

# EXCHANGE VISITOR'S POST ARRIVAL PACKET

Southern Methodist University



**SMU** International Student  
and Scholar Services

## LETTER FROM THE ISSS DIRECTOR



Dear International Student/Scholar:

On behalf of the International Student & Scholar Services team (ISSS), I would like to welcome you to Southern Methodist University. You have chosen to attend one of America's premier comprehensive universities, and we are pleased that you are part of the SMU family. The SMU campus and community provide a variety of resources to ensure that your time here as a student or scholar is productive on both a personal and academic level. The International Student & Scholar Services team is committed to facilitating and enriching your experience before you arrive on campus and while you are here in the U.S. All members of the ISSS team work diligently to provide the best and most useful resources prior to your arrival through a comprehensive pre-arrival information packet that will assist the visa application process. Once you arrive on campus, we welcome you with various immigration orientations in order to inform you of the various visa compliance regulations that you must follow as an international student or scholar in order to maintain your visa status. Our team is responsible for reporting to the federal Government all compliance events relating to our international population through SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System). For this reason it is important that you check your SMU e-mail regularly, since regulations sometimes change. Once you arrive, it is our desire that you take every opportunity to participate in our programming events. Our office coordinates several events throughout the year in order to celebrate the different cultures and contributions from our international population. Our staff consists of a group of professionals who are prepared to respond to your unique needs through our excellent immigration advising system. Our staff is also prepared to help you navigate through all the resources that SMU has to offer that will help you achieve your academic goals. Once again, welcome to SMU. We are happy that you are with us. Please contact any member of the ISSS team if you have any questions or concerns. If we do not know the answers to your questions, we will try to find someone who does.

Best Regards,

Claudia Sotomayor Hart

# International Student & Scholar Services Office

No matter where you are across the globe, the International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) team is here to support you. ISSS provides services to help you maintain your immigration status and promote your success here at SMU. Stay up to date via our website [www.smu.edu/enrollmentservices/international](http://www.smu.edu/enrollmentservices/international).

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### Follow us:



@smuinternational



@smuintlservices



SMU International Student and Scholar Services



This packet contains information about maintaining your status as an exchange visitor on a J Visa, as well as useful information on resources at Southern Methodist University and living in the United States.



# WELCOME!

We hope your stay at Southern Methodist University enhances your educational objectives, while you are engaging in research and/or teaching activities. The International Student & Scholar Services Office is here to assist you and provide support services that will contribute to a successful experience.

## **The Role and Responsibility of the J-1 Exchange Visitor:**

*Please read carefully.*

As a J-1 Exchange Visitor, you are required to maintain your status and stay in compliance with federal immigration regulations that affect you and your dependents. Please read the following information carefully in order to understand your responsibilities while you are being sponsored as an exchange visitor by Southern Methodist University, P-1-02901.

*Note: This information is subject to change without notice. You should check your SMU email account daily in order to stay informed of any federal regulation changes or university policies and best practices that affect your status.*

# What's Inside?

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# Important Resources

# While you're here you must...

- You and your dependents must have current passports at all times. If your passport expires, you could be out of compliance. Remember your dependent's status depends on the validity of the J-1 status so if you are out of compliance so are they.
- You must **always** be in possession of a valid DS-2019 document, which accurately reflects your activities at SMU. Should your DS-2019 expire soon and you have received an extension of your appointment, you are required to submit an extension request **BEFORE** the DS-2019 expires. We require that you submit a request at least one month before your DS-2019 program end date.
- You must come to the ISSS Office to have your DS-2019 signed (and dependent DS-2019s, if applicable) if you will travel outside the United States. Travel endorsements/signatures are valid for ONE YEAR.
- You must report any life event that may affect your immigration status such as marriage, change of legal name, or divorce. This rule also extends to your J-2 dependents.
- You must report any changes of address to the ISSS Office within 10 days. Email [internationalscholars@smu.edu](mailto:internationalscholars@smu.edu) to report address changes.
- If you are considered an SMU Employee, you will need to apply for a Social Security Number. If you need information about the SSN application process or if you are not employed by SMU and wish to apply for a Social Security Number, please ask a scholar advisor during your government check-in.
- J-1 Exchange Visitors and dependents (J-2s) are **required** to have major medical insurance for the duration of the program. You are not allowed to start your research and/teaching activities until you have submitted proof of health insurance. All SMU benefits employees are required to pay a monthly premium to the SMU's benefits Office.\*

\*Failure to pay your insurance premiums on a timely manner will cause termination of your J-1 status. If you are not receiving fringe benefits, you need to purchase an insurance policy that meets the requirements of the Department of State.



# Departure/Check-Out:

- When your program has concluded, you must complete a Notice of Departure Form. The ISSS Office is required to report your program end date to the Department of State. This could be the end date of your DS-2019 or an earlier date if you concluded your activities earlier than anticipated.
- **If you are receiving fringe benefits from SMU, you must also visit the HR office to conduct an exit interview.**



# TRANSFER TO ANOTHER J- PROGRAM:

- If you plan to transfer your J-1 visa sponsorship to another institution, you must inform the ISSS Office of your intent to do so PRIOR to departing SMU. Please complete our J-1 Transfer-Out Form available at our website. Remember, you must have your department supervisor sign this form in order to complete this request.
- If you are considered an SMU employee (receive compensation/benefits), you must also visit the Human Resources Office and go through an exit interview.





# Taxes:

If you are being paid in the United States, you must file tax forms no later than the IRS tax deadline (typically around April 15th) of the following year: (For example, if you earned wages in 2020, your tax forms will be due on April 15 of 2021). Please look out for an email from ISSS in late February/early March for information on how to file for taxes by using Sprintax Software. If you are leaving the U.S. prior to the tax filing deadline, you are still required to file tax forms. You might file for your tax forms electronically. Please contact the ISSS Office to get more information about accessing Sprintax.

For more tax information, please visit:  
[smu.edu/EnrollmentServices/international/USLiving](http://smu.edu/EnrollmentServices/international/USLiving).



## Other issues related to your status:

Please remember that the ISSS Office is the only authorized office to provide immigration advice. While other departments at SMU will help you and assist you, you need to verify any information/advice received by other parties with an International Services Specialist at the ISSS Office.

### J-2 Dependent Work Authorization:

J-2 dependents may request work authorization from USCIS. The ISSS Office will help with this process.

## If you are an SMU Exchange Visitor receiving fringe benefits from SMU, please be sure to do the following:

- **Visit the SMU Human Resources Office:** After attending your mandatory check-in session with ISSS, you must visit the Human Resources Office (HR) to complete your I-9 form. The HR Office is located on the second floor of the Expressway Building location. You will also need to complete your W-4 form as well as the Alien Determination Form for tax purposes.
- **Visit the Benefits Office for Medical Insurance Information:** If you are receiving benefits from SMU, you need to make sure to get proper medical insurance coverage BEFORE you begin teaching or research activities at SMU. Please arrange an appointment with the Benefits Office. Please email [benefits@smu.edu](mailto:benefits@smu.edu) to set up an appointment.
- **File Tax Treaty form (if applicable):** if you have questions about tax treaties between the U.S. and your home country, you need meet with a representative from the Payroll Office. Please email [foreignnationals@smu.edu](mailto:foreignnationals@smu.edu) for more information.
- **SMU ID and Parking Permit:** In order to purchase your parking permit, please visit the SMU Parking & ID Services located on the first floor of the Hughes Trigg Student Center. Make sure to take your DS-2019 document, your passport, I-94 arrival document.
- **Social Security Number:** Exchange Visitors are eligible to apply for a SSN. Those employed by SMU, must obtain a Social Security Number. Please let us know if you need to apply for an SSN, so we can assist you with this process at the time of your check-in appointment. In order to apply for an SSN, you must have the following documents with you when you visit the Social Security Office:
  - Letter of appointment/invitation
  - Letter from ISSS Office verifying your status (received at check-in session)
  - Your passport, visa
  - Your I94 arrival document
  - Your DS-2019
- **Updating your information in My.smu.edu:** All exchange visitors must update their information on [my.smu.edu](http://my.smu.edu) including your residence address. Should you move, you are required to update your new address under Residence Address Type within 10 days from the date you have moved. Should your home country address change, you will need to email the ISSS Office at [internationalscholars@smu.edu](mailto:internationalscholars@smu.edu).



## If you are an SMU Exchange Visitor without fringe benefits, please be sure to do the following:

If you are at SMU to engage in research and you are being supported by your home institution, please read the following instructions:

- **SMU Parking and ID Services:** All exchange visitors at SMU must visit the SMU Parking and ID Services office after check-in to have their pictures taken and get their a Non-Employee card.
  - After you have received your non-employee card, please visit the SMU Parking and ID Services office located on the first floor of the Hughes Trigg Center in order to receive your SMU ID card and purchase your parking permit.
- **SMU Email/Network Access:** If you will be at SMU for more than 3 months, please contact your department representative so they can sponsor a network account on your behalf.
- **Health Insurance:** You must submit evidence of health insurance to the ISSS Office before engaging in research/teaching activities at SMU. If you are provided health insurance through your government, you must provide a policy that meets all the requirements in English.
- **Updating your information in My.smu.edu:** All exchange visitors must update their information on My.smu.edu including your residence address. Should you move, you are required to update your new address under Residence Address Type within 10 days from the date you have moved. Should your home country address change, you will need to email
- **Dependents arriving later:** If you have dependents arriving later, you will need to make sure they have a current DS-2019 for J-2. Upon their arrival, we will need to see their original passport, visa, I94 arrival information and DS-2019.

\* More information on the ISSS website under Scholars and "New Scholar Information"





# Post-Arrival Checklist

# PRE & POST ARRIVAL CHECKLIST

For New International J-1 Exchange Visitors

## Pre-Arrival Checklist

*You've received your DS-2019, next steps:*

- Pay the SEVIS I-901 fee.** Visit [fmjfee.com](http://fmjfee.com) to pay for this fee. Be sure to print a copy of the SEVIS fee payment receipt.
- Apply for J-1 Visa.** Complete the online Visa Application form, pay the DS160 fee, and schedule your appointment.
- Prepare to Enter the U.S.** Plan for health insurance, initial expenses, baggage, temporary housing, and medical records prior to departing your home country.
- Arrive in the U.S.** Plan to have the necessary documents available to show the inspection officer at the U.S. port of entry and plan travel from the airport to SMU.

 **Tip:** Review the Exchange Visitor Post Arrival Handbook on the ISSS website for more information and resources about SMU and Dallas.

- Obtain Adequate Health Insurance.** Ensure that you and all dependents (if applicable) have health insurance that meets at least the minimum requirements.
- Secure Housing.** Use an apartment search on the internet to search for apartments near SMU. Keep in mind some apartments are accessible via the SMU Express bus.

## Post-Arrival Checklist

*Welcome to Dallas, Texas!*

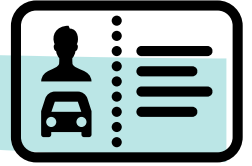
- Scan all documents:** DS-2019 first page, J-1 Visa, Passport, I-94 Arrival Document, Appointment Letter, and copies of all immigration documents of J-2 dependents, if applicable.
- Register to attend the required Government Check-in Session:** Visit <https://booking.smu.edu/calendar/scholars> to register for a check-in session.
- Attend Government Check-In appointment with ISSS:** Prior to attending, review the required documents on the ISSS website and bring scanned versions of them all and a device (laptop) to submit documents on.
- Attend Employee Orientation with Human Resources (Only for benefits-eligible employees).**
- OBTAIN SMU ID:** Visit SMU Parking and ID Services (Hughes-Trigg Student Center) to pick-up your SMU ID Card.

For more information, visit  
<https://www.smu.edu/EnrollmentServices/international/For-Scholars/New-Scholar-Information>




# Transportation in the U.S.

# TEXAS I.D./DRIVER'S LICENSE



The driver license or state I.D. card issued by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), serves as most people's primary identification document. Students and Scholars are encouraged to apply for a Texas I.D. or a Driver's License once they have arrived in Dallas.

Foreign nationals may drive on their foreign driver's license for a period of *up to one year*, provided they have an **International Driver's Permit (IDP)**. The IDP is a document secured in one's home country of origin and serves only as a valid translation of a home country driver's license. It may not be used by itself, as the official home country driver's license must accompany it to be considered a valid driving document. Please check with your home country government office on how to obtain an IDP in your home country.

 *Please note* that an IDP is **not** an International Driver's License - the internet has a lot of false information regarding an invalid document called an "International Driver's License". Please **do not** purchase one of these false documents, as it is not an acceptable legal document to drive in the US.

## **Applying for a Texas Driver License (TDL) - Valid for only one year**

For the I.D. Card, you will need to complete an application form; show your passport, visa stamp, I-94 card, and immigration status documents; and pay an application fee. You must have been a resident of Texas for at least 30 days in order to apply for a Texas ID Card or Driver License. You will have to prove your Texas residency by showing 2 original documents from the DPS's list of approved materials. The ISSS Office will take students and scholars to apply for their Texas ID at the beginning of each semester.

# HOW TO APPLY FOR A TEXAS I.D./DRIVER'S LICENSE



## Applying for a Texas Driver License (TDL) - Valid for only one year

1. Proof of having passed the writing portion of the driving test. You can study the writing portion of this test by downloading the TEXAS DRIVERS HANDBOOK.
2. Proof of Identity
3. Proof of valid immigration status.
4. Proof of SSN or sign an affidavit affirming you are not currently eligible for an SSN
5. Proof of Texas vehicle registration and liability insurance if you have a car.
6. Complete required forms available at any Texas Driver License office.
7. Pass a vision exam – take your glasses or contact lenses if you need them to drive.
8. Pass a driving exam: Note, you will need to provide the car for the driving test. If you do not own a car, you may consider using the Zipcar service available on-campus.
9. For individuals between the ages of 18 to 24, you will also require proof of having taken an approved driver's education course. For approved courses, click here

## Reminders

- Contact the local office of the DPS if you do not receive the license within 60 days.
- Any time you move, notify the DPS of your change of address within 10 days.
- Obey all laws when driving. Do not take unnecessary risks. Be a polite and considerate driver.
- Alcohol and drugs, even prescription or over-the-counter drugs, and mixing medications, can affect your driving skills. Penalties for driving while intoxicated (DWI) are strictly enforced.
- Always carry your driver's license when driving.

*For more information about Texas Driver's License, please visit:  
[smu.edu/EnrollmentServices/international/USLiving](http://smu.edu/EnrollmentServices/international/USLiving).*





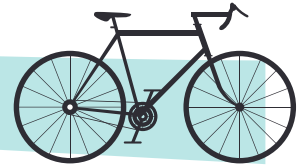
# SO YOU WANT TO BUY A CAR...

Some international students and scholars will consider buying a car while they are here in the DFW area. Please be aware that you will need to have established credit if you wish to purchase a new car. If you are considering buying a used car, we recommend you get an overview on used car prices through **Kelley's Blue Book**.

## *Here are some useful tips when considering buying a used car:*

- Get all the information on automobile insurance policies, including liability and comprehensive and collision costs for the vehicle model, make, and year.
- Get the vehicle identification number. Ask to see the Title ("Certificate of Title") of the car. All the information needed to inquire about insurance for this particular car will appear on the Title. (This will also prove that the person selling you the car is the owner).
  - **Important:** Make sure that no liens are recorded on the Title. (If money is owed on the car, another name will appear in the space for "lienholder." In addition, the "clear" Title (no debts are held against the car) is blue, and the temporary Title (proof of sole ownership has not yet been issued) is red.
- Arrange with the insurance company you have chosen to begin the coverage, especially the liability insurance required by law, before you meet with the seller to finalize the transaction.
- After buying the car, make sure you visit the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles to ensure you have obtained the title. You will pay a fee and the sales tax on the vehicle (approximately 6.25% of the sales price of the car) to transfer the Title to you, the new owner. The seller need not go to the Tax Office with you. You should receive your Title by mail within 4 to 6 weeks.

# TRANSPORTATION IN THE U.S.



Concerned about how you are going to get around when you come to Dallas? Don't worry- there are a lot of options!

## On-Campus

### Walk

Most students walk to class. Just make sure you leave with enough time to make it to class! Google Maps works great in the area and on campus.

### Electric Scooters

A popular alternative to walking when in a hurry are scooters. Just download the Bird or Lime app, unlock the scooter, and off you go!

### Bikes

When going to a university, lots of students may bring a bicycle for transportation around campus. SMU provides various areas to keep your bikes, just bring your lock.

### Tapride

If you find yourself feeling uncomfortable walking alone after a long night in the library, call a safe ride using the app *Tapride*. An SMU security officer will pick you up in a golf cart and take you wherever you need on campus.

### SMU Express

The SMU Express is a DART operated bus that goes on campus and makes stops at nearby apartments, shopping centers and restaurants.

For more information visit [the SMU Parking and ID Services Office website](#).

## Off-Campus

### Ride Share Services

The most popular option for transportation around Dallas are ride sharing services such as Uber and Lyft. Just download the apps and input your destination! Always make sure the license plate matches.

### DART

The *Dallas Area Rapid Transit* service is a railway that travels around the Dallas area including to the airport and NorthPark Mall. Conveniently, across the street from SMU campus is a DART station! SMU students are eligible for a free SMU DART transit pass by enrolling through the Parking and ID Card Services Office with a valid U.S. phone number. DART is typically much cheaper than ride sharing options.



**Pro Tip:** While the DART is typically safe it would be smart to travel with a friend and avoid riding the DART late at night.

### Zipcar Rental

Any international student or scholar who is 18 years of age or older with an international or U.S. driver license may sign up for this program for a \$25 membership fee. Once you sign up, you can rent the car by the hour or by the day and not have to worry about gas or insurance since it is included in the rental price. You can reserve the car online and let yourself in with your Zipcard.

Find out more about the Zipcar and sign up at <http://www.zipcar.com/smu/>



## Transportation from the airport upon arrival in the U.S.

Most students use ride sharing options such as Uber or Lyft for their commute from the airport to campus, but others may use DART.



# Resources and Facilities at SMU



# HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## Dr. Bob Smith Health Center

The health center is an on campus clinic that provides students with access to medical, counseling, and dental services.

Also, the health center has a pharmacy and offers student health insurance.

[Learn more at smu.edu/studentaffairs](http://smu.edu/studentaffairs)

## Office of the Chaplain & Religious Life

“Inspiring the Expression of Religious Faith and Discourse in the University”

The Office of the Chaplain works to ensure that SMU is a place that welcomes religious diversity while offering student support.

[Learn more at smu.edu/studentaffairs](http://smu.edu/studentaffairs)

## Dedman Center for Lifetime Sports

The recreation center offers a free-weight and cardio gym as well as basketball, volleyball, and tennis courts. You will also find indoor and outdoor pools and countless fitness classes including spin and yoga!



Check out the SMU International Student & Scholar Service Channel for our mental health video.

# SMU LIBRARIES

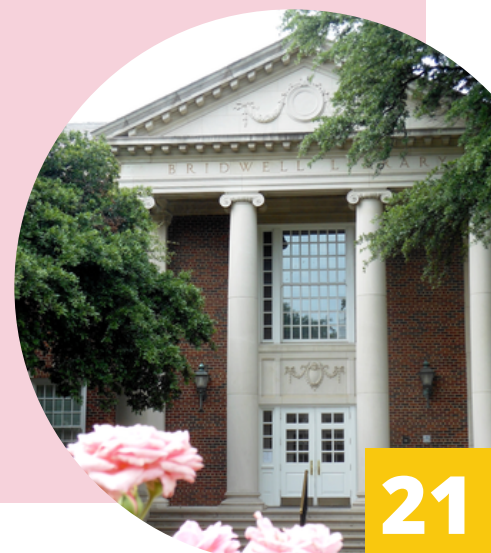
SMU is home to **6 on-campus** libraries including the largest private law library in the Southwest. The most popular library, Fondren library, offers study spaces and meeting rooms that you can reserve as well as a Starbucks.

Not on-campus? No worries, visit [smu.edu/libraries](http://smu.edu/libraries) for 24/7 access to materials in all SMU libraries.



**Fondren | Bridwell | Business | DeGolyer |  
Hamon Arts | Underwood Law**

For more information, including online databases, visit [smu.edu/libraries](http://smu.edu/libraries)



*On-Campus*  
**Dining Facilities**

**The Market in Hughes-Trigg Student Center**

Mon - Thu 9:00AM - 8:00PM  
 Fri 9:00AM - 4:00PM  
 Sat 10:00AM - 4:00PM  
 Sun 2:00PM - 6:00PM

**Arnold Dining Hall**

**All Day**  
**Mon - Thu 7:00AM - 9:00PM**  
**Fri 7:00AM - 7:00PM**  
**Sat 9:30AM - 7:00PM**  
**Sun 9:30AM - 8:00PM**

Hours vary seasonally, for the most up to date hours, please visit [smu.campusdish.com/](http://smu.campusdish.com/)

**Umphrey Lee Dining Hall**

<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Dinner</b>
Mon - Fri 7:00AM - 10:30AM	Mon - Fri 11:00AM - 2:00PM	Mon - Thu, Sun 5:00PM - 8:00PM
Sat - Sun 9:30AM - 2:00PM		Fri-Sat 5:00PM - 7:00PM

**Other On-Campus Dining Options**

- Starbucks** - Fondren Library
- Lawyer's Inn** - Law School Quad
- Mac's Place** - 6000 Bishop Blvd
- Chick-Fil-A** - Hughes-Trigg Student Center
- Panera** - Hughes-Trigg Student Center
- Rollin' and Bowlin'** - Hughes-Trigg Student Center
- Sushic** - Hughes-Trigg Student Center
- The Mustang** - East Campus
- P.O.D. at the Bonelli** - Meadows School of Arts

For more information visit: [smu.campusdish.com/](http://smu.campusdish.com/)

## Post Office

SMU has a conveniently located mail center in Hughes-Trigg Student Center where you can send letters and if you live on-campus you can pick-up packages. The on-campus post office also offers international shipping and mailing supplies such as envelopes, stamps, and boxes.

### Front Counter Hours

Monday - Friday  
8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

### Mail Pick Up

Monday - Friday  
8:00 AM - 5:30 PM  
Saturday  
11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

For questions email [postoffice@smu.edu](mailto:postoffice@smu.edu) or call 214-768-4450.

## Copy Center

The copy center, located next to the Post Office in Hughes-Trigg student Center, prints posters, yard signs, booklets, resumes, and projects.

### Copy Services

Monday - Friday  
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

For questions or job submissions email [copycentral@smu.edu](mailto:copycentral@smu.edu) or call 214-768-7901

Learn more at the SMU Mail and Copy Center website.



# Dependent Information



# Public School for children

Public education for children is determined by geographic area. Your children may only attend the school provided in the geographic area in which you live. SMU is in the Highland Park Independent School District. If you live in University Park, contact the schools below for information necessary for enrollment.

- Armstrong Elementary School (grades K-4) 214-780-3100
- University Park Elementary School (grades K-4) 214-780-3400
- McCulloch Intermediate School (grades 5-6) 214-780-3500
- Highland Park Middle School (grades 7-8) 214-780-3600
- Highland Park High School (grades 9-12) 214-780-3740

If you live in Dallas, you may contact the Dallas Independent School District @ [www.dallasisd.org](http://www.dallasisd.org) or call (972)925-3700 for instructions on school enrollment. The quality of public school may vary. Where you live will determine the school your child will attend. Although there are other schools in the SMU area, international parents recommend the schools in Highland Park Independent School District (listed above) and Stonewall Jackson Elementary in the Dallas Independent School District (972)749-7200. We highly recommend that you check the schools in your area before renting an apartment.



# Child Care and Preschool

Families with children age 5 and younger may be interested in day care or preschool opportunities. Day care provides supervised play activities. Preschool offers an academic structure. All charge for their service. Many have waiting lists so you should call as soon as possible. None of the businesses near SMU accept drop-ins, (take a child for just an occasional day). Many churches have mother's day out, where children are taken care of in a play group for one morning a week. They usually require regular enrollment for this service.

*SMU Preschool and Childcare Center*  
SMU Hawk Hall  
214-768-2278

*Park Cities YMCA*  
6000 Preston Road  
214-526-7293

*Highland Park United Methodist Church  
Child Development Program*  
3300 Mockingbird  
214-521-2600

*Children's Center of First Community  
Church Preschool*  
6255 E. Mockingbird (near Abrams)  
214-823-2119

*Christ Lutheran Child Development Center*  
3001 Lovers Lane  
214-363-2242

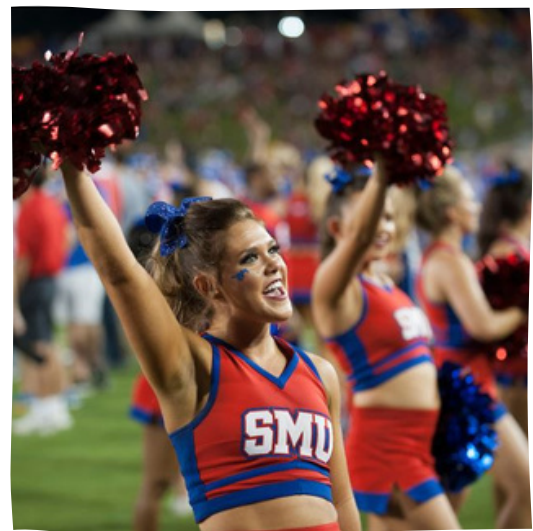
*Park Cities Baptist Church Preschool*  
3933 Northwest Parkway  
214-860-1500





# Living in the U.S.

# Our favorite SMU Traditions



“We don’t tailgate, we boulevard” is one of the most common phrases that comes up when talking about SMU tradition. A day or two before each football game, beautiful white tents are put up all along the Boulevard and the lawn in front of Dallas Hall. Then, three hours before the game, SMU students, faculty, alumni and friends come out to enjoy food and games on the Boulevard.

**At the beginning of each school year there are many events to enjoy and make new friends. Usually there is also a chance to get free food too! The New Student Welcome Party hosted by ISSS has always been a good one!**

**Homecoming is always a big tradition at SMU. There is banner making, window painting, Peruna painting and float building. Then there is also the much-anticipated Homecoming court in which each organization nominates a candidate for homecoming queen and king. The week builds up to the Homecoming parade to showcase the floats students have worked on.**

The Celebration of Lights! Every year in December thousands of lights are displayed on Dallas Hall and it’s surrounding area. SMU students come out to sing, listen to groups perform and hear President Turner read The Christmas Story. The finale of the night is always the lighting of the Christmas tree, Dallas Hall and the surrounding trees with more than 100,000 twinkling lights that helps everyone feel the holiday spirit.

# Life in Dallas, Texas



**POPULATION:** Dallas is the **9th largest city** in the US and the third largest in Texas with a population of 1,281,047.



**LOCATION:** Dallas is located in the Central Time Zone in North Central Texas, 35 miles east of Fort Worth, 245 miles north, northwest of Houston and 300 miles north of the Gulf of Mexico.



**CLIMATE:** Spring (Mar–May) and fall (Sep–Oct) are warm. Summer (Jun–Aug) is hot. Winter (Nov–Feb) is cool to cold.  
Average annual snow days: 1.3  
Average rain days: 81 days



**BUSINESS CLIMATE:** The Dallas area is home to 21 Fortune 500 companies including Exxon Mobil, JC Penney, AT&T, Texas Instruments, and others.



**SPORTS & RECREATION:** Dallas is home to five professional sports teams: The Dallas Cowboys (NFL); Dallas Stars (NHL); Dallas Mavericks (NBA); Dallas Wings (WNBA); FC Dallas (MLS) and the Texas Rangers (MLB) plus NASCAR and Indy racing.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- The 52 foot 'Big Tex' statue that greets visitors at the annual State Fair of Texas is the tallest cowboy in Texas.
- With the roof enclosed, the entire Statue of Liberty could fit into the Cowboys Stadium.
- The first convenience store, 7-eleven, got its start in Dallas and the corporation is headquartered there today.



# U.S. LAWS & SAFETY

## Did You Know?



## Emergency Blue Lights

There are over 55 emergency Blue Light phones across SMU's Campus, typically placed outside or in parking garages. If you are in danger, find the nearest blue light phone, press the emergency button, and you will be connected with the police department and an officer will be dispatched.

## SMU Alerts

In the case of a campus wide safety threat, SMU will send out alerts through the Emergency Notification System (ENS) to alert everyone on campus that there is a threat. Alerts will also be posted on all official SMU social media sites, emailed, and in buildings alarms will sound.

## Legal Ages in the U.S.

**Drinking Age:** 21+

**Tobacco Age:** 21+

## Seatbelts

In the U.S. it is **required** to wear a seatbelt in a vehicle, regardless of whether you are driving or not.

## Drinking and Driving

In the U.S. it is not permitted to operate a vehicle under the influence of alcohol. If you do, you will jeopardize your student visa status.

## Smoking on Campus

Smoking is prohibited within twenty-five (25) feet of any entrance to buildings on campus.

## Alcohol on Campus

Alcohol is not permitted in any public area on SMU's campus including the residence halls regardless of your age.

# EMERGENCIES AT SMU: KNOW WHAT TO DO

In the case of an on-campus emergency, alarms will sound across campus buildings with audio instructions on what to do. Students will also get an emergency alert to their emails and phones with updates on the situation.

## Emergency Guidelines

### Lockdown

#### When

You will receive this notice if there is an active shooter or other violence on campus

#### Actions

Depending on the situation: run away, or hide where you are, under furniture; lock or barricade doors; turn out lights; remain quiet. As a last resort fight to defend yourself.

Call 911 if you have information for the police.

Warn others if possible.

Wait for official notice to resume normal activities.



### Evacuate

#### When

You will receive this notice if there is danger inside or near the building.

#### Actions

Leave the building - do not use elevators.

Assist the disabled.

Take your cell phone, keys, and valuables with you.

Proceed to assembly area outside.

Wait for official notice before attempting to re-enter the building.



### Seek Shelter

#### When

Outdoor sirens signal severe weather or an environmental danger outside

#### Actions

Seek shelter inside a building and remain there.

Go to the lowest level of the building, stay in interior hallways, away from glass doors and windows.

Monitor TV or website news, if possible.

Wait for official notice to resume normal activities.





# EMERGENCY RESOURCES

## LiveSafe App

SMU LiveSafe is free mobile app available through the App Store or Google Play. The University and Student Senate partnered with LiveSafe to provide members of the SMU community access to an easy-to-use mobile app that links users to campus safety resources.



**Communicate Engage Protect**

**Safety alerts from your organization and friends**

**Share text and media via two-way chat**

**Invite friends to see you on a live map as you travel**

## Preparing for an Active Threat on campus

Visit [smu.edu/aware/activethreat](https://smu.edu/aware/activethreat) to learn more about how SMU is keeping students safe and how you can be prepared for an active threat on campus.



# Banking in the U.S.

Below is a list of major banks near the SMU campus:

## *Bank of America*

Snider Plaza, 6901 Hillcrest  
Dallas, TX 75205  
214-987-3658

Monday – Thursday, 9:00am – 4:00pm

Friday, 9:00am – 6:00pm

Saturday, 9:00am – 1:00pm

Sunday, Closed

ATM Open 24 Hours

## *Bank of America*

Park Cities BC  
5500 Preston Pkwy  
Dallas, TX 75205  
214-559-6300

Monday – Thursday, 9:00am – 4:00pm

Friday, 9:00am – 5:00pm

Saturday, 9:00am – 1:00pm

Sunday, Closed

ATM Open 24 Hours

## *Chase Bank*

6437 Hillcrest Ave.  
Dallas, TX 75205  
214-360-3170

Monday – Friday, 9:00am – 6:00pm

Saturday, 9:00am – 2:00pm

Sunday, Closed

ATM Open 24 Hours

## *BBVA Compass Bank*

6501 Hillcrest Ave.  
Dallas, TX 75205  
214-346-6141

Monday – Thursday, 9:00am – 5:00pm

Friday, 9:00am – 6:00pm

Saturday, 9:00am – 1:00pm

Sunday, Closed

ATM Open 24 Hours

## *Park Cities Bank*

6829 Hillcrest Ave.  
Dallas, TX 75205  
214-378-3011

Monday – Friday, 9:00am – 5:00pm

Saturday – Sunday, Closed

## *Wells Fargo Bank*

6900 Snider Plaza  
Dallas, TX 75205

Monday – Friday, 9:00am – 6:00pm

Saturday, 10:00am – 2:00pm

Sunday, Closed

## *Wells Fargo Bank*

5809 E. Lovers Lane (inside Tom Thumb)  
Dallas, TX 75206  
214-692-8193

Monday – Thursday, 10:00am – 7:00pm

Friday, 9:00am – 7:00pm

Saturday, 9:00am – 5:00pm

Sunday, Closed

ATM Open 24 Hours



# Phones in the U.S.

Information about some companies that offer local phone service in the DFW area is provided below.

## **AT&T**

Retailer providing wireless plans & a range of phones, devices & accessories.

[\(214\) 272-8852](tel:(214)272-8852)

5618 E Mockingbird Ln, Dallas, TX 75206

## **Verizon**

Retailer providing wireless plans & a range of phones, devices & accessories.

[\(214\) 273-6669](tel:(214)273-6669)

3820 Lemmon Ave, Dallas, TX 75219

## **T-Mobile**

Wireless provider offering cell phones, data plans, Internet devices & accessories.

[\(214\) 361-2759](tel:(214)361-2759)

8180 Park Ln Ste C349, Dallas, TX 75231

Research more options on Google!





# Medical

# HEALTH CARE TREATMENT

## SMU Health Center

*Dr. Bob Smith Health Center*

Medical, Pharmacy, Dental, Counseling, and Testing Services

M-F 8:30 - 5:00 PM

Main line: 214-768-2141

[smu.edu/studentaffairs/DrBobSmithHealthCenter](http://smu.edu/studentaffairs/DrBobSmithHealthCenter)

*For after hours care, please visit:*

### Local Emergency Room

*For life-threatening injury/illness*

#### **Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas:**

8200 Walnut Hill Ln  
(214) 345-6789

#### **Baylor Hospital**

3500 Gaston Ave  
(214) 820-0111

#### **Baylor Scott and White Hospital- White Rock**

9440 Poppy Dr  
(214) 324-6100

### Local Urgent Care

*For minor injury or illness*

#### **PrimaCare**

6350 E. Mockingbird Ln  
(214) 828-0448

Monday-Friday, 8:00am-8:00pm  
Saturday - Sunday, 8:00am-5:00pm

#### **Sinai Urgent Care**

3414 Milton Ave  
(469) 522-3995

*Sinai Urgent Care is located in Snider  
Plaza, in walking distance from campus*

*For more information, including information about after hours  
care and insurance, please visit  
[smu.edu/StudentAffairs/DrBobSmithHealthCenter](http://smu.edu/StudentAffairs/DrBobSmithHealthCenter)*

# DENTAL CARE




## ABOUT THE DENTAL OFFICE

Campus Smiles is an independent affiliate of SMU that provides comprehensive dental services to the greater SMU community right on campus. Our dental care team is made up of an experienced group of licensed professionals who are committed to providing everyone at SMU with the highest quality, most convenient and affordable dental care available.

## SMU HAS A DENTAL OFFICE ON CAMPUS

As a comprehensive general dental office, we aim to offer quality dental services to our patients in a convenient and relaxing atmosphere. Whether you visit us for a routine cleaning and exam, restorative dentistry or for cosmetic treatment, you're in good hands. For over a decade we have offered high-quality dental care to in many universities across the nation.

## DENTAL BENEFITS


- ✓ CHECK UP EXAMS
- ✓ EMERGENCIES
- ✓ CLEANINGS
- ✓ X-RAYS
- ✓ FILLINGS & CROWNS
- ✓ ROOT CANALS
- ✓  **invisalign**  
PROVIDER
- ✓ WHITENING
- ✓ BRIDGES
- ✓ MOUTHGUARDS
- ✓ EXTRACTIONS

To see more offered services visit our website

## DENTAL INSURANCE PLAN



This August, students can enroll in an affordable dental plan that covers 200+ services for nothing out-of-pocket at Campus Smiles – SMU.

 For more details  
**(214) 449-1041**



Visit Us  
**campus-smiles.com/SMU**



**Dr. Bob Smith Health Center**  
6211 Bishop Blvd, Suite 140  
Dallas, TX 75205



# Food in DFW



# Eating *Vegetarian* at SMU

## In Dallas

Being vegetarian can feel daunting in situations when it seems hard to find options to fill one's appetite. However, the proximity of SMU to downtown Dallas provides students with a greater variety of choices.

Every corner gives rise to a new discovery of small restaurants with unique styles and food. Right across the North East dorms there is the *Sinder Plaza* which is a common place for students to hangout while studying or to visit restaurants or ice cream shops.

If one wants to go further off campus, there is an abundance of opportunities to explore new and wonderful flavors on the weekends by planning an adventure with your friends to downtown Dallas using the DART (Dallas Transit) which is free for all SMU students

## At SMU: Dining Halls

### Umphrey Lee

The brownies at the Vegan Dessert Section at Umph are delicacies and if you are an SMU student the Umph cookies have a fame of their own. If you consume dairy products and have a sweet tooth, the Umph Dessert Section is a blessing.

Another captivating feature is the make-your-own sandwich and salad area at Umph, it provides you with the flexibility to choose your own ingredients to make your own veggie salad or sandwich.

### Arnold

Arnold, has their own make-your-taco section which again, could be made vegetarian with only a red bean paste filling.

Arnold also has a Mongolian grill station where students can make their own grill with rice or noodles hence, vegetarians have the ability to personalize their food.

## Other Options on Campus

Something notable about **Mac's place** is that it offers *Beyond Meat* style burgers for us vegetarian lovers. Another favorite are the salads here! Though they are made available in the menu with meat it could be replaced while you are placing your order.

A vegetarian or vegan is in for a treat at the **Food Market!** There is a whole section dedicated to vegan versions of food. It ranges from vegan ice creams to vegan oven cooked food and biscuits. It is my haven.

We also have restaurants on campus which are Chick-fil-a, Lawyer's Inn and Cinco Taco. While at Chick-fil-a there are not many vegetarian options, it is a go-to for french fries. The potato tots at Lawyer's Inn are my vegetarian choice and the vegetarian tacos are *amazing* at the Cinco Taco.

## Tips from Upperclassmen

- **Tread with Caution!** It might be hard to differentiate between the meat option and vegetarian options sometimes, so when in doubt check with the staff and double check yourself!
- **Double Check!** Check before consuming boiled or cooked vegetables since sometimes in the cooking process butter is added.
- **Take Advantage!** If you're at the SMU dining halls, there are a variety of fruit options available to take and it is a healthy snack between meals and classes to keep around. So grab a fruit on your way out!



**Dedeepya 'Deepu' Chinnam**

Sophomore in Business, Economics, and Statistics

# Ethnic Grocers and Restaurants

## African

### **Maru Grocers**

8353 Park Ln Dallas, TX  
75231

### **Quick Shop**

17509 Coit Rd Ste 6 Dallas,  
TX 75252

### **Desta Ethipoian**

12101 Greenville Ave Ste  
105 Dallas, TX 75243

## Asian

### **Hong Kong Market**

9780 Walnut St Dallas, TX  
75243

### **Thai Oriental Food Store**

5615 Sears St Dallas, TX  
75206

### **Patel Brothers**

8150 Walton Blvd Irving, TX  
75063

### **Gui-Rock Korean BBQ**

2625 Old Denton Rd Ste 700  
Carrollton, TX 75007

### **Royal Thai**

5500 Greenville Ave Ste 608  
Dallas, TX 75206

## European

### **Cafe Madrid**

4501 Travis St Dallas, TX  
75205

### **Bavarian Grill**

221 W Parker Rd Ste 527  
Plano, TX 75023

### **Wooden Spoon**

### **Scandinavian Shop**

1617 K Ave Plano, TX 75074

## Middle Eastern

### **Cafe Istanbul**

7300 Lone Star Dr Ste 160  
C Plano, TX 75024

### **Ali Baba Mediterranean Grill**

2103 N Central Expy  
Richardson, TX 75080

### **Food From Galilee**

6710 Snider Plz Dallas, TX  
75205

### **Haji Foods Market & Deli**

4621 W Park Blvd Ste 108  
Plano, TX 75093

## Latin

### **El Rio Grande Latin Market**

5308 Maple Ave Dallas, TX  
75235

### **Fiesta Mart**

5334 Ross Ave Dallas, TX  
75206

### **Nazca Kitchen**

8041 Walnut Hill Ln Ste 854  
Dallas, TX 75231



For more  
information and  
reviews of Dallas  
Restaurants,  
please visit: Yelp,  
Zomato, or Guide  
Live





# Grocery Stores

## Closest to campus:

### **Tom Thumb**

7000 Snider Plaza

## On the Mustang Express Bus Route:

### **Kroger**

Mockingbird and Greenville

### **Central Market**

5750 E. Lovers Land and Greenville

(Wide range of produce, prepared and speciality foods; more expensive)

### **Tom Thumb**

Greenville and Lovers Lane

## Must be reached by car:

### **Fiesta**

5334 Ross Avenue

(Highly recommended by students for lower prices, wide range of produce, good fish, and international foods.)

### **Whole Foods Market**

8190 Park Lane (Shops at Park Lane)

(Similar to Central Market; more expensive)

# Important Contact Information

## United States Emergency

Phone Number:

**911**

## Campus Police:

214-768-3333

*Campus Police*

*(Non-Emergency):*

214-768-3388

## International Student & Scholar Services:

214-768-4475

iss@smu.edu

## ISSS Document Pick-Up Hours:

Monday to Friday:

9:00AM-4:00PM

## ISSS Virtual Advising Hours:

Monday to Thursday:

9:00am-11:00 am

& 2:00-4:00 pm

<https://smu.zoom.us/j/571970673>



## SMU IT Help Desk:

214-768-4357

help@smu.edu

help.smu.edu

## Bob Smith Health Center:

*Medical Services:*

214-768-2141

*Nurse Advice:*

214-768-3194

*Pharmacy:*

214-768-2149

*Counseling Services:*

214-768-2277

*Health Education:*

214-768-2393

## Violence Prevention and Support Services:

214-768-4512

## SMU General Helpline:

214-768-2000

## What's the difference between U.S. emergency number and the campus police?



Campus police are *real* police officers that deal specifically with campus safety. They monitor and patrol campus 24 hours a day to ensure SMU is a safe place!

Learn more (including how to report an incident) at [smu.edu/BusinessFinance/Police](https://smu.edu/BusinessFinance/Police)

# SMU

**You Are Welcome Here.**