter the US to attend a different school. Likewise, do not use another school’s Form I-20 or DS-2019 if you intend to attend Stony Brook University. You will be expected to register for at least one full semester at Stony Brook University if you enter the US using Stony Brook’s Form I-20 or DS-2019.

The US Department of State website, http://travel.state.gov has an excellent summary of information about applying for F-1 and J-1 visas.

At the visa interview, a consular officer will examine:

· Form DS-156, Non-immigrant Visa Application.
· Men aged 16-45 years old must also complete Form DS-157, Supplemental Visa Application
· Your Form I-20 or DS-2019
· The letter offering you admission to one of Stony Brook’s academic programs,
· Original documents demonstrating that you will have financial resources to study and live in the US until you complete your studies, and
· Proof of proficiency in the English language.
· Check the website for the US consulate where you intend to apply for your visa to see if that post requires additional documentation or has issued special instructions for F-1 or J-1 visa application.

Everyone applying for a F-1, F-2, J-1 or J-2 visa is required to document “bona fide non-immigrant intent” by demonstrating binding ties to his or her home country. Consular officers are likely to ask questions pertaining to this. You will find more information about non-immigrant intent on the US Department of State website listed above.

When you receive your visa stamp, please check it at the consulate. If you notice a mistake, it is much easier to return it to the visa section immediately for correction, if you are still there.

Visa Delay or Denial
Some students may encounter delays in visa issuance due to security clearance checks. This is routine for applicants from designated countries and for students studying in certain technological fields. Consult consular websites for information about applying for a student (F-1) or Exchange Visitor (J-1) visa and regarding any additional documentation you could provide to facilitate the security checks and visa processing. The consular officer who conducts the interview should inform you if there will be a delay. Note that a security clearance delay is NOT denial of the F-1 or J-1 visa.

If you encounter difficulty in obtaining a visa, e-mail International Services at Stony Brook as soon as possible: internationalservices@notes.cc.sunysb.edu Write “Visa problem” and your full name in the subject line. In your message, include the location of the consular post, date of the consular interview and reason for the visa denial or delay so that we can follow-up appropriately.

Very few Stony Brook students are denied visas and our advisers are prepared to help you through the process if you encounter problems.

OTHER IMPORTANT ISSUES
Students intending to enroll in a college or university should not enter the US with a “visitor for pleasure or business” visa (B-1/B-2) unless it has been clearly designated “Prospective Student” by a consular officer. Students entering the US on B-1/B-2 visas cannot begin studies until US Citizenship and Immigration Service has approved a change of status to F-1 or J-1, a process that may take several months.

Likewise, do not enter the US under the Visa Waiver pilot program, in “WT” or “WB” status, as you will not be allowed to study. Individuals entering the US with a visa waiver are not eligible to apply for a change of immigration status while remaining in the US.

TRANSFERRING TO STONY BROOK FROM ANOTHER US SCHOOL

**F-1 students** transferring from another school, college or university in the US must obtain and complete a Transfer Report form from Stony Brook.

To begin the transfer procedure, a student should notify the International Student Adviser, typically a “Designated School Official” (DSO) at the last school attended that he or she intends to transfer to Stony Brook. The DSO at the old school should complete the Transfer Report form, indicating the date the SEVIS record will be released to Stony Brook University. Form I-20 for transfer to Stony Brook can be prepared by the DSO at Stony Brook only after the SEVIS record has been released, admission and English proficiency verified, and original financial documentation is deemed adequate.
Undergraduate students should return the Transfer Report form to the Undergraduate Admissions Office at Stony Brook.

Graduate students should return the Transfer Report form to their prospective departmental office.

**The transfer procedure is completed by personally reporting to an International Student Adviser at Stony Brook within 15 days of the beginning of classes. Failure to complete the transfer procedure in a timely manner will result in violation of status.**

Any student already in violation of status should apply for reinstatement with the school in which they were previously enrolled, as soon as possible. Consult with an International Student Adviser for assistance.

**J-1 students**

transferring from another school, college or university need to contact International Services to initiate the transfer procedure. The electronic transfer process conducted through SEVIS requires that the two J-1 programs coordinate their efforts. When the transfer is completed, a Stony Brook SEVIS Form DS-2019 will be issued. “Request for SEVIS Form DS-2019 for New Student” is also used for transfer students, and is available on the International Services website.

**STUDENTS WITH DEPENDENTS**

Students intending to have their spouses and/or children live with them in the US should plan accordingly. Students are encouraged to bring their families only after appropriate family housing accommodations are confirmed. The University cannot guarantee housing for married students, and low-cost housing can be difficult to find on Long Island.

Dependent family members (spouse and children under 21 years old) joining students in the US each need their own Certificate of Eligibility from Stony Brook University or the sponsoring agency. Forms I-20 for F-2 dependents and Forms DS-2019 for J-2 dependents are issued based on proof of sufficient funds available in addition to the amount required for the duration of the student’s entire course of study.

Currently, a spouse needs to have at least $6,500 per year in financial support, and each dependent child needs $3,630 per year. ( Agencies sponsoring J-1 students may have their own guidelines for amounts of support required for dependents.)

The dependents’ Certificates of Eligibility may be issued when the student’s initial Form I-20 of DS-2019 is prepared, or after the student has entered the US and started the program of study. Each dependent needs to secure appropriate F-2 or J-2 visa stamps in their passports before entering the US.

Note that F-2 spouses of F-1 students are not allowed to work in the US and are prohibited from “vocational” or matriculated study. F-1 children may study full-time up to the university level, and at that time they must change to F-1 status to continue their studies. F-2 dependents may be eligible to change to independent work or study immigration status while remaining in the US, but must await the approved change of status before beginning employment or study.

J-2 spouses and children of J-1 students may apply to US Citizenship and Immigration Service for permission to accept employment after arrival in the US. Current immigration regulations allow spouses and children in J-2 status to study. Note that many J-1 and J-2 Exchange Visitors may be unable to change their immigration status while remaining in the US if they are subject to provisions of the “two-year home country residency” rule.

Unmarried domestic partners are not eligible for F-2 or J-2 status under immigration regulations.

**PURCHASING US DOLLARS**

Many foreign governments place limits on the amount of their currency that can be exchanged for US dollars (USD), or the amount of funds that can be brought out of the country.

Some governments require documents from the university certifying acceptance, dates of enrollment and expense estimates before releasing or exchanging funds to US dollars. To address these requirements, students should present their Certificate of Eligibility Form I-20 or Form DS-2019 and letter of acceptance to the appropriate officials.

It is the student’s responsibility to assure monetary transfer permission in advance. Please read sections about “Carrying Money” and “Payment of Tuition, Fees and Other Charges.”

**Budgeting**

At times during the academic year, such as at the beginning of each semester, larger amounts of readily-available funds may be required. Careful financial planning is required if your funds will be arriving occasionally from overseas.

Personal expenses are conservatively estimated to average $1,000 per month for food, housing and miscellaneous items. Students expecting personal expenses to be covered by university stipends are cautioned that it may be several weeks before receiving their first stipend check. Plan to bring enough money with you to easily cover living expenses for the first two months of the first semester.
Note that our estimate of expenses is the minimum required to live on Long Island with careful budgeting. Students planning to live off campus, eat out in restaurants, purchase a car or enjoy off-campus entertainment will require additional funds.

**WHAT TO BRING**

It is important that your most valuable items be packed in the luggage you will carry on the plane and keep closest to you. Cash, credit cards and traveler’s checks should probably be packed in a discreet money belt. The carry-on and/or purse should contain:

- Airline tickets for your flight(s) to New York
- Any prescription medications that you need to bring, with the written prescriptions from your doctor
- Your passport, valid at least six months into the future, with a valid visa stamp (only Canadian citizens will not need a visa stamp)
- Form I-20 or DS-2019
- You may also be asked to present Stony Brook’s admission letter and proof of financial support
- One complete change of clothing and toiletries, in the event that your checked luggage is delayed
- Your driver’s license and a translation, or “international driver’s license”, if you intend to drive
- A campus map, available at [http://www.stonybrook.edu/sb/map/](http://www.stonybrook.edu/sb/map/)

Students may wish to bring items from home, such as photographs, crafts, art and music to decorate their new residence and to share aspects of home country culture with new friends.

Basic furniture is provided in campus residence halls, but plan to buy a lamp (*no halogen lamps are allowed in the dorms*), light bulbs, clock/radio, bulletin board, pillows, bed linens, and towels. Warm blankets or a “comforter” will be necessary for our cold winter nights.

Current students recommend bringing a sheet, towel, and a few toiletries to use until you have a chance to go shopping. Some students also recommend bringing a few basic cooking implements, particularly if these items are much cheaper in your home country.

International student clubs have posted some useful information on their websites specific to students traveling from their countries.

While the following items may be purchased locally, we recommend bringing at least some of them to begin your stay. Just remember, if you pack it, you’re going to have to carry it around at least two airports!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clothing</th>
<th>Medicine and Toiletries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 pair of walking shoes</td>
<td>Prescription medicines*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 alternate pair of shoes</td>
<td>Eyeglasses/sunglasses or contact lenses and supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pair flip-flops or shower shoes</td>
<td>Toothbrush and toothpaste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 pairs of socks</td>
<td>Soap and shampoo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 pairs of underwear</td>
<td>Comb/brush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 pairs of shorts</td>
<td>Moisturizers and cosmetics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-4 skirts and/or trousers</td>
<td>Deodorant or antiperspirant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-4 shirts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-4 sweaters and/or sweatshirts</td>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raincoat/poncho</td>
<td>Camera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathing suit</td>
<td>Small, paperback dictionary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy winter jacket</td>
<td>Address book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter hat</td>
<td>Umbrella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair of gloves or mittens</td>
<td>Backpack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scarf</td>
<td>Towel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair of waterproof boots or overshoes</td>
<td>Sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lightweight jacket</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sleepwear</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*You may be unable to get prescriptions written by your home doctor filled in the US. Typically, you will need to be examined by a physician in the US and issued a new prescription. If you have a chronic medical condition requiring regular medication, please contact Student Health Services **before arrival** to make arrangements.*

**Shopping for Supplies**

We plan a shopping trip during the International Student Orientation for those who will need to make a few purchases shortly after arrival.

Throughout the year, there is local bus service from campus to several shopping centers and grocery stores to accommodate purchase of food and personal supplies such as toiletries, bedding and bicycles.

Be careful to budget your spending, especially in the first few weeks of school. Resist buying luxury items on impulse; the same items will be available later, when you have a better idea of how much discretionary spending you can afford.
Books
Standard references in your native language may be helpful to get started. Excellent library resources provide students with ample opportunity to obtain supplemental reading materials and basic texts needed for review and research.

Students are expected to purchase textbooks required for the courses in which they enroll; the texts are available through the campus bookstore. Students may be able to save money by purchasing used textbooks through the bookstore or online. Be careful that used textbooks are the required edition of the text for your course.

We do not recommend bringing textbooks used in previous study, unless they are specifically needed for transfer credit evaluation. Transfer students applying to receive advanced credit for courses taken elsewhere must provide an official course description for each course for which Stony Brook University credit is sought. Names of textbooks may also be needed. Undergraduate students should contact Undergraduate Admissions for specific requirements for transfer credit.

Climate and Clothing
Individual tolerances for heat and cold vary considerably, so the following are merely guidelines. Students from tropical climates may consider warm sweaters to be essential, even in summer, as most public buildings are air conditioned from May through September.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Temperature</th>
<th>Clothing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>50 to 90F= 10 to 32C</td>
<td>Wear light clothing for hot days and light jackets for cool nights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(June – September)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>20 to 80F=-7 to 27C</td>
<td>Layer clothing on chilly autumn days; raincoats or medium-weight coats or ski jackets are worn outdoors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(September– December)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter</td>
<td>0 to 45F= -18 to 7C</td>
<td>In winter, heavy jackets/coats, warm hats, scarves, gloves, and waterproof snow boots are necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(December – March)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>40 to 72F=4 to 22C</td>
<td>Like Fall, layer clothing. Spring can be rainy and cool, warming on sunny afternoons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(March – June)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Carrying Money
We recommend that you arrive with enough US currency to pay for transportation to campus and for expenses during your first few weeks here. Do not carry large amounts of cash or other valuables, due to the risk of loss or theft.

Any cash and valuables you bring should be in your carry-on baggage or a money belt, not in baggage to be checked.

If home country regulations permit, students should bring at least $1,000 USD in traveler’s checks for the first few weeks of school, in addition to the funds required for tuition, fees and books. If you plan on living off-campus, you will need significantly more. See “Off-campus Housing.”

**Students bringing large sums of money to the US should seek advice from a bank official regarding the safest and most convenient way to carry or transfer that money.** Most major banks in the US have established connections with foreign banks, so transferring funds requires only a draft from the home bank be presented to the US bank with personal identification, resulting in immediate credit in US dollars.

Transfer of funds should be in US dollars because foreign currency exchange may not available locally, and the University and local businesses accept only checks or drafts in US dollars.

Credit cards, ATM cards, traveler’s checks and US bank drafts are also good options for gaining access to personal funds safely. Traveler’s checks may be purchased at banks or travel offices either in the home country or in the US. They are typically available in denominations of $20, $50, $100, $500 or $1,000. Smaller denominations are preferable, as small checks ($20 or $50) are easier to cash. Students should carry at least $100 USD in cash when traveling; the largest denomination should be a $20 bill.

US paper currency is issued in $1, $5, $10, $20, $50 and $100 bills; larger denominations are issued, but rarely circulated. Many shops prefer bills $20 or less when making purchases. Coins are 1 cent/penny, 5 cents/nickel, 10 cents/dime, 25 cents/quarter, 50 cents/half dollar, and 100 cents/dollar or $1. The half-dollar and dollar coins are seldom used and can be mistaken for quarters; however they are heavier and slightly larger than quarters.

ARRIVAL IN THE UNITED STATES

Preparing for Arrival Inspection
Form I-94, also known as the Arrival/Departure Record, is a long white card issued to passengers before the plane arrives at the point of entry. Students complete the top and bottom sections of the form and a separate customs declaration form. If you are bringing $10,000 USD or the foreign equivalent into or out of the US, you are required to declare the amount on the customs form.

Upon arrival in the US, each person will pass through passport control (immigration inspection), and then customs inspection. US Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) officers take their duties very seriously and we recommend that you remain patient and polite during this time. Making jokes while going through this process is strongly discouraged.

**Passport Control**

During the passport control phase of inspection, every student entering the US is required to present:

- A passport valid at least six months into the future, with
- A valid visa stamp (only Canadians citizens will not need a visa stamp)
- Form I-20 or DS-2019
- Completed Form I-94 and
- You may also be asked to present Stony Brook’s admission letter and proof of financial support.

A Border Patrol Officer may ask some questions about your purposes for traveling to the US. Some examples include, but are not limited to: “What is your final destination?”, “Where will you be studying?”, or “How long do you plan to be in the United States?”

At passport control, students will give the Form I-94 to a CBP Officer. The officer will make necessary notations and return a portion of the form, the I-94 card, often stapling it to the passport.

The I-94 card records the date of admission into the US, and the assigned immigration status. Form I-94 is the document that specifically assigns J-1 or F-1 immigration status while students are in the US. The length of stay for F-1 and J-1 students should be recorded as “D/S”, which means, “duration of status”.

Any J-1 or F-1 student who receives a date-specific expiration date on the I-94 card should contact International Services as soon as possible after arriving on campus.

Keep your I-94 card safe while you are in the US, as it is a very important document. The I-94 card will be collected by a CBP Officer upon departure from the US, except under specific circumstances when traveling to Canada, Mexico and contiguous territories of the US.

**Customs Clearance**

Once you are granted admission into the US, you need to pick up your checked luggage at baggage claim. Even if your final destination requires travel to another airport, you must claim you luggage so that US Customs inspectors can examine all bags for compliance. Often, working dogs sniff the baggage claim area to help find illegal imports.

You will bring your baggage to the designated area and present the customs form that was distributed by the airline during the flight. The inspector may look through your luggage, asking questions about whether or not you’ve brought any prohibited items or have large amounts of currency ($10,000 USD or more) to declare.

Prohibited items include plants, fruits, meats, other fresh or cured food products, drugs and items for resale. For a more complete listing of prohibited items and further information about Customs inspection, ask for a booklet regarding customs regulations at the US embassy or consulate when you get your visa, or consult the CBP website at [http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/prohibited/permitted_prohibited_items.shtml](http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/prohibited/permitted_prohibited_items.shtml)

Once a CBP Officer collects your customs form, you may re-check your bags if proceeding to a connecting flight, or exit the airport.

**TRANSPORTATION TO STONY BROOK**

**University Airport Pick-Up Service**

Stony Brook University provides new students a limited schedule of bus transportation – FOR THE FALL ORIENTATION ONLY – from John F. Kennedy Airport (JFK) to the University. There is no charge for this service. For details, please see the separate enclosed information or the International Services website. Generally, you will receive an e-mail confirmation of the scheduled airport pick-up after you contact Stony Brook about your arrival plans.

University volunteers, dressed in Stony Brook shirts, will circulate near the exit from the Customs area. **Do not go with any other bus/limo/drivers/claiming to representatives of Stony Brook University. Always ask to see a Stony Brook ID from anyone meeting your flight.** University buses are identifiable by the prominent Stony Brook logo.

We cannot meet every flight, so students who cannot take advantage of Stony Brook’s airport pick-up, or those who miss their scheduled pick-up will need to make their own travel arrangements to the University. **If you miss your scheduled university bus for any reason, proceed to one of the ground transportation alternatives listed below.**

We recommend that you report your anticipated arrival information to International Services even if your itinerary does not appear to coordinate with the scheduled pick-up times.
Sometimes we can add additional buses if we discover that several students are arriving at the same time.

**Limousine Transportation**

“Limousine” or group van service is available from all New York airports to Stony Brook. The prices for shared rides vary, but are currently approximately $54 per person (not including recommended 15% gratuity, or “tip”); students should verify charges when reserving a ride.

Once your arrival time is known, it is advisable to reserve a ride to campus by phone or online at least 24 hours in advance. See the “Quick Reference section (p.25) for some limousine service phone numbers. Ask the driver to take you directly to your campus residence. A copy of the campus map will help the driver find your building on campus. A campus map is available at http://www.stonybrook.edu/sb/map/

Courtesy telephones are available to contact ground transportation services. There may be a long wait for a shared-ride van service if a reservation was not made in advance.

If you reserve transportation before you leave home, factor in time for customs and immigration inspections before you can leave the airport.

Seek advice on ground transportation only from uniformed personnel at the airport’s Ground Transportation desk outside of the restricted customs area. Do not go with unknown people who may be offering transportation outside of the customs area. Do not leave your luggage unattended.

**Individual taxis to campus are very expensive and are not recommended.**

**Railroad Transportation**

From JFK airport, take the AIRTRAIN link from any terminal to Jamaica station for the Long Island Railroad (LIRR). The $5 trip to Jamaica station lasts approximately 20 minutes.

From Jamaica station, take the LIRR (Port Jefferson line, eastbound) to the Stony Brook station, about a 1.5 hour ride. One-way fares range from $7.25 to $10, depending on the time of day. Purchase your LIRR ticket from one of the ticket machines before boarding the train, as you may pay an additional $5 fee when buying a ticket from the conductor onboard the train; the ticket machines only accept US currency in small denominations. More information on AIRTRAIN and the LIRR is available at: http://www.mta.nyc.ny.us/mta/airtrain.htm

From New York City (Penn Station, 34th Street and 7th Avenue), take LIRR’s Port Jefferson line to the Stony Brook station. One-way fares range from $9.50 to $13, depending on the time of day.

Passengers may have to change trains at a station along the line; this is indicated in the schedule pamphlet and announced on the train.

When your ticket is being collected or purchased, ask the conductor for information about whether and where you may have to change trains.

If you arrive at the Stony Brook railroad station on the Saturday or Sunday before check-in day, or in the evening during orientation week, you may use a pay phone to call the University Police (632-3333) for assistance in getting to your campus residence.

Pay phones are coin-operated, using quarter coins.

If you are using your cell phone, you will need to dial any required long-distance code (such as 1+) and the Suffolk County area code (631) before the numbers listed above.

If you arrive between 8:30 a.m. and 4:45 p.m. Monday through Friday of orientation week, call International Services (623-4685). When you are using a campus telephone, dial 2-4685 for assistance from International Services.

**Automobile**

Take the Long Island Expressway (I-495, also called the “L-I-E”), east. Continue on the LIE to Exit 62N, Nicolls Road (County Route 97). Drive nine miles north on Nicolls Road, directly to the main entrance of the Stony Brook campus, on the left. You will see signs to direct you. A campus map is available at: http://www.stonybrook.edu/sb/map/

**Luggage and Baggage**

Do not send baggage in advance of your arrival to the University. Stony Brook does not have storage facilities for luggage, trunks or packages.

Most students bring necessary items as personal baggage on the plane; check with a travel agent or airline for specific size and weight limitations. Excess baggage can cost less than air freight charges for similarly-sized parcels.

Air freight shipments can be very difficult to get through customs, and may require the services of an agent for clearance and forwarding to campus. These services can result in significant delays and extra fees.

After arrival, friends and family may mail small packages to you by surface mail or airmail. A package marked, “gift,” with contents valued under $100 USD may enter duty-free (without tax).

Any duty charge on mail packages is collected at the US Post Office in Stony Brook village.

**HOUSING**
On-Campus Housing

ON-CAMPUS HOUSING SHOULD BE ARRANGED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND WELL IN ADVANCE OF YOUR ARRIVAL.

Planning ahead and making arrangements for housing is extremely important. Residence Hall rooms are reserved on a first-come, first-served, space-available basis. On-campus housing is not guaranteed. Students desiring to reside on campus should complete and return their housing application and deposit fee to the Division of Campus Residences before the deadline noted on the application.

Dormitory rooms will not be available before check-in day unless prior arrangements have been made and confirmed with the Campus Residences office. Students planning to arrive early and stay in a dormitory room must notify Campus Residences in advance and pay additional rent.

Accompanying dependents (spouses and children) cannot be accommodated without advanced approval from Campus Residences.

If you arrive on campus without a confirmed housing assignment, you will need to stay in a hotel or bed and breakfast. Expect to pay over $100 each night, plus the cost of local transportation until you are either assigned on-campus housing or find off-campus housing. Either is likely to take several weeks, even months, adding thousands of dollars to your expenses.

Address all housing inquiries and make all housing arrangements directly with the Campus Residences office. They may be reached by phone at (631) 632-6750 or by e-mail at adevries@notes.cc.sunysb.edu. You can also visit their website: http://studentaffairs.stonybrook.edu/res/

Off-Campus Housing

It may take several weeks to find suitable accommodations off-campus. Housing may be far from the campus, which may force you to rely on often-inconvenient public transportation services or purchase an automobile. Both methods of transportation require budgeting additional time and money.

Local apartment rentals usually require the equivalent of two months’ rent in advance; one month would be applied as a security deposit, refundable if no damage occurs to the facility. Students using services of a rental agent pay the equivalent of one month’s rent as a fee, in addition to the security deposit and one month’s rent in advance. A lease may be signed that obligates the tenant for a specific number of months, typically one year.

Off-campus rental rates vary, but students should expect to pay a minimum of $500 per month for a room in a shared house, and a minimum of $1,000 for a small studio apartment. Utility charges (gas, oil, electricity, water, and telephone) are often paid in addition to the basic rent.

Questions regarding off-campus housing may be directed to the University Off-Campus Housing Service, located in Room 104, Administration Building. They may be reached by telephone at (631) 632-6770. Useful information regarding off-campus housing may be found on their website: http://och.vpsa.sunysb.edu

Home Stay Opportunity

Students may participate in a brief home stay with an American family before the beginning of the term. This program allows students to learn a bit about US life and culture, and can help ease transition into American society. Requests should be made at least two months in advance. Contact:

Servas US, Inc.
11 John Street, Room 406
New York, NY 10038
Telephone (212) 267-0252
e-mail: usservas@igc.apc.org
website: http://www.usservas.org/

Temporary Housing

Students arriving on the designated arrival date who have been assigned on-campus housing may move into the residence hall on that date. Arrangements made for early arrival must be made in advance with Campus Residences.

Students planning to reside off campus cannot stay in temporary on-campus housing, nor can the University rent private accommodations on behalf of students. See “Temporary Accommodations in the Local Area” (p.25).

Meals and Food Services

A wide variety of dining options are available on campus, from cafeterias and cafes to Jasmine, the new Asian food court located in the Wang Center. Campus dining accommodates special diets including halal, kosher and vegetarian foods. Further information about dining options and meal plans is available at http://www.campusdining.org/index2.php

REPORTING TO INTERNATIONAL SERVICES
Check-in
All individuals in F-1 and J-1 immigration status based on Form I-20 or DS-2019 issued by Stony Brook must check-in with the International Services office.

If you arrive before check-in day, please come to the International Services office to meet with an adviser during our regular business hours, generally Monday through Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. This is so that an International Student Adviser may confirm your arrival in the federal SEVIS electronic database through an “intake interview” process. We are located in The Graduate School, 2401 Computer Science Building on the main campus.

It is essential that J-1 students check-in and complete their intake interviews within 30 days of entry into the US or the start date on Form DS-2019 – whichever is soonest – or the SEVIS record automatically “terminates”, as the federal tracking system will not reflect that you’ve reported to the school. This is a very serious violation and it can be very difficult or impossible to correct.

It is essential that F-1 students check-in and complete their intake interviews within 30 days of entry to the US or the SEVIS federal tracking system will not reflect that you’ve reported to the school. This is a very serious violation and can be very difficult or impossible to correct. F-1 transfer students must check-in and complete the intake interview within 15 days of the start of classes.

To check-in with International Services, please come to the lobby of the Javits Lecture Center anytime between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on the assigned check-in day. We will confirm your arrival at Stony Brook University and answer any brief questions you may have. Many students will have their intake interview at check-in, but time constraints will limit the number of student intake interviews that can be completed that day.

Intake Interview
All new and transfer international students will see an International Student Adviser for an initial “intake interview” at the beginning of their first semester at Stony Brook. This allows us to review your original immigration documents, collect photocopies for our records, and document your arrival in SEVIS.

You will need to bring the following original documents to the intake interview, as well as a photocopy of each:

- Passport
- I-94 card (copy front and back)
- Form I-20 or Form DS-2019
- If transferring, copies of all Forms I-20 or DS-2019 issued on your behalf
- If you are beginning study following a change of status granted by US Citizenship and Immigration Services, a copy of the Approval Notice, Form I-797
- You will also need to know you complete residential address, even if temporary, and
- Contact information for an immediate family member that we could use in case of a medical emergency

Likewise, if you were unable to complete your intake interview on check-in day, come to the International Services office during our regular business hours.

Transfer students must report to International Services for an interview within 15 days of the first day of classes. Do not wait for the last day or two! When the intake interview process is completed, a “block” is lifted from the University database, so that you will be able to register for classes.

Mandatory Orientation
You are required to attend the entire orientation program for international students, even if you are transferring from another school in the US or have attended Stony Brook University in a different immigration status in the past. You are also required to attend the New and Transfer Undergraduate Student orientation, or Graduate School, Teaching Assistant and Academic Department orientations, as appropriate.

Orientation programs play a crucial role in the transition to life in a new environment and cultural setting. These programs have been carefully planned to help you succeed at Stony Brook University. Attendance is mandatory, so plan to be on campus every day of the orientation week.

Note:
You must obtain permission from International Services to arrive after the first day of orientation, since a new or updated SEVIS Form I-20 or DS-2019 may be required for entry into the US. Students who cannot arrive by the reporting date should contact International Services to obtain permission for a later arrival date. If you must request permission for late arrival, e-mail International Services at Stony Brook as soon as possible: internationalservices@notes.cc.sunysb.edu Write, “Late arrival” and your full name in the subject line. In your message, include the reason you will need to arrive after orientation begins, and the date that you expect to be able to arrive. If you cannot arrive on time
for orientation, we may recommend that your admission be deferred to next semester.

Keeping Documents Safe
After arrival, you should make copies of all travel documents and keep them in a safe place, separate from the originals. In the unfortunate event that your original documents are lost or stolen, these copies will facilitate their replacement. Note that Form I-20 or DS-2019 and your valid I-94 card are as important as your passport, and should be treated as such. The documents to be photocopied for safekeeping include:

- Passport identification page (your picture, the passport number, and personal information)
- Passport page with US visa used for entry
- Passport page with expiration date of passport
- Both sides of the I-94 card
- SEVIS Form I-20 or Form DS-2019

Remember to keep the original I-94 card and all Forms I-20 or DS-2019 with your passport while you are in the US. While your visa stamp allowed you to enter the US, the valid passport, I-94 card and Form I-20 or DS-2019 are the physical evidence used to determine that you are allowed to remain in the US.

In the event any of these documents are lost or stolen, you will need to file a police report. If the documents are not recovered promptly, you will need to replace them. Contact your embassy to request a new passport. Meet with an International Student Adviser to request a replacement Form I-20 or DS-2019; you will need to provide a copy of the police report for our records. We will help you apply to the US Citizenship and Immigration Service to replace the I-94 card; the replacement fee is currently $160.

ACADEMIC CONSIDERATIONS

English Language Requirements and English Courses
All students are required to demonstrate proficiency in English prior to admission. Doctoral students must also demonstrate proficiency in spoken English to fulfill the university’s teaching practicum requirement. For English proficiency requirements for international students, see the separate information sheet.

Students who do not meet English proficiency requirements, or who would like to improve their English skills prior to enrollment in a degree program, are encouraged to enroll in the University’s Intensive English Center. Summer programs are available.

For further information, contact

The Intensive English Center
Frank Melville, Jr., Memorial Library, Room E-5320
Stony Brook University
Stony Brook, NY  11794-3390
Telephone (631) 632-7031  Fax (631) 632-6544
Website http://www.sunysb.edu/iec/

Notice of Withdrawal
If you will not be joining us this semester, please withdraw your acceptance by notifying the University in writing and returning the Form I-20 or Form DS-2019.

- Graduate students should send withdrawal letters directly to their departments, and return their Form I-20 or Form DS-2019 and a copy of the withdrawal letter directly to International Services. Contact your department if you need to defer your admission to the next semester.

- Undergraduate students should send withdrawal letters and the Form I-20 or DS-2019 to Undergraduate Admissions at 118 Administration Building; Stony Brook University; Stony Brook, NY  11794-1901. The telephone number is (631) 632-6868

- Note that, in order for us to issue a Form I-20 or Form DS-2019 for admission in a subsequent semester, the previously-issued document must have been returned.

Refunds for tuition payments are only authorized once written notice of withdrawal is received in a timely manner by the Registrar’s Office. Time limits for withdrawal and for refund of eligible payments are noted on the academic calendar posted on their website: http://www.sunysb.edu/registrar

Tips for Academic Success
Attend orientation programs.

Seek academic advising from an Academic Adviser (undergraduate students) or Graduate Program Director in the academic department (graduate students) prior to registering for classes. Inappropriate course choices can lead to academic problems.
Read the University’s Undergraduate Bulletin or Graduate Bulletin very carefully, to know and understand the academic rules and regulations of the University. These are available on the University website: (undergraduate) http://www.stonybrook.edu/ugrbulletin/ and (graduate) http://www.grad.sunysb.edu/academics/bulletin/BULLETIN_HTM.htm

International Student Advisers are available to assist students in understanding aspects of US university education that may be unfamiliar to you. Contact us with any questions you may have.

Study hard and complete your assignments on time, but... have fun, too! Participating in arts, sport events and other activities should be an important part of your experience at Stony Brook University. We encourage you to get involved in campus life.

Withdrawing from the University during the course of a semester requires that F-1 and J-1 students leave the US or apply for another immigration status immediately. Please seek advice from an International Student Adviser before withdrawing from classes.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Payment of Tuition, Fees and Other Charges
The University bills students for tuition, fees, room and other charges. A payment plan option “Time Option Payment Plan” (TOPP) is available through the Bursar's office. Billing and payment information is available to their website: http://ws.cc.sunysb.edu/bursar/

Financial Aid Information
Financial assistance for international students is limited. Most financial aid from New York State or the federal government is not available to non-immigrant students.
Very few scholarships or fellowships are available to international students other than those awarded through graduate programs.
No long-term loans are available through the University. Because immigration regulations place restrictions on work in the US, students should not plan to finance their education through work in the US.

As a non-immigrant student, you were issued a SEVIS Form I-20 or DS-2019 on the basis of financial affidavits and proof of financial ability to cover the costs of your proposed program of study. If there is an adverse change in your financial circumstances, do not come to the University with inadequate financial support. Please contact International Services for advice regarding your individual circumstance.

Graduate Assistantships
Academic departments make decisions about graduate teaching and research assistantships, fellowships, and tuition scholarships based on the funds budgeted to the department by the University and on funds available through faculty research grants. These awards are merit-based, and as such are not provided to every student.

Proficiency in spoken English is required for those who are offered teaching assistantships. Please see the enclosed information regarding SPEAK test requirements if you have been awarded a teaching assistant position.

Graduate students accepted without verification of a financial award should assume that they are not recipients of university financial assistance.

OTHER INFORMATION

Health Insurance
The University requires that all students have adequate medical hospitalization, and medical evaluation and repatriation insurance. All international students are required to purchase the mandatory International Student and Scholar Health Insurance (ISSHI) policy through the University. The ISSHI policy cost is automatically billed to F-1 and J-1 students as a required fee. Coverage is effective upon your date of arrival in the US, provided the insurance is purchased within the first 30 days of arrival.

Students offered graduate assistantships may be offered some employment-based insurance options. Insurance coverage will be discussed in detail at Graduate orientations.

F-2 and J-2 dependent spouses and children must also have insurance coverage and should purchase the university international insurance plan. Failure to enroll and maintain dependents' insurance can result in dismissal from the school. J-1 students are required by federal regulations to carry insurance; failure to enroll and maintain J-2 dependents' insurance is a violation of status, requiring notification of the SEVIS system, termination of the student program, and prompt departure from the US.

Please refer to the Health Insurance handout for information on ISSHI. You may contact the Student Health Insurance office by phone (631) 632-6054, or by e-mail: ledelson@notes.cc.sunysb.edu There is basic information on the campus website: http://ws.cc.stonybrook.edu/sb/newstudents/nsheathinsurance.shtml

Health Requirements and Health Report
All students must complete and return the University’s health report form and submit a report of a physical examination within the past year. Proof of immunization for measles, mumps and rubella is required before registering for classes. Additionally, you must present the results of a recent tuberculin test and evidence of a tetanus/diphtheria inoculation within the last ten years. Student Health Services will place blocks on students’ course registration if these requirements have not been met by their deadlines.
We recommend that you have a physician in your home country complete your health form. It is possible to have a physical exam and receive inoculations after coming to Stony Brook, but this type of care is very expensive and is not covered by your SUNY international student insurance plan. For more information, contact the Student Health Center (631) 632-6740. Information is also available on their website: http://www.sunysb.edu/stuaff/health

Telecommunications
You are encouraged to contact your family as soon as possible after arrival to assure them you have arrived safely in the US.

Students living on campus have access to telephone service. However, students living in the West Apartments will have to purchase their own phone equipment.

E-mail accounts can be arranged through the Computing Center in the Engineering Quad, or through the SINC site in the main library: Frank Melville, Jr., Memorial Library, Room S-1460. The Instructional Computing website is: http://www.sinc.sunysb.edu Undergraduates may also sign up for an account during New and Transfer Undergraduate Student Orientation.

Host Family program
The Host Family Program is a community hospitality organization for international students. Host families provide new students with friendship, companionship and guidance while they are learning to adjust to a new culture and a new environment. The Host Family Program provides a great opportunity to get to know an American family and to share your culture with them. Host families do not assume any financial responsibility or provide housing for students.

Stony Brook International Clubs
Stony Brook University has many student clubs and organizations that are prepared to welcome you. The following are only a few of the numerous clubs available to our students. A complete list of these clubs and organizations is available at http://www.ic.sunysb.edu/Clubs/· Caribbean Students Organization
· Chapin Apartments Residents’ Association
· Chinese Association at Stony Brook http://www.sinc.sunysb.edu/Clubs/casb
· Chinese Student and Scholars Association http://www.sinc.sunysb.edu/Clubs/sbcssa sbcssa@ic.sunysb.edu
· Graduate Student Organization http://www.sinc.sunysb.edu/Clubs/gso usbgso@ic.sunysb.edu
· Indian Graduate Student Association http://www.sinc.sunysb.edu/Clubs/igsa igsa@ic.sunysb.edu
· International Cultural Exchange (ICE) Buddy icebuddies@gmail.com
· Korean Graduate Student Association http://sinc.sunysb.edu/Clubs/kgsa kgsa@ic.sunysb.edu
· Korean Student Association http://www.ic.sunysb.edu/Clubs/ksa ksa@ic.sunysb.edu
· Latin American Student Organization http://www.ic.sunysb.edu/Clubs/lasso stonybrooks_laso@hotmail.com
· Muslim Students Association http://www.stonybrookmsa.com/ msa@ic.sunysb.edu

QUICK REFERENCE

International Services – The Graduate School
Suite 2401, Computer Science Building (2nd floor)
Stony Brook, NY 11794-4433 USA
Telephone: (631) 632-4685 Fax: (631) 632-7243
e-mail: internationalservices@notes.cc.sunysb.edu
website: http://www.grad.stonybrook.edu/International-old/index.html

EMERGENCY (medical or criminal): 911

University Police: (631) 632-333 from off-campus phone
911 from on-campus phone

Airport Ground Transportation
Classic Transportation (800) 666-4949
Long Island Air Limo (631) 234-0223
Spartan Limo (631) 928-5454
Winston Limo (800) 424-7767

Important University Numbers
Campus Residences (631) 632-6750
Graduate School (631) 632-4723
Meal Plan Office (631) 632-6517
Off-campus Housing (631) 632-6770
Student Health Center (631) 632-6740
Student Health Insurance (631) 632-6054
Undergraduate Admissions (631) 632-6868
### Temporary Accommodations in the Local Area – all prices subject to change without notice

**Danford's Inn**
- Tel: (631) 928-5200
- Fax: (631) 928-3598
- 25 East Broadway, Port Jefferson, NY 11777
- **Price:** $140 (student rate)

**Heritage Inn**
- Tel: (631) 473-2499
- 201 West Broadway, Route 25A, Port Jefferson, NY 11777
- [http://portjeffheritageinn.com](http://portjeffheritageinn.com)
- **Price:** $109 - $119 (Sunday – Thursday), $129 (Friday and Saturday)

**Holiday Inn Express**
- Tel: (631) 471-8000
- Fax: (631) 471-8623
- 3131 Route 347, Stony Brook, NY 11790
- [www.stonybrookny.hiexpress.com](http://www.stonybrookny.hiexpress.com)
- **Price:** $129 (A complimentary shuttle service is available to the University, Islip airport and local train stations.)

**Holly Berry Bed and Breakfast**
- Tel: (631) 331-0706
- Fax: (631) 476-6855
- 201 Liberty Avenue, Port Jefferson, NY 11777
- **Price:** $145 - $195 (10% student discount, determined by Ron/Grace)

**Miss Scarlett's Bed & Breakfast**
- Tel: (631) 928-5064
- Fax: (631) 928-3067
- 305 California Avenue, Port Jefferson, NY 11777
- [http://www.bedandbreakfast.com/ppf/inn/601271/Listing.aspx](http://www.bedandbreakfast.com/ppf/inn/601271/Listing.aspx)
- **Price:** 105- $125, includes breakfast (10% student discount, determined by Miss Scarlett)

**Three Village Inn**
- Tel: (631) 751-0555
- Fax: (631) 751-0593
- 150 Main Street, Stony Brook, NY 11790
- [http://www.threvillageinn.com](http://www.threvillageinn.com)
- **Price:** $139 daily