



International Student & Scholar Services Office

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 small classes, our friendly and helpful faculty and staff, and our picturesque campus inspiring in a variety of ways.

International Student & Scholar Services Staff members:

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PREPARING FOR TRAVEL

The International Student & Scholar Services deals with F-1 and J-1 non-immigrant visas.

The Visa Application:

Please note that 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.

Obtaining a Passport: Before entering the United States, you must obtain a passport. Your passport is issued by your Home Country.

Who needs a Visa? All foreign passport holders, except Canadian citizens, must have a valid F-1 or J-1 student U.S. non-immigrant visa in order to enter the United States to study or engage in research.

What documents do I need to show when applying for a visa? Every U.S. embassy or consulate has different requirements for the visa application process. However, the following documents are always requested:

I-20 (F-1 student) or DS-2019 (J-1 exchange visitor): This is the document issued by the school to which you have been admitted. Each I-20/DS-2019 has information from SMU, the program you are admitted for, the expected duration of your program, and financial information. In addition, the I-20/DS-2019 form provides your personal information.

Please make sure that your name on the I-20 or DS-2019 is exactly the same as your name on your passport.

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

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 I-20 or DS-2019.

Other Requirements:

SEVIS Fee, I-901 form: Please refer to the attached form included in this packet.

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:

<http://www.usembassy.gov/>

Visa Information:

http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html

Student Visa Information:

http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1270.html

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:

http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/denials/denials_1361.html

For J-1 visa applicants only:

What is the Two-year Home Country Residence requirement?

The 212 (e) rule or two-year home country residence requirement obliges Exchange Visitors (J-1 students, researchers, professors) to return to their home country for two years before being eligible to apply for an immigrant visa or a different non-immigrant visa.

For more information on the 212 (e) rule, please visit the following link:

http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1267.html#15

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>

ARRIVAL:

The U.S. has four time zones. Please check the time at each connecting airport to prevent missing your connecting flight. Dallas is in the “Central Time Zone.”

Prior to arrival, the flight attendant will hand you an I-94 card and customs forms that you must complete. **Make sure that the name you use on the I-94 is identical to your name as it appears in your passport.**

Departure Number 00000000 00	ADMITTED AS A REFUGEE PURSUANT TO SECTION 207 OF THE INA FOR AN INDEFINITE PERIOD OF TIME. IF YOU DEPART THE U.S. YOU WILL NEED PRIOR PERMISSION FROM INS TO RETURN. EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZED.
Immigration and Naturalization Service I-94 Departure Record	NYC DATE IMM.OFF. JUN - 7 1995 NYC 000
14. Family Name	
15. First (Given) Name	16. Birth Date (Day/Mo./Yr.)
17. Country of Citizenship	

Warning: A nonimmigrant who accepts unauthorized employment is subject to deportation.
Important: Retain this permit in your possession; you must surrender it when you leave the U.S. Failure to do so may delay your entry into the U.S. in the future.
 You are authorized to stay in the U.S. only until the date written on this form. To remain past this date, without permission from immigration authorities, is a violation of the law.
 Surrender this permit when you leave the U.S.:
 - By sea or air, to the transportation line;
 - Across the Canadian border, to a Canadian Official;
 - Across the Mexican border, to a U.S. Official.
 Students planning to reenter the U.S. within 30 days to return to the same school, see "Arrival-Departure" on page 3 of Form I-20 prior to surrendering this permit.

Record of Changes

A# 00000000	V# 00000000	IV# 00000000
DES MOINES	IA 50314	IOWA

Part: _____ Departure Record
 Date: _____
 Carrier: _____
 Flight #/Ship Name: _____

Important: The above is a sample of an I94 card. Please make sure your I94 is stamped as F1 or J1 visa type and has a notation of D/S.

At your port of entry, immigration check and customs clearance can take an hour or more. If you have a connecting flight to DFW (Dallas/Fort Worth) International Airport from another U.S. airport, you need to allow time for this customs & immigration clearance in your flight schedule.

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>

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).

Arrival at SMU: Please make sure to attend a Mandatory Immigration Check-In Session.

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 of 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>

Approximate Rate: \$209 per night + 15% tax (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>

Approximate Rate: \$ 99 -129 per night + 15% tax (SMU rate – must call hotel for reservation, discount not available for online booking).

Hotels within a Short Drive of SMU

Doubletree Campbell Center

8250 N Central Expressway
 Dallas, TX 75206
 Tel. 214-691-8700 or 1-800-222-8733
 Fax 214-706-0187

http://doubletree1.hilton.com/en_US/dt/hotel/DFWCNDT-DoubleTree-by-Hilton-Hotel-Dallas-Campbell-Centre-Texas/index.do

Approximate Rate: \$109 per night + 15% tax (SMU rate – must call hotel for reservation, discount not available for online booking) and \$129- \$154 per night + 15% tax (non SMU rate).

Northpark Courtyard by Marriott

10325 N Central Expressway

Dallas, TX 75231

Tel. 214-739-2500 or 1-800-321-2211

Fax 214-739-6450

<http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/dalcc-courtyard-dallas-central-expressway/>

Approximate Rate: \$99 per night + 15% tax Sunday – Thursday and \$79 per night + 15% tax Friday – Saturday (SMU rate – must call hotel for reservation, discount not available for online booking). \$109-\$199 per night + %15 tax (non SMU rate).

Embassy Suites Hotel Dallas –Love Field

3880 W. Northwest Highway

Dallas, TX 75220

Tel. 214-357-4500 or 1-800-EMBASSY

Fax 214-357-0683

http://embassysuites1.hilton.com/en_US/es/hotel/DALLFES-Embassy-Suites-Dallas-Love-Field-Texas/index.do

Approximate Rate: \$99 per night + 15% tax (SMU rate – must call hotel for reservation, discount not available for online booking).

Hyatt Place

12411 N Central Expressway

Dallas, TX 75243

Tel. 972-458-1224 or 1-800-833-1516

Fax 972-458-2887

<http://dallasparkcentral.place.hyatt.com/>

Approximate Rate: \$89 per night + 15% tax (SMU rate – must call hotel for reservation, discount not available for online booking).

Westin Galleria Dallas

13340 Dallas Parkway

Dallas, TX 75243

Tel. 972-934-9494 or 1-800-937-8461

Fax 972-851-2869

www.westin.com

Approximate Rate: \$129-\$300 per night + 15% tax for a Standard Room (no SMU rate available).

HOUSING OPTIONS:**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:

TXU
Reliant Energy
Stream Energy Dallas

The fee for setting up new telephone service will average approximate \$50.00 to \$75.00. Monthly rates will average approximate \$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:

<http://www.apartments.com/search/Texas/Dallas-Ft.Worth&Vicinity>

www.dfwapartmentguide.com

www.apartmentfinder.com

http://www.apartmentwiz.com/dallas_apartments/

FINANCIAL MATTERS:

Preparing For Tuition and Fee Payment

Please remember to have enough money in a U.S. bank or in traveler's checks to cover your immediate expenses and initial University tuition, fees, etc. Failure to be prepared for these expenses could result in you not being allowed to register for classes or having your classes cancelled. This would cause problems for your immigration status in the U.S. For more information, you can access the latest information on SMU policies and information regarding payment of tuition, fees, room and board by logging onto <http://www.smu.edu/bursar/>. You may pay for your tuition and fees by a variety of methods.

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.

Assistantship: If the University is paying you for an assistantship, you will not receive your first payment until the end of the first month. You will continue to be paid on a monthly basis

at the end of each month. Note, students that are on Teaching Assistantship or Research Assistantship, are not eligible to have a second on campus job during the school year.

Scholarship: If you are on a scholarship, the funds will be applied to your student account towards your tuition and fee costs. We advise you to consult your department for details especially if you will be receiving a scholarship. Scholarships which cover living expenses are taxed by the U.S. government at approximately 15 %. Please be aware of this when you budget your finances. Discuss this with your family and be prepared to pay this amount from private funds.

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.

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: iss@smu.edu

Mail: SMU International Center/International Student & Scholar Services
6185 Airline Drive, Suite 216
Dallas, TX 75205

Location: The SMU International Center is located at the corner of SMU Blvd and Airline Road at 6185 Airline in the Laura Lee Blanton Student Services Building.