WELCOME TO FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY!

At this point, you should have received your official acceptance letter and FIU I-20 or DS-2019. If you have not, please contact the Admissions Office:

- Undergraduate (http://admissions.fiu.edu/know/contact.php)
- Graduate (http://gradschool.fiu.edu/ContactUs.html)

Please read the following information carefully before you travel to Miami:

- Before You Arrive in the U.S.
- Arrival in the U.S.
- Arrival at Florida International University
- Immigration Regulations: Full-Time Enrollment Requirements

Click these logos for in-depth information about Studying in the United States

EducationUSA provides a free “Getting Ready To Go” Booklet (http://www.educationusa.info/5_steps_to_study/resources_documents.php#top)

Before you arrive in the U.S.

Pay SEVIS I-901 Fee

If you are a newly admitted international student entering the U.S. for the first time and a first-time F-1/J-1 visa applicant, you must pay the SEVIS Fee.

- When you receive your I-20 go to https://www.fmjfee.com to pay the SEVIS I-901 Fee online or to get information about other payment options.
- Print your receipt as proof of payment.
**Obtain a Student Visa**

Schedule an appointment at a U.S. embassy or consulate in your home country to apply for an F-1 or J-1 visa. You will need to present these documents:

- **I-20** issued by FIU or **DS-2019** issued by your agency sponsor or FIU
- **Passport** (must be valid at least 6 months into the future)
- **Financial documents** to prove availability of funds to support your education (includes bank letter, sponsor’s letter, etc.).
- Proof of payment of **SEVIS I-901 Fee** (see above)
- Please see your local **U.S. Embassy or Consulate** (http://www.usembassy.gov/) website for other requirements.

**DO NOT ENTER IN B-1/B-2 STATUS**: B-1/B-2 (tourist) visa holders and those who have entered on a visa waiver are prohibited from enrolling in academic courses.

**Arrange either On-Campus or Off-Campus Housing**

**ISSS cannot make housing arrangements for you. Please make such arrangements before your arrival.**

**On-Campus Housing**: If you would like to live on campus, space is limited so submit your Housing Agreement and required fee as soon as possible. See **Housing & Residential Life** (http://www.housing.fiu.edu/) for complete information.

**Important to know:**

- The Housing Agreement is a legally binding document and once signed, you **may not be able to cancel or break it**.
- Check-In (when you arrive) usually occurs only the weekend prior to the beginning of classes. See below for information on arranging Short-Term Housing.

**Off-Campus Housing**: If you would like to live off campus, check the **Office of Orientation and Commuter Student Services** (http://classifieds.fiu.edu/) off-campus housing site to view property listings, message boards to find roommates, furniture, etc. and links to campus and local resources.

Many other websites to search for rentals in the local community exist. **FIU is not responsible in any way for the accuracy or availability of information on such sites and ISSS is not recommending or endorsing any of these companies but merely giving examples of the type of information that is available online. Please use caution when giving out personal information or payment to avoid internet scams, identity theft, and fraud.**

- http://www.apartmentguide.com/
- http://www.theflyer.com
- http://miami.craigslist.org/
- http://www.rent.com/
- http://www.apartments.com/
When searching by zip code, keep in mind that zip codes for areas near the Modesto Maidique Campus include 33172 and 33174; zip codes for areas near the Biscayne Bay Campus include 33181 and 33160.

**Short-Term Housing:** If you arrive before your On Campus Check In time or have not secured housing before your arrival, you may need to stay in a hotel. Average hotel rates per night run from $75 - $150 and they may not be in easy walking distance to campus.

It is a good idea to make reservations before you arrive. Please see the [listing of hotels](http://admissions.fiu.edu/visiting/areahotels.php) near each campus.

**Take Care of Medical Requirements (Immunizations & Insurance)**

You will **NOT** be able to register for classes without submitting this information to University Health Services (UHS). You are **REQUIRED** to have **APPROVED** medical insurance. There are no exceptions to this policy.

- Refer to the [Immunization Requirements](http://healthservices.fiu.edu/immunization) on the UHS website.
- Refer to the [Medical Insurance Requirements](http://healthservices.fiu.edu/insurance/Pages/International-Student.aspx) on the UHS website.
- If possible, bring detailed and current medical and dental records with you as well as any prescriptions for medication and eyeglasses in English.

**Prepare for Money Matters**

You are expected to have sufficient funds for the period of your studies at FIU as you have shown on your Declaration & Certification of Finances. Do not depend on employment here in the U.S. to cover any significant part of your expenses.

- When you arrive, you will need to cover your expenses. It may take weeks to open a bank account and transfer funds, so plan ahead.
- You may want to bring cash, a bankcard (find out first if it is valid in the United States), prepaid debit card, or traveler’s checks. We suggest you have **at least $7,000** available to use immediately.
- Expenses may include, but are not limited to:
  - FIU Tuition & Fees
  - Medical Insurance Payment
  - Books and school supplies
  - Payment for on campus housing or off campus rent (note: you may be required to pay a security deposit plus your first two months’ rent before you move in)

*Avoid carrying large sums of money with you when it is not necessary*

*For additional information see [International Student.com - Money Matters](http://www.internationalstudent.com/study_usa/way-of-life/money-matters.shtml)*
 Prepare for Travel

Which airport?

- The primary airport is Miami International Airport (MIA) (http://www.miami-airport.com/).
- Students at the Biscayne Bay Campus may also want to consider Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport (FLL) (http://www.broward.org/airport/Pages/Default.aspx).
- IMPORTANT: FIU has several campuses. Please determine which of the FIU Campuses (http://www.fiu.edu/about-us/campuses/index.html) you are going to before you arrive.

When to arrive?

- You should arrive before the semester begins, but remember that you may NOT enter the United States more than 30 days prior to the start of classes.
- Graduate students should check with their academic department for the dates of any required orientations prior to the semester. Undergraduate students may check with the Office of Orientation and Parent Programs for either Freshman or Transfer Orientation dates (note: some of these orientations you must sign up for in advance).

What to bring to the U.S.?

- **In your carry-on luggage:**
  - Immigration Documents: Make sure to take all your immigration documents (FIU I-20 or DS-2019, valid passport with F-1 or J-1 visa stamp, and original financial documents) and that they are packed in an accessible place. **Do not pack these documents in your checked luggage.**
  - A change of clothes and essentials in case your luggage is lost or delayed
  - Medication you may need right away
  - Contact information for someone in the U.S. and for FIU

Other things to consider:

- Place clear labels with your name and address both inside and outside each piece of luggage.
- Make several copies of your important documents and pack them in different places in case one bag is lost.
- Consider pre-arranging your transportation from the airport (see Arrival in the U.S. below).

Arrival in the U.S.

- **Arriving at a U.S. Port of Entry (Immigration and Customs)**
  
  - You will be required to present the following documents to the Immigration Officer
    - Passport with F-1 or J-1 Visa Stamp
    - FIU I-20 (If you plan to attend FIU, you MUST enter with an FIU I-20)
    - It is also recommended that you carry with you:
Evidence of financial resources
Copy of receipt of SEVIS I-901 Fee
Contact information of the FIU ISSS Office

Make sure your passport is stamped F-1 or J-1 (according to your visa) and "D/S" ("duration of status") instead of a specific expiration date.

You MUST NOT enter the U.S. using a B-1/B-2 visa or W-T (Visa Waiver)

**Transportation from the Airport (Taxis and Shared Shuttle Rides)**

- **IMPORTANT**: FIU has several campuses. Please determine which campus you are going to before you arrive. Refer to the list of all FIU Campuses (http://www.fiu.edu/about-us/campuses/index.html) on FIU's main site.
- For airport-specific transportation information please visit
  - Miami International Airport (MIA) http://www.miami-airport.com/hotel_shuttles.asp
  - Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International (FLL) http://www.broward.org/Airport/Transportation/Pages/Default.aspx
- You may also reserve a Super Shuttle (https://reservations.supershuttle.com/Default.aspx) prior to your arrival.
- For addresses and directions to FIU, click here. (http://admissions.fiu.edu/visiting/directions.php)

**Arrival at Florida International University**

Refer also to detailed maps (http://campusmaps.fiu.edu/) of all FIU Campuses.

**Check In with the International Student & Scholar Services Office (ISSS)**

You MUST check in at the ISSS Office as soon as you arrive on campus.

- Office Hours: 8:00am – 5:00pm, Monday – Friday (closed weekends and holidays)
- Modesto Maidique Campus - Graham Center 355
- Biscayne Bay Campus - Wolfe University Center 363
- You must bring with you:
  - Valid passport
  - F-1 or J-1 visa stamped into passport OR proof of change of status within the U.S., i.e. a USCIS I-797 approval notice
  - FIU I-20 or DS-2019
  - Form I-94 (an electronic form that you will access online at www.cbp.gov/i94 and print out)
  - You will also be asked to complete an ISSS Data Sheet with your:
    - Local U.S. Address (PO Boxes are not acceptable)
    - Name and Phone # for an Emergency Contact
    - Foreign Address
FIU International Student & Scholar Services: Pre-Arrival Information

✓ **Attend All REQUIRED and Recommended Orientations**

- **ISSS Immigration Orientation**: This is **MANDATORY** for all new and transfer international students. See the [ISSS Immigration Orientation](http://isss.fiu.edu/f1orientation.htm) schedule for details.
- For Freshman and Transfer Orientations (undergraduate), refer to the [Office of Orientation and Parent Programs](http://orientation.fiu.edu/)
- For Graduate Orientations refer to the [University Graduate School](http://gradschool.fiu.edu/)

✓ **Submit Medical Documentation (Proof of Immunizations & Insurance)**

If you have not already done so, provide University Health Services with your [Immunization](http://healthservices.fiu.edu/immunization/Pages/Immunization-Requirements.aspx) and purchase an approved [Medical Insurance](http://healthservices.fiu.edu/insurance/Pages/International-Student.aspx) policy.

✓ **Register for Classes**

- Make sure that you have removed all registration holds ("service indicators") on your record in order to register.
- Meet with an academic advisor in your department to determine which courses you should take (if you are a lower-division undergraduate student, see an academic advisor in the [Undergraduate Education](http://undergrad.fiu.edu/advising/index.html) Academic Advising Center).
- To refer to registration information and the course catalog visit the [Office of the Registrar](http://registrar.fiu.edu/)
- Note important deadlines (last day to register, last day to drop, etc.) on the [Academic Calendar](http://registrar.fiu.edu/index.php?id=88)
- You may be able to register in your student portal at [https://my.fiu.edu](https://my.fiu.edu)
- **IMPORTANT**: You must be registered FULL TIME. See [requirements](#) below.

✓ **Pay Tuition and Fees**

- Pay your tuition and fees IN FULL by the appropriate deadline (usually within the first week of classes) to avoid late fees and cancellation.
- For payment information, see [Frequently Asked Questions for Student Financials](http://registrar.fiu.edu/index.php?id=164) on the Office of the Registrar's website.
- You may pay in person at the Cashier’s and Student Financials Office or online in your [MyFIU](https://my.fiu.edu) account.

✓ **Get your FIU One Card**

- This card will be your student ID and can be used for a variety of purposes.
- It can be linked to a Checking Account (with Wells Fargo Bank) if you wish.
- You will need to bring identification and proof of registration to the Card Office.
- For more information, [click here](http://shop.fiu.edu/onecard/index.html)
✓ Set Up your FIU Account and Email Address

- All FIU communications, including from ISSS, will be sent to your FIU email address.
- You may set up your account online (http://panthersoft.fiu.edu/students.html) and if you have problems you may contact the University Technology Services (http://uts.fiu.edu/helpdesk/index.shtml) Helpdesk.

✓ Open a Bank Account

- It is not advisable for you to carry large sums of money with you. We recommend that you open a bank account as soon as possible.
- FIU has partnerships with the following banks (although you may join any bank):
  - University Credit Union (http://www.ucumiami.org/)
  - Wells Fargo (https://www.wellsfargo.com/jump/college/FIU)

✓ Contact ISSS with Questions

All ISSS staff & advisors are here to help you. Please contact us with any questions or concerns.

- Modesto Maidique Campus
  - In person: Graham Center (GC) 355
  - Telephone: 305-348-2421
  - Email: isss@fiu.edu
- Biscayne Bay Campus:
  - In person: Wolfe University Center (WUC) 363
  - Telephone: 305-919-5813
  - Email: bbcisss@fiu.edu

Immigration Regulations: Full-Time Enrollment Requirement

All international students MUST register FULL TIME or will fall out of status and become ineligible for immigration benefits.

Undergraduate (Bachelor’s Degree)

- FALL and SPRING semesters
  - Full Time = minimum total twelve (12) undergraduate credit hours
  - Minimum of nine (9) credits must be in-person (NOT online) classes; only 3 online credits may be counted toward the 12 credit total

- SUMMER semester
  - If Summer A is your FIRST semester
    - Full Time = minimum twelve (12) credit hours
    - Minimum of nine (9) credits must be in-person (NOT online) classes; only 3 online credits may be counted toward the 12 credit total
If Summer B is your FIRST semester
- Full Time = minimum six (6) undergraduate credit hours
- Minimum of three (3) credits must be in-person (NOT online) classes

Graduate (Masters and/or Doctoral Degree)

- FALL and SPRING semesters
  - Full Time = minimum nine (9) graduate credit hours
  - Minimum of six (6) credits must be in-person (NOT online) classes; only 3 online credits may be counted toward the 9 credit total

- SUMMER semester
  - If Summer A is your FIRST semester
    - Full Time = minimum six (6) graduate credit hours
    - Minimum of three (3) credits must be in-person (NOT online) classes
  - If Summer B is your FIRST semester
    - Full Time = minimum three (3) graduate credit hours
    - Minimum of three (3) credits must be in-person (NOT online) classes
  - Summer is OPTIONAL (no class requirements) for most continuing students