INTERNATIONAL STUDENT & SCHOLAR SERVICES OFFICE

PRE-ARRIVAL EXCHANGE VISITOR PACKET
WELCOME

Welcome! We are looking forward to meeting you and helping you make your experience at Southern Methodist University (SMU) a success. We are certain that you will find your time with us to be personally, professionally, and academically rewarding. You will find our facilities, academic resources, our outstanding faculty and staff, and our picturesque campus inspiring in a variety of ways.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT & SCHOLAR SERVICES STAFF MEMBERS:

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The SMU International Student & Scholar Services may be contacted by:

Phone: 214-768-4475 (Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM) Closed major U.S. holidays

Fax: 214-768-1051

E-Mail: isss@smu.edu
The Visa Application Process

The Visa application process may change according to the requirements of the U.S. Embassy or Consulate where you will be applying. This information will cover the basic documents needed in order to apply for an F-1 or J-1 visa.


Who needs a Visa? All foreign passport holders, except Canadian citizens, must have a valid J1 Exchange Visitor visa in order to enter the United States to engage in research or teach.

What Documents do I need to apply for an Exchange Visitor’s visa?

- **Form DS-2019, Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Status.**
  This is the document issued by Southern Methodist University after you have accepted an appointment to engage in research or teach at one of the schools at SMU or its affiliated institutions. **Please make sure that your name on the DS-2019 is exactly the same as your name on your passport.**

- **Form DS-160: Online Nonimmigrant Visa Electronic Application:**
  [http://travel.state.gov/visa/forms/forms_4230.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/forms/forms_4230.html)

- **Passport:** A passport valid for travel to the United States with a validity date at least six months beyond the applicant’s intended period of stay in the United States. Your passport is issued by your home country.

- **One (1) 2x2 photograph.**

- **Evidence of adequate financial resources to attend SMU (Scholarship letter or bank letter).**

What are the Required Visa Fees?

- Nonimmigrant visa application processing fee: For current fees for Department of State government services go to: [https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/study-exchange/exchange.html](https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/study-exchange/exchange.html)

- **The SEVIS I-901 fee receipt:** Any exchange visitor who receives a DS-2019 form from a U.S. University must pay the SEVIS I-901 fee before their visa appointment.

  The SEVIS fee must be paid and fully processed before the applicant arrives at the consulate for the visa interview. Make sure to print a copy of your receipt for your appointment. For more information on the SEVIS fee I-901 payment, please visit: [http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/](http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/)
• Visa issuance fee: Additionally, if the visa is issued, there will be an additional visa issuance reciprocity fee, if applicable. Please consult the Visa Reciprocity Tables: https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/fees/fees-visa-services.html

**Spouses and Children:** Applicants with dependents must also provide:
Proof of the exchange visitor’s relationship to his /her spouse and/or children (e.g., marriage and birth certificates in English.).
If applying separate, dependents must bring a copy of exchange visitor’s passport and visa, and all other required documents.
**All dependents who do not arrive to the U.S. within 30 days from the principal exchange visitor’s program start date will need to receive a new DS2019 for admissions to the U.S.**

**Work:** The spouse and/or children of an exchange visitor in the U.S. may not work in J-2 status, unless they have filed Form I-765 Application for Employment Authorization and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has approved permission to work. For more information, please visit: www.uscis.gov

**Study:** The spouse and/or children of an exchange visitor visa holder who are in the U.S. may study in the U.S. without also being required to apply for a student (F-1) visa or change to F-1 status.

Spouses and/or children who do not intend to reside in the U.S. with the principal visa holder, but visit for vacation only, may be eligible to apply for visitor (B-2) visas, or if qualified, travel without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program:

**When to Apply for a Visa?** It is important to apply for a visa as early as possible. Most U.S. embassies allow applicants to start the visa application as early as 90 days prior to the beginning date on the DS-2019 document.

**Proof of “Ties to your Home Country”**
Ties to your home country are the things that bind you to your hometown, homeland, or current place of residence: job, family, financial prospects that you own or will inherit, investments, etc.

**Other Forms:** DS-156, DS-157, DS-158, Evidence of English Language ability sufficient for the course of study you will pursue (scores from standardized tests such as, IELTS, TOEFL, SAT, GRE, GMAT, etc.).

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE VISA APPLICATION PROCESS PLEASE VISIT THE FOLLOWING WEBSITES:**

**Link to U.S. Embassies and Consulates:**

**Visa Information:**
[https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en.html](https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en.html)
Two-year Home-country Physical Presence (Foreign Residence) Requirement

When you agree to participate in an Exchange Visitor Program and your program falls under the conditions explained below, you will be subject to the two-year home-country physical presence (foreign residence) requirement. This means you will be required to return to your home country for two years at the end of your exchange visitor program. This requirement under immigration law is based on Section 212(e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended, and Title 22 Part 40 and Part 41 in the Code of Federal Regulations.

Two-year Home-country Physical Presence Requirement Conditions - An exchange visitor is subject to the two-year home country physical presence requirement if the following conditions exist:

- **Government funded exchange program** - The program in which the exchange visitor was participating was financed in whole or in part directly or indirectly by the U.S. government or the government of the exchange visitor’s nationality or last residence;

- **Graduate medical education or training** - The exchange visitor entered the U.S. to receive graduate medical education or training;

- **Specialized knowledge or skill: Skills List** - The exchange visitor is a national or permanent resident of a country which has deemed the field of specialized knowledge or skill necessary to the development of the country, as shown on the Exchange Visitor Skills List. Review the Exchange Visitor Skills List 2009

What if my visa is denied?

If you are denied a visa, please ask the officer for a list of documents he or she would suggest you bring when you request a visa the next time. You should be able to ask the visa officer to give you the reason for denial. Unfortunately, our office is not able to discuss your visa denial with Consular Officers.

For more information on visa denials visit: https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/general/denials.html

**Medical Records:** Please remember to bring copies of your medical records and those of your dependents, if any. All copies must be certified English translations. If you have children, please bring their immunization records as they are required to enroll in public schools in the United States. Current immunization requirements may be found on the web at: http://www.dshs.state.tx.us
ENTERING THE UNITED STATES: I94 PROCEDURES

The Form I-94 is issued to lawful nonimmigrants at the time that they enter the United States. This form serves as evidence of admission and proves the status of the nonimmigrants by indicating their date of entry, visa type, and allowed length of stay. This new rule by CBP means they will no longer issue paper Form I-94s to those traveling by air or sea. It is crucial that The International Student and Scholar Services Office have access to this information. Please bring a print out of your automated I-94 along with all your immigration documents with you when you come for your Mandatory Government Check-In. If you do not receive an I-94 from a Global Entry Kiosk, your entry information can be found online. The electronic Form I-94 can be obtained at www.cbp.gov/I94. Please see below for examples of the new Form I-94 according to the type of travel when entering the U.S.

Tips to Locate and Print Electronic Form I-94

If you cannot locate the Form I-94 on the CBP website (www.cbp.gov/I94), and instead receive a “Not Found” message, it is possible that the Form I-94 does not exist because of a system error. However, it is more likely that the Form I-94 is in the CBP system, but the data is formatted differently than you entered it, so the I-94 is “hiding.” Below are some tips to assist you in obtaining the Form I-94 out of the CBP automation system:

• First, ensure data is entered correctly in all applicable fields.
  - Enter the name as stated in the passport, visa, or the submitted Form DS-160. Although CBP has stated it would draw the name for the Form I-94 from the travel document (e.g. passport biographic page or visa), that is not always the case. The instructions on CBP’s website state that the name is drawn from the visa, if any. Therefore, check the passport, visa, and a copy of the submitted Form DS-160 (if available) for name variations. Try entering the name as stated on each document.
  - Enter the first and middle name in the First Name field. In the first name field, type the first and the middle name (if any) with a space in between. Do this even if the middle name is not stated on the passport or visa.
  - Switch the order of the names. Switch the last and first name when entering the information on the website. Some countries state the name in the passport as first name, last name, rather than the more standard order of last name, first name. This may cause the name to be recorded incorrectly in the CBP system.
  - Enter multiple first names or multiple last names without spaces. If a person has two first names or two last names, type the first names without a space between them or the last names without a space between them. Example: type the first names “Mary Jane” as “Maryjane.”
  - Check for multiple passport numbers. Check the Form DS-160 (if available) for the passport number stated. If the passport number on the Form DS-160 is different than the passport number on which the person was admitted, type the passport number as stated on the submitted Form DS-160. Also, check the passport number stated on the visa. If the passport number is different than the current passport, enter the passport number stated on the visa.
  - Do not enter the year if included in the passport number. Some passport numbers may begin with the year in which the passport was issued, causing the number to be too long for the relevant field in CBP’s automation system. If relevant, try entering the passport number without the year. For example, a Mexican passport that was issued in 2008 may have a passport
number that starts with “08” followed by nine digits. Try entering the passport number without the “08.” This problem should not arise for newer Mexican passports, as those passports do not begin with the year.

- Check the Classification. Check the classification designated on the visa and compare it to the classification stated on the admission stamp in the passport, as there may be a slight variation. Be sure to try both designations. For example, the visa may state “E-3D” for an E-3 dependent, but the admission stamp may state only “E-3.” The automated I-94 could state the classification either way.

DEFERED INSPECTIONS UPDATE:

Phone: 972-973-9846
Location: DFW airport, Terminal D, Level 1. Enter the building and look to the left, there are some short glass walls (sic) and in that corner is the new office.
Procedure for corrections: Call the number above and set an appointment time. After arriving at the office, sign in on the clipboard and people will be seen in the order of arrival.

The CBP web site is not updated with the new location, but does have a new mailing address which is:
Mailing address:
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
P.O. Box 619050
DFW Airport, TX 75261

- Enter the building at D22 International Arrivals
- The office is to the right of the Southwest News Stand
- The door says US Customs and Border Protection
- They are open 8:30 – 2:00, Monday – Frida
You should have the following items with you at your port of entry to the U.S. **Do not pack these in your checked luggage.**

1. Passport
2. Visa
3. Proof of Finances
4. I-20 for F-1 visa holders or DS-2019 for J-1 visa holders
5. Letter of acceptance from SMU
6. Proof of intent to leave the U.S. at the end of the academic program.

**An F-2 visa holder (spouse or child/children) should have the following items at the port of entry to the U.S.:**

1. Passport
2. Visa
3. Proof of Finances
4. I-20 for F-2 or DS-2019 for J-2
5. Proof of relationship to primary visa holders (Certified English translations of marriage certificate for spouse; birth certificate for children)
6. Proof of intent to leave the U.S. at the end of the academic program
7. If the dependents travel separately, they will be required to show proof of the primary visa holder’s full time enrollment in school.

**Customs:** Each person is allowed to bring in personal items and other goods duty free, unless it is a gift or other item that will be left in the United States. Please check the web at http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/vacation/kbyg/ as duty tax rates and rules are subject to change.

**ARRIVING AT DFW AIRPORT**

You have a number of transportation options when you arrive at DFW Airport:

*Please note all prices are subject to change without notification.*

**City Shuttle:** $21.00 per one passenger from DFW International Airport to Southern Methodist University Campus or $17.00 per one passenger to the Hotel Lumen (across SMU). http://www.cityshuttle.net/index.php?lang=english&f_id=3

**Go Yellow Checker Shuttle:** $25.00 per one passenger from DFW to Southern Methodist University. http://www.yellowcheckershuttle.com/ SMU Students get a discount: Click here for your discount

**Super Shuttle:** $26.00 per one passenger from DFW to Southern Methodist University for SMU students. Please use code VJJZ7 when making reservation. https://www.supershuttle.com/default.aspx?GC=SMUIC
For more information on pick up services, please check the following website:


Dallas Love Field Airport: If you have a connecting flight and you are arriving at Dallas Love Field, please check their website: http://www.dallas-lovefield.com/parking-transportation.html

Airport Physical Addresses:

DFW International Airport: 3200 East Airfield Drive, DFW Airport, TX 75261
Dallas Love Field Airport: 8008 Cedar Springs Road, LB 16 Dallas, TX 75235: 214-670-6080 phone

Local Train

You can also log onto www.dart.org for more information on train service from the airport. Taking public transportation from DFW airport to SMU will only cost $4 to $7 but is difficult if you have luggage.

- Take a DFW shuttle to Center Port train station
- Take the TRE (Trinity Railway Express) train to Union Station (east bound)
- Change platform to the red and blue line trains (the platform next to the ticket building)
- Take either the north bound red or blue train to Mockingbird train station
- Take the escalator or elevator to the ground level
- Take the bus number 768 to SMU (walking distance: 10 minutes).
ARRIVING AT SMU

- Check-in times for new exchange visitors are Monday to Thursday at 1:30 pm at the Blanton Building, suite 216.

- For more information about checking in, please check our Mandatory Check-In Session form included in your packet and also sent to you electronically.

- Health insurance requirements:
  - Medical Benefits of at least $100,000 US dollars per accident or illness.
  - Repatriation of remains in the amount of $25,000 US dollars (Definition of Repatriation: If a person dies in a foreign country, we say they are “repatriated” when their body returned to the native country. Repatriation insurance is used for the transportation expenses related to returning the deceased to their native country.)
    - Expenses associated with the medical evacuation of the non-immigrant visitor to home country in the amount of $50,000
  - Deductible not to exceed $500 per accident or illness.

- Please note all scholars and professors receiving fringe benefits by SMU must visit the ISSS Office and Human Resources before beginning research or teaching activities at SMU. All Exchange Visitors will be required to submit the Exchange Visitor Health Insurance Verification form and a copy of their insurance card.

- All Exchange Visitors who are NOT receiving fringe benefits from SMU are encouraged to purchase insurance from Ascension. All Exchange Visitor must submit the Health Insurance Verification Form before they can being their research or teaching activities at SMU. In addition to the form, the Exchange Visitor must submit a copy of their policy in English and in U.S. dollar.

HOTEL LISTING INFORMATION

If you or any family members traveling with you need temporary accommodations, we have listed hotels in the area that are nearest to SMU. Make sure to ask for the SMU discount at all hotels. In order to receive the SMU discount at most of the hotels below, you must call for reservations. All prices are subject to change.

HOTELS WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE FROM SMU

HOTEL LUMEN
6101 Hillcrest Ave
Dallas, TX 75205
Reservations 800-908-1140
Hotel 214-219-2400

Fax 214-219-2402
http://www.hotellumen.com
(use code “SMU” when booking online to receive a variable discount)

Radisson Hotel
6060 North Central Expressway
Dallas, TX 75206
Tel. 214 750 6060 or 1-800-333-3333
Fax 214-750-5959
http://www.radisson.com/dallas-hotel-tx-75206/txdalcen
(SMU rate – must call hotel for reservation, discount not available for online booking).

HOTELS WITHIN A SHORT DRIVE FROM SMU

Doubletree Campbell Center
8250 N Central Expressway
Dallas, TX 75206
Tel. 214-691-8700 or 1-800-222-8733
Fax 214-706-0187
(SMU rate – must call hotel for reservation, discount not available for online booking)

Northpark Courtyard by Marriott
10325 N Central Expressway
OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING:

There is limited housing in the SMU area and it is expensive. If you decide to rent an apartment outside campus, the price will usually begin at about $800 monthly. An initial deposit is required when renting an apartment. This will usually be equal to the first month’s rent. The deposit is returned when you move out of the apartment if you do not break the contract and if there is no damage to the apartment.

There are additional monthly charges for utilities (gas and electricity). Charges vary but will be approximate $200 monthly for utilities.

If you will be living in an apartment, there are usually additional start up charges for electric and gas service to your apartment. Electric and gas service requires an initial deposit of approximate $90 to $150 when ordering a new utility service. If you will be living in the university halls of residence you will not have to pay for electric and gas service. Electric and gas costs are covered in room and board charges. Some electric companies are:
The fee for setting up new telephone service will average approximately $50.00 to $75.00. Monthly rates will average approximately $30.00 to $50.00. Long distance charges are additional. For more information about telephone service in the Dallas/Fort Worth area you can log onto www.att.com

There are several steps you can take to arrange for your housing.

Check the SMU Housing Websites:
http://smu.edu/housing/
http://smu.edu/housing/apts.asp

Apartment Finders:
ApartmentList.com
www.apartmentfinder.com
www.dfwapartmentfinder.com
http://www.apartmentwiz.com/dallas_apartments
FINANCIAL MATTERS

Please remember to have enough money in a U.S. bank or in traveler's checks to cover your immediate expenses.

1. Credit cards
SMU accepts “Master Card”, “Discover” and “American Express Cards.”
You need to contact your credit card company before you leave home to make arrangements for a transaction of a large size to be processed.

2. Travelers' Checks
Please obtain the checks in denominations of $1,000.00 in order to make your payment in the Bursar’s (cashier’s) office more efficient. (Using traveler’s checks for other purposes will require much smaller denominations.)

3. Wire transfers to the SMU Bursar’s office
Bank wiring instructions are as follows:

   Bank Name:       Bank of Texas, Na.
   Bank Address:    6215 Hillcrest Ave., Dallas, TX  75205
   Bank ABA Number: 111014325
   Account Number:  8090468754
   Account Name:   SMU Transfer account.
   Swift Code:      BAOUKUS44

Student name as spelled on passport
Student identification number (if you have it)
Amount wired
Make sure that your bank includes the name of the student when wiring the money. Many times the originating bank fails to identify the student.

Always keep a record of the date that you wired the money. This is very important!!
You will be asked the date by the cashier at SMU in order to properly apply the funds to your account.

CURRENCY

It is wise to carry travelers’ checks instead of cash. Travelers’ checks can be replaced if they are lost or stolen. They can be used upon arrival for food, ground transportation, hotels, etc. There are several good banks near the University, so it will be easy to open an account immediately upon your arrival.

Purchases made in the U.S. have sales tax added to the purchase price. In Dallas, this tax is 8.25% of the purchase price. For example, if you purchase an item or a meal that is $10.00, an additional 83 cents in taxes will be added to the cost.
HEALTH INSURANCE REQUIREMENT

Health Insurance is required by law for a visitor entering the U.S. on a J-1 visa as a student or scholar. All Exchange Visitors sponsored by Southern Methodist University and its program P-1-02905 must present valid policy covering the time on their DS-2019 document in order to begin their research or teaching activities at SMU or its affiliated institutions.

The U.S. Department of State requirements for health insurance is as follow:

- Medical Benefits of at least $100,000 US dollars per accident or illness.
- Repatriation of remains in the amount of $25,000 US dollars (Definition of Repatriation: If a person dies in a foreign country, we say they are “repatriated” when their body returned to the native country. Repatriation insurance is used for the transportation expenses related to returning the deceased to their native country.)
- Expenses associated with the medical evacuation of the non-immigrant visitor to home country in the amount of $50,000
- Deductible not to exceed $500 per accident or illness.

All Exchange Visitors are required to submit the Exchange Visitor Health Insurance Verification form before they begin their activities at SMU.